

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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ARTICLE I.

THE BRETHREN OF OUR LORD.

An interesting inquiry is suggested by the phrase, "The brethren of our Lord." Were they children of Joseph and Mary, our Lord's mother; or of Joseph by a former wife; or of Mary the wife of Cleopas, adopted by Joseph on the death of their father; or of Joseph by a Levirate marriage with the widow of his brother? For this last view few advocates have appeared, and these divided in opinion as to the person of the widow, whether Mary the wife of Cleopas or some unmentioned woman. Indeed the opinion is entirely based on suppositions, none of which can survive a critical examination.

Of the three others just given, the bulk of Patristic, Papal, and Protestant authorities favor the adoption of the third. Early authorities were divided between the first and second. Each has had distinguished advocates as well as the third during the last hundred years, within which period discussions on the subject of the inquiry have become more numerous and been distinguished by more zeal and ability than during any former period subsequent to the fourth century.

In prosecuting this inquiry, it becomes us to lay aside *à priori* considerations, traditions, and ecclesiastical dogmas, and examine with careful criticism those scriptures which formally or incidentally inform us respecting our Lord's parentage, birth, and house

ARTICLE VI.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT LOUISVILLE.

ORGANISATION.

There were very few of our Presbyteries not fully represented in the late Assembly. An unusually large proportion of the Commissioners were new men, and very many of them young. But no lack of ability was to be discovered in the body, while its patience and prudence and good temper were certainly remarkable. Not an unkind word was spoken and not the slightest manifestation was made of unfraternal confidence and affection. Dr. Peck, the retiring Moderator, preached an able and interesting sermon entirely without notes. Dr. Wilson was elected in his place by a very large majority of votes. In fact, it came near being a unanimous election—a tribute to his talents and learning and long and faithful services as Stated Clerk. Dr. Park filled the place he left temporarily vacant, and Dr. Bunting was elected by acclamation the temporary or reading clerk. The venerable Permanent Clerk, Dr. Brown, shewed his placid face as usual at his desk, evidently much improved in health. Thus the Assembly was organised and ready to proceed to its work. We propose to make no comments in the way of either censure or commendation of the manner in which the officers of the Assembly discharged their appointed duties, with a single notable exception, and that in favor of

THE COMMITTEE ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The reverend chairman of this Committee, we have been informed, had signalled his firmness and his zeal for the discharge of the same duties at a late meeting of the Synod of Virginia, although we do not know whether that circumstance had aught to do with his appointment to the like office in the late Assembly. And never having sought for leave of absence from any church court, it is probable that we are not very good judges of the way in which a Committee on Leave should receive and entertain and dispose of applications; but we confess to a great admiration, in our inexperience, of the course pursued by Mr. Dinwiddie (of

Alexandria) and his colleagues. For example, on the last Saturday of the sessions, there appeared before them a venerable theological professor and ex-moderator (who himself gave us the account of the proceedings and was evidently very much entertained thereby), and the first question was, "Well, Doctor, what application do you propose to make to this Committee?" The Doctor stated his application, and the chairman with great formality wrote down the same. Then he turned and very courteously requested a statement of the Doctor's grounds or reasons for making such an application. By this time the Doctor had begun to wish himself out of the scrape, but he manfully stated his reasons, which the Chairman and Committee appeared to take into careful but silent consideration. At length the chairman very blandly spoke to this effect: "But Doctor, are you not aware that there remain several answers to overtures which have been reported by you to the Assembly and it has not yet had time to consider them?" Gently and softly the chairman proceeded: "And, Doctor, are you not also aware that you are published with the approbation and sanction of the Assembly to preach to-morrow in Dr. Robinson's church?" The venerable applicant was beginning evidently to reflect on these suggestions, when the mild-mannered chairman followed up his advantage with the remark very respectfully offered: "I would recommend, Doctor, that you withdraw your application;" and the Doctor answered that he had come to the same conclusion.

On the same day another Doctor of Divinity appeared, and the same formal courtesy asked and obtained and recorded the nature of his application, and then the grounds or reasons of it were respectfully called for. In this case the applicant was a very laborious worker but delicate and needing rest, and accordingly his plan was to get leave of absence after the afternoon session and ride from Louisville to St. Louis, where he expected to solace himself after severe and protracted toils with the Christian privileges of that city on Sunday and the delightful society of some near and dear relatives. At that time it was not anticipated that the Assembly could be dissolved that night. The Committee carefully meditated for some time on this application and its grounds

and then the courteous chairman broke the long silence thus: "But, Doctor, have you reflected that as you need rest you could secure it better by remaining here to-morrow than by spending Sunday at St. Louis, where you might be called on to preach?" This was a weighty suggestion, which must have produced some effect. He continued: "And, Doctor, does it not appear to you that to ride all night in a railroad car might be too much for your strength which you feel has been very much exhausted?" This logic could not be resisted, and the application was withdrawn.

Next came a legal gentleman, who was a ruling elder and who seems to have witnessed the scenes just described. The preliminary formalities being in his case also carefully gone through with and his reasons for asking leave of absence given, it appeared that his business at home absolutely required his attention and it was positively necessary that he should lose no more time at the Assembly. This statement threw the Chairman and his Committee into a brown study, but at length one of the members catching inspiration from the chairman propounded this question: "But are not you the man, sir, who on a certain occasion in the proceedings occupied the Assembly with a speech some hours long?" We are informed that upon this the applicant hastily gathered his hat and walking stick and politely bade the Committee a good evening.

It is not very long since our Assembly requested the Presbyteries in electing Commissioners to make sure that the parties chosen would make their arrangements to stay quietly and patiently for two full weeks at the meeting, should so much time prove to be requisite. It was a reasonable request. All honor to the Rev. William Dinwiddie and his Committee! They excused only four commissioners to go home before the close of the proceedings.

REPORT OF SUSTENTATION COMMITTEE.

This was read on the second day of the proceedings, immediately after the announcement of the Standing Committees appointed by the Moderator. The chief statements made in this report are as follows: The yellow fever epidemic in various ways operated to check the Sustentation work; the number and amount

of the collections for Sustentation, the Evangelistic work, and the Invalid Fund do not vary greatly from those of the year previous; the coöperation of Ladies' Societies and Sunday-schools is considered to be of great importance; receipts for Sustentation during the past year have been \$16,680, which is \$28 more than last year; for Evangelistic work the receipts are this year \$515 less than last year, the whole amount appropriated to 626 Presbyteries being \$6,725; the Invalid Fund receipts have been \$1,245 less; the Relief Fund is worth \$30,000, and annuities have been paid to families of six deceased ministers, amounting to \$1,800; the number of names on the lists of this fund are 83; twenty-six aged and infirm ministers and eighty-three families of deceased ministers have been aided from the Invalid Fund; and the "Committee of Sustentation" asks that its name be changed to the "Committee of Home Missions."

ACTION ON SUSTENTATION.

The Assembly recognised with honorable mention the fact of the two secretaries having voluntarily relinquished each \$250 of salary per annum; also agreed to the change of name asked for; also added words to the third Section of By-law No. 5, which make it indispensable to any grant of money for a church building that the sum appropriated by the Committee shall clear the same of debt; also removed the restriction which limits all appropriations to the Colored Evangelistic work to *five per cent.* of the whole receipts, leaving the amount to the discretion of the Committee.

We hope to be pardoned for suggesting to this "Committee of Sustentation" (now of "Home Missions") that their Annual Report contained too much *preaching*, and that the omission also hereafter of all that looks like advice to the Presbyteries would not hurt but help their cause. Moreover, greater simplicity and directness in the statements made, and less reference to what is "pleasing" or "painful" to the Committee, would improve these papers.

We must add that the comparisons which the Secretary of Sustentation allowed himself, when addressing the Assembly, to

make between the Foreign and the Home work and between these both and the Invalid Fund, appeared to us unhappy. For such an officer of our Assembly to feel it necessary for him to declare that he was "the honest friend and advocate of Foreign Missions," seemed to us a very strange thing. And it certainly was unfortunate for him to fall into any such train of remarks as required him to make this declaration. If there is, we will not say *jealousy*, but even *competition*, between Home and Foreign Missions, the question will and should be raised of separating them. The two causes were put at the one place any how not by deliberate preference on the part of the Church.

REPORT OF FOREIGN MISSIONS COMMITTEE.

The reading of this report followed immediately that on Sustentation. The main facts reported are: (1) That the whole of our Foreign Missionary force consists of eighty-six persons, thirty-seven sent from this country and forty-nine natives of the countries where they labor. Of the thirty-seven, fifteen are ministers and twenty-two assistant missionaries. Of the forty-nine, eight are ministers, eight licentiates, and thirty-three teachers and colporteurs. (2) Six additions only were made during the year past to the missionary corps, and all of these under very peculiar providences. Our means to carry on the foreign propagation of the faith have sunk to such a low ebb that except for extraordinary circumstances these additions would not have been ventured to be made. The Rev. T. R. Sampson and his wife were sent to Greece, but at the special charge of some friends, who will also provide for their support in the future. The Rev. J. W. Dabney (formerly of the Campinas Mission and having knowledge of the Portuguese language) finished his theological course at Union Seminary, and with his wife has gone back to assist at the Campinas Institute, where it is expected arrangements can be made for their entire support without charge to the Mission. The Rev. John W. Davis, of the Soochow Mission, married a lady of the Northern Presbyterian Mission at Shanghai, and so a valuable member is added to our corps in China. And Mr. A. H. Erwin at Barranquilla has been so blessed

in his humble but efficient missionary labors there, that, as the expense of his support will be very small, it has been decided to let him remain at his post. This is certainly a humiliating report touching progress for our Church in foreign lands. (3) The receipts for the year past were \$16,234, of which \$5,490 came from Sabbath-schools, \$8,815 from Ladies' Missionary Associations, and the remainder, \$31,928 from churches and individuals. The receipts of the year fall behind those of the year previous by \$990. The general debt is \$9,524. The number of contributing churches is 1,193, which is 108 more than contributed the previous year. More than one-third of our churches still contribute nothing. (4) *The Missionary* cost during the past year only \$442 more than its receipts. Had the one thousand copies sent free to ministers been paid for, it would have more than supported itself. (5) The work, all things considered, never wore a more encouraging aspect. It is believed that, notwithstanding the falling off of receipts for some years past, there is a growing interest in the cause among the great body of our people, and that the number is increasing who practise self-denial and make earnest effort to obtain means for helping this cause. And then the success had in missionary labors abroad is encouraging, from the numbers converted, and the increase of native laborers, and the flourishing condition of our various schools, and the cessation of violent opposition, and the more earnest attention given to preaching. The field is ripening; our great want is more men to gather the harvest. (6) Four more missionaries are specially called for abroad: two for China, one for Greece, and one for Pernambuco. To send out and support them for one year will cost \$10,000. The very existence of one of these Missions, that at Pernambuco, where the Rev. J. Rockwell Smith has labored for six years with very marked success, is now at stake. Mr. Smith has been quite alone for the last three years. It is considered necessary to send another missionary there without delay.

Dr. Wilson was then heard through a paper which he presented on his own responsibility. For three years past the contributions to Foreign Missions have steadily fallen off, so that now they are

\$15,000 behind what they were in the spring of 1876. At this rate in ten years there will be no contributions and no Missions from our Church. At the same time, through the blessing of God and in answer to our prayers, our Church work abroad has made great progress and calls for not less but more outlay. The Committee have in obedience to what was required of them enforced both at home and abroad the most rigid economy with the most discouraging results. Three of our Missions have been cast off; offers of service from many of our young people have been declined; those in the service have not been reinforced as was needful, and for them both health and life have been in this way exposed to serious risk; and many of our people have apparently become, under the cry that has been raised for retrenchment, more callous and indifferent to the claims of this sacred cause. The very moment the Committee began the work of contraction, the gifts of the people began to fall off; and they have continued to do so in a way that occasions serious alarm. And now in further proceedings of retrenchment and contraction, which of our Missions shall next feel the stroke of the axe? Or shall we, to save a few hundred dollars, cease to have a special organ of Missions? Or shall we undertake to carry on both Foreign Missions and Sustentation with only one Secretary? Or, shall we adopt the expedient of sending out our missionaries henceforth without the encumbrance of families, and require them also to follow some secular pursuit to aid in their own support?

Dr. Wilson's paper proceeded to urge that, in whatever way sought to be carried out, the policy of retrenchment in Foreign Missions is from the very nature of the case a suicidal one. It is not retrenchment, nor is it any readjustment of machinery which is now required, but the stimulation of our people to a higher standard of liberality. It is not the want of means, but of system and life, which cripples this cause.

ACTION TOUCHING FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Assembly instructed the Executive Committee (1) to aim at the highest economy compatible with the greatest efficiency; declared that it would not consist with this efficiency to give to

Foreign Missions less than the whole time of one Secretary; expressed the conviction that the foreign department of our Church work has been managed with great economy. (2) It instructed the Committee to make every effort to extinguish the debt, but to contract the foreign work no further unless absolutely necessary to secure the speedy extinction of the debt. (3) It instructed the Committee to continue the publication of *The Missionary*. The Assembly also recommended that our churches be exhorted to greater liberality and our ministers and other officers be urged to do what they can to extend the circulation of *The Missionary* and the observance of the Monthly Concert. As to Dr. Wilson's paper, the Assembly recommended its publication and circulation at the discretion of the Committee.

REPORT OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

The main facts are, (1) That eighty-eight candidates under care of our Presbyteries have been aided during the past year—forty-five of them at Seminaries and forty-three in literary institutions. (2) That in accordance with instructions from the Assembly the appropriation to Seminary students was reduced from \$175 to \$125, and to college students from \$150 to \$100 each. (3) That the Secretary was able to visit only the two Synods of Georgia and Memphis, the two Presbyteries of Memphis and Cherokee, and some eight or ten churches; but he has diligently sought to extend and deepen an interest in the cause by appeals addressed to individual churches, with results on the whole very gratifying. (4) That the entire receipts of the year were \$11,456, and the expenses \$1,774. (5) That there were upwards of eight hundred contributing churches, and that of our sixty-four Presbyteries all except three coöperate in some form with the Committee. (6) That the number of candidates aided is this year nine more than the year previous.

ACTION TOUCHING EDUCATION.

The Assembly (1) declined making any change in the location of the Executive Committee (as was proposed from some quarter), or in the plan of aiding candidates whether in the seminaries or in

the colleges; (2) urged the continued policy of not incurring debt; (3) and recommended that every congregation have opportunity to contribute; (4) that the Secretary visit as far as possible Synods, Presbyteries, churches, and individuals; (5) that the concert of prayer on the last Thursday of February should continue to be observed.

The Rev. J. L. Rogers from Atlanta Presbytery moved to strike out "churches and individuals" from the recommendation touching the Secretary's visiting, on the ground that this looks towards the old agency system which our Church has abandoned. He failed, however, to secure the attention of the body to his important suggestion, and his motion was lost.

REPORT OF THE PUBLICATION COMMITTEE.

The main facts are, (1) That the debt now stands at \$17,177, but there are reliable assets available during the next few months to reduce it to less than \$14,000. (2) That for the coming year the office expenses will be not far from \$3,500; and the amount required for interest about \$1,000. On the larger part of the debt interest has been reduced from ten to eight per cent. To meet this outlay, about \$2,000 will be provided by royalty on the the papers and the book business. Special efforts in every Presbytery to increase the circulation of our papers might result in an income from this source that would cover all expenses. (3) Of *The Earnest Worker* the edition is now 7,000, an increase of 2,000. Of *The Children's Friend*, 18,000 are printed—no increase of circulation. Had we 10,000 subscribers to the *The Earnest Worker* and 40,000 to *The Children's Friend*, our income from this source would be \$3,400; a little active effort in every Presbytery would bring this about. (4) A Presbyterial Sabbath-school Superintendent in every Presbytery is for this end and many others of great importance. (5) No favorable opportunity to sell the Publication House has yet occurred, but it may be safely regarded as having paid all its own expenses.

ACTION TOUCHING PUBLICATION.

The Assembly resolved, (1) That all collections and other

revenues above the Executive Committee's actual working expenses be appropriated to the extinction of the debt. (2) That the instructions of the last Assembly touching the sale of the House be carried out as early as possible. (3) That the efficient Secretary and Treasurer be recommended to visit Synods and Presbyteries as far as in his power to forward this cause. (4) That the Committee's papers be earnestly recommended for increased patronage in all our Sabbath-schools. (5) That the Committee's suggestions touching colportage and Sabbath-schools be recommended to the consideration of our Presbyteries at their next meetings.

READING OF ALL OVERTURES.

On the afternoon of the second day, as soon as the Publication Committee had finished its report, overtures from various Synods and Presbyteries to the Assembly were presented. It was moved to pass them to the appropriate Committee. Dr. Woodrow moved to read them all before reference. Objection was made by Elders Howison and McPheeters, because of the time it would consume; and the practice of former Assemblies and of State Legislatures was pleaded against this innovation. Dr. Woodrow urged that inasmuch as we have not the legislative custom of three readings of a bill, it was better to have all overtures read before reference. Thus all could know the substance of the overtures and have opportunity to reflect on them. Ruling Elder Livingston supported the motion and it was carried, and we believe the experiment gave satisfaction. The overtures were then read and passed into the hands of Dr. Peck.

THE GENERAL PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL.

At the night session a letter was read from the Rev. Dr. H. A. Boardman of Philadelphia, inviting the Assembly to arrange for taking part in the coming Council. Some little disposition was exhibited to reopen the question of our Church's taking part again in this matter, but by a large majority it was decided to appoint a committee to nominate delegates to the Council to meet in Philadelphia in July, 1880. This committee consisted of W. U. Murkland, John B. Adger, and W. W. Houston, *ministers*;

and Alexander Sprunt, A. M. McPheeters, and L. L. Holliday, *ruling elders*.

It was resolved in committee that there should be had in the nomination (1) some regard to *continuity*, so that the delegation should not be entirely new, but embrace a few names of men attending the Edinburgh meeting. (2) That some general regard should be had to a geographical distribution of the selections, but that chiefly a choice should be aimed at of men who could really be regarded as representatives of our Church. (3) That a full list of delegates, both *principals* and *alternates*, should be presented to the Assembly with a view to shutting out all extemporised and partisan nominations on the floor.

Accordingly the following nominations were reported and the same were adopted by the Assembly:

Ministers.

Principals.

Stuart Robinson,
B. M. Palmer,
J. L. Girardeau,
C. A. Stillman,
J. Leighton Wilson,
Jos. R. Wilson,
J. A. Lefevre,
Thomas E. Peck,
Geo. D. Armstrong,
W. U. Murkland,
H. C. Alexander,
William Brown,
C. H. Read,
Jacob Henry Smith.

Alternates.

J. B. Stratton,
M. H. Houston,
James Woodrow,
J. T. Hendrick,
R. F. Bunting,
Isaac J. Long,
Jno. N. Waddel,
R. P. Fâris,
E. H. Rutherford,
Jno. W. Pratt,
W. E. Boggs,
T. A. Hoyt,
J. N. Craig,
George Howe.

Ruling Elders.

Jno. L. Marye,	Va.	Robert Stiles,	Va.
Thomas Thomson,	S. C.	James Fentress,	Tenn.
T. G. Richardson,	La.	W. P. Webb,	Ala.
W. M. McPheeters,	Mo.	H. H. M. Spencer,	Mo.
I. D. Jones,	Md.	J. F. Hart,	S. C.
Thos. A. Hamilton,	Ala.	T. J. Kirkpatrick,	Va.

<i>Principals.</i>		<i>Alternates.</i>	
W. C. Kerr,	N. C.	Jno. Dillon,	N. C.
Patrick Joyes,	Ky.	J. W. C. Watson,	Miss.
D. C. Anderson,	Ala.	J. L. H. Tomlin,	Tenn.
C. S. Venable,	Va.	H. B. McClellan,	Ky.
J. Randolph Tucker,	Va.	C. B. Moore,	Ark.
J. M. Baker,	Fla.	J. R. Blake,	N. C.
J. J. Gresham,	Ga.	J. A. Billups,	Ga.
A. P. McCormick,	Texas.	A. F. Hardie,	Texas.

The Stated Clerk was then instructed to reply to the communications from the officers of the Council and forward the names of our delegates.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

The permanent Committee on the Sabbath appointed by the last Assembly, of which the Rev. Dr. Stacy was chairman, made on the third day the following report:

“On account of the absence of the chairman in Europe during the past summer, it was late in the fall before the committee were called together, and not until after the meeting of most of the larger and more important ecclesiastical bodies had taken place. Since that time, however, your committee have been endeavoring faithfully to obey the instructions given, as far at least as other engagements would allow. They have been in correspondence with the New York Sabbath Committee, the Sabbath Alliance, and the International Association of Philadelphia, the New Jersey Association, and the Association of Maryland. They have communicated with only two of the Synods of our Church for the reason above stated. They have addressed, however, a letter to all the Presbyteries, asking them to place this subject upon their docket and consider the same at their spring session. They have also written to thirteen of the Conferences of the M. E. Church South. They have also been in correspondence with the Federation Internationale of Geneva, Switzerland. They have raised the necessary funds, procured and distributed over eleven hundred copies of the tract issued by our Committee of Publication styled “The Holy Sabbath,” sending one to each minister in our entire Church, as far as their address was known. They have endeavored also to enlist the sympathies and services of the editors of several journals of the different denominations, asking them to make this one of the more prominent themes, both for their editorials and selections. They have also sent a communication to the Southern Baptist Convention at Atlanta, to the Northern General Assembly now in session at Saratoga Springs, and to the Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in session at

Memphis, asking them to take action in the matter; and in addition to all this, they have been gathering statistics and all the information within their reach bearing upon the general subject, and endeavoring as far as possible to spy out the land and see how it lies.

“From a general survey of the field as far as we have been able to view it, we feel fully persuaded that the last Assembly has neither acted hastily nor yet given undue prominence to this matter, Notwithstanding the grave doubt expressed by one of our ecclesiastical bodies, to those who have closely inquired into the matter, it is obvious that there is a growing tendency to laxity in views on this whole question of Sabbath observance. The loose trans-Atlantic ideas are coming over with every tide of immigration. And though we in distant portions of the South may not yet feel the influence to any great extent, it is nevertheless stealthily creeping in, and like leaven, is quietly but surely working. The recent movements in Cincinnati and Louisville, the growing disposition on the part of the secular press to make their Sunday issues specially interesting and attractive, the increasing patronage of Sunday trains by professing Christians and even ministers of the gospel, many of whom do not hesitate to travel on Sunday trains to fill their appointments, the habitual silence of many pulpits on this subject, and last though not least, the lamentable example so recently set in the halls of the country, when the supreme law-making power in the land openly, and in the eyes of the nation and of the world, desecrated the sanctity of the Lord's day by appropriating it to the transaction of Congressional business, all furnish evidence of this laxity. And we may here remark that the present remoteness of the evil from us is no protection. Society, like the atmosphere above us, cannot be agitated in one direction without sending the influence in others. Any evil practice in one section, like the cold wave in the northwest, will soon begin to travel, and unless arrested will continue to spread, until the whole country is brought under its influence and feels its chilling power. Let the plague break out in any country, and how soon our authorities would be enforcing the law of quarantine. The action would be wise, the course commendable. Evil practices, like the plague, when once established will soon begin to spread in every direction. The time to fight any contagion is in its incipency.

“Whilst our rulers are so ready to look after the physical health of the nation, it is greatly to be regretted they are so slow in realising its moral necessities. The question of the Sabbath has much more to do with our political and social systems than many are ready to admit. It has a political as well as religious outlook. Standing in close connexion with the morals of the country, like any other question of morals, it must bear directly upon the question of national prosperity. The ordinance stands as the representative of the Lord, and cannot be disregarded, without to that extent disowning allegiance to the God of heaven.

The hebdomadal division of time being the foundation of God's scheme of creation, and also of redemption, is also clearly the foundation of his projected scheme of providence, with reference both to Church and State. He has ordained that man shall within six days do all his work and rest the seventh; and every law or action that ignores this regulation is contravening his plan, and everything that contravenes any of his plans must in the end work disastrously to all concerned. It is clearly to the best interest of the race closely to scan and rigidly to observe all the rules and principles of the Creator, as revealed either in revelation or nature—in one word, to keep as near the divine plan as possible. It is only in this way that the great problems of human civilisation and national reform can ever be solved. Real progress in mechanism has been attained only by a close observance and imitation of nature. When man departs from that scheme—when he sets his judgment against the divine judgment, and his law against the divine law—the scheme of the Great Architect is marred, the time of its completion delayed, and the interest of the whole jeopardised.

“Our legislators and rulers have generally acted upon this principle, inasmuch as they have in the main based our Constitution and laws upon the teaching of the Scripture. In this they have acted wisely. Queen Victoria uttered a great truth as well as a noble sentiment when, in response to the inquiry of the African king, she gave this answer, accompanying the gift of a Bible: ‘This book is the secret of England’s greatness.’

“Whilst our Constitution and laws profess conformity to the Word of God, there is one particular in which, in their practical workings at least, they are sadly in want of harmony with it. While the Scriptures say positively and unequivocally, ‘Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates,’ railroad and other corporations are allowed to ply their vocations as on other days. In the language of one of our correspondents, ‘The Sunday freight business is enormous, bringing terrible oppression upon thousands of men.’ So in the postal service. The running of trains, the carrying and distributing of mails on the Lord’s day on the thousands of roads and the ten thousands of post-offices in this broad land, is a great work, requiring a great number of employés and a vast outlay of physical labor. This robbing so large a portion of our citizens of their seventh day rest is a wrong done them, as they are unjustly deprived of a boon conferred by the Creator upon every creature. It is wrong done the law of God, as it casts contempt upon its authority. It is a wrong done the Christian Church, as it weakens its testimony, and in many instances interferes with its services. It is a wrong done

the whole country, as it places the entire nation in a position of antagonism to the divine law and the divine plan, which will necessitate chastisements and scourgings of various descriptions, if not final overthrow. Revolution must of necessity follow revolution, until the governments of this world are fashioned after the principles and teachings of the Scriptures. And it would be well for the people of this country to remember that there is no new world—no inviting Eldorado in the distant West—to which these principles may again be transplanted and begin the experiment anew. The struggle must be at home. The elimination, if ever effectual, must be wrought with our own hands, and here upon our own soil.

“In this action of the Government, it is impossible to see upon what principles of equity or righteousness its conduct is based. We are utterly at a loss to see with what consistency it can forbid in others what it allows in itself: how it can require individual citizens to cease from their daily toil, whilst it is driving its own business and carrying on its own work on the seventh day as well as any other.

“Nor can we see upon what principle of justice it can allow railroad and other corporations to carry on their traffic through the same period of seven days, while individual citizens are required to cease from theirs. That is a strange system of ethics, indeed, which condemns an action in an individual when he stands in his isolation, but justifies the same when he merges into the constituency of the Government or becomes a stockholder in some legalised corporation. It is needless for us to declare that the Word of God recognises no distinctions. If it be right for the Government and these corporations to violate the Sabbath, it is right for individuals to do the same. If it be wrong for individuals to do it, it is equally wrong for the Government and these corporations.

“It is not enough to say that it is a work of necessity and mercy. The Master in his exposition of the law has clearly defined the only exceptions to the rule, and it is utterly impossible to see how, upon any known principles of interpretation, this wholesale and constant discharge of regular and servile work can be made analogous to the few exceptional cases given. It is neither lifting the ox out of the ditch nor leading the ass to water. It is purely a question of gain. It is the same unconquerable thirst for riches that has influenced this people as the ancient people of God, to believe that there is more profit in seven continuous days of toil than in six of labor, with the seventh as a day of rest.

Nor is it an answer to say that the Sabbath is a religious institution, and that the Government is a political organisation, formed for temporal and political purposes solely, and therefore as such has nothing to do with religion. We most heartily indorse this sentiment, and most earnestly insist upon its rigid enforcement. As a Church, we are ready to affix our broadest seal to the doctrine of the eternal separation of Church

and State. Let the things of Cæsar ever be kept separate from the things of God. But this matter of a day of rest is something that concerns the kingdom of Cæsar as well as the kingdom of Christ. There are two distinct questions here before us—the one a moral, the other a religious one; the one a State, the other a religious question. The one concerns us as citizens, the other as Christians. It is to the former of these that we are now speaking. It is to the question that concerns us as citizens—that concerns our temporal interests and welfare as individuals, and our temporal prosperity as a nation, that we are directing attention; and we insist upon it, that this is a question for legislative consideration, inasmuch as it involves the question of morals, and the question of morals bears directly upon the question of national prosperity. God has so constituted the world that the temporal rests upon the moral and the moral upon the religious. The field of morals touches religion upon the one side and human government on the other, and, like the ocean separating two continents, is the property alike of both. No government can flourish without good morals, and no good morals can exist without a clear recognition of the teachings of Scripture. The true interests of the country demand that the Sabbath be protected, as the marriage relation, or human life and property, and for the same reason. If the Government has authority to forbid adultery, murder, and theft, because these things are enemies to its material progress and stability, for the very same reason it has authority to forbid the outward violation of the Sabbath law. It has nothing to do with the anger that is in murder, the lust that is in adultery, or the concupiscence that is in theft, for these things fall within the purview of religion. But it has the right to forbid the overt acts to which they lead, because hurtful to its interests. So it has no right to say that its citizens shall indulge in holy affections or attend religious exercises on the Sabbath, for these also fall within the scope of religion. But it has the right to require that its citizens shall abstain from all labor and every open and flagrant breach of the peace and order of the day.

“As to the questions, what can be done toward abating the evil, and what is our duty in the premises? we answer that our duty is very clear in one direction at least. ‘Ye are my witnesses,’ saith the Lord. It is the duty of the Church to bear testimony to God’s truth, and the teaching of the Scriptures on this subject, and as far as possible to train the public conscience aright. And not simply to bear testimony with the lip, but also with the life. Preaching, unsupported by practice, would be wholly ineffectual. A mere resolution, without observance on the part of ministers, elders, and members, would be utterly futile and vain. We hope, therefore, that the Assembly will first of all insist that ministers and elders and members of the church shall themselves set the example by rendering due respect in the observance of the day. For without this, any

deliverance on the subject, no matter how admirable, would only provoke the taunting retort, 'Physician, heal thyself.'

"Whether much can be done by way of petition will depend very much upon the style of the address, the zeal with which it is prosecuted, but especially upon the number and character of the petitioners. Two of the Synods (Alabama and North Carolina) have, through their respective committees, petitioned their Legislatures. The petition of the first was too late to be fairly before the Legislature, and was defeated. That of the second was so far successful as to secure a law forbidding the running of 'freight trains on the Sabbath.' If all the Christians of the different denominations could only be aroused to unite in one grand effort, we feel fully assured that much could be done toward abating the evil, and preventing any further encroachments upon the sanctity of the day.

"In several of the larger cities, and in a few of the States, there are Sabbath Associations, composed of members of the different denominations, which have been doing a good deal in a quiet way toward promoting Sabbath observance. If such associations could be formed in every State, they could doubtless do much toward restraining the obvious tendency to Sabbath lawlessness and desecration.

"An effort is being made to hold an international meeting of all the associations in this country and Canada, to meet some time in the fall, with a view of considering the whole subject, and devising, if possible, some measure for the arrest of this national evil. What the result will be remains to be seen. A similar meeting of the associations of Europe is also appointed to be held in the city of Berne in September next, from which we hope great good will come.

In the meanwhile we urge upon the Assembly the importance of continued agitation. Let this venerable court continue to speak upon this subject, and speak in no uncertain way, but in a loud and emphatic manner. Let its voice be heard throughout the land and even the world. Let its testimony be pointed, decided, unequivocal. Let her ministers be urged to present this subject to their respective congregations. For if this evil is ever reached, it must be through the agency of the Church; and even if not reached and corrected, it is only in this way that the Church can clear her skirts."

Motion was made by Ruling Elder Livingston to adopt. Dr. Peck wished the report docketed. Rev. J. P. Smith of Fredericksburg moved to refer to a special committee to recommend such action as might be necessary. Dr. Woodrow urged postponement, because the Assembly ought to be responsible not only for any report as a whole, but also for the reasoning and even the expressions employed. There should be nothing in such a

report which all the members of our Church could not defend or which could not be used authoritatively. While he saw nothing very objectionable in this report, he was of opinion that there were certain parts of it to which he could not commit himself. Dr. Peck's motion was carried.

On the next day the Rev. D. K. McFarland of Savannah moved to take this report from the docket and refer it to a special committee, which was urged by several speakers, and the motion prevailed. D. K. McFarland, J. L. Rogers, F. H. Johnston, *ministers*; W. G. Clark and W. V. Chardavoyne, ruling elders, were appointed.

On the ninth day this Committee reported, (1) commending the diligence and faithfulness of the Permanent Committee, and continuing the same with the duties and work imposed by the last Assembly; (2) recommending Synods and Presbyteries to consider this subject, and the appointment of Presbyterial Committees to investigate and agitate; (3) calling on ministers, officers, and members of the church to remember the Lord's day to keep it holy; (4) appointing the same Permanent Committee, with the addition of the name of Rev. J. H. Martin, D. D.

THE TUSKALOOSA INSTITUTE REPORT.

The main facts are, the much lamented death of Prof. A. F. Dickson; the appointment temporarily in his place of the Rev. J. W. Kerr, M. D., at sixty dollars per month; the attendance at the school this year of ten students; the good character maintained by those who had been previously at the Institute, and the appointment of Dr. B. T. Lacy as Financial Agent.

The Assembly adopted resolutions reported by the Committee on Theological Seminaries expressive of their interest in this important enterprise and commending it to the churches.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER CHURCHES.

On the fourth day came a telegraphic communication from the General Assembly at Saratoga, presenting "its cordial salutations to the General Assembly in session at Louisville, praying for them grace, mercy, and peace, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In behalf of the Assembly and in the sympathies of a common faith and order, I am, etc., Henry H. Jessup, Moderator." To this the following response by telegraph was made: "The General Assembly at Louisville cordially reciprocates the kind Christian salutations of the General Assembly at Saratoga, and commends that body to the grace of our common Lord and Master, praying that his presence may overshadow it and its deliberations be directed for his glory."

Similar salutations were communicated by letter to "the Reformed Episcopal Church," "the Associate Reformed Synod of the South," and "the Cumberland Presbyterian Church."

The next day, however, a delegate from the Cumberland Presbyterian Assembly appeared in person. A letter from him addressed to the Moderator being referred to the Committee on Correspondence, a report was made by that Committee, declaring on behalf of the Assembly that "in determining no longer to send delegates to corresponding bodies (always excepting the General Synod of the Reformed Church), it was by no means our intention to control the action of these bodies in the matter. One reason for our action was our poverty. But the Assembly is delighted to receive delegations whenever sent to us, and cordially invites the Rev. R. H. Caldwell, the delegate to this body from the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, to address us this morning at 12 o'clock." Accordingly Mr. Caldwell addressed the Assembly and the Moderator responded.

Subsequently the Rev. C. H. Read, D. D., was appointed principal delegate to the General Synod of the Reformed Church and the Rev. J. A. Lefevre, D. D., his alternate.

Upon the presentation of the report last referred to, a discussion arose on a motion of Dr. Baird to rescind the rule limiting correspondence on our part to letters, except in the case of the General Synod. Dr. Baird held that each Assembly was entitled to regulate the matter for itself, and he was opposed to any fixed policy of correspondence. Dr. Adger opposed the motion, *first*, because of our poverty, and *secondly*, because a written communication can better express the views and wishes of the Assembly when there is anything special or particular to be said,

than a delegate who will say what he pleases. While our Foreign Mission work is suffering we can hardly afford to spend money on mere courtesies. The Rev. J. L. Rogers said we must have a settled policy—corresponding either in one or in the other way; and other bodies must know what that policy is, so that they may act accordingly. Dr. Boude favored rescinding, and would appoint the delegates, and then if they could not go on account of their poverty, let them write the letter and say they are too poor to go. Dr. Adger urged that if we only send letters, we cannot expect other bodies to send us deputations. But a previous Assembly had made a rule, and being a continuous body, respect should be had to what was done by our predecessors, unless good reason can be given for rescinding. The Assembly refused to rescind.

It now appears that the late Assembly at Saratoga of the Northern Church has followed us in this matter. It resolved to correspond with other Churches hereafter only by letter. Two good results may therefore be claimed for the rule our Assembly refused to rescind: first, we have probably killed off for all the Presbyterian bodies one of the most burdensome and pretentious of shams; and secondly, we have as probably settled the vexed question of Fraternal Relations with the Northern Church. It seems that they could not bring themselves to say those “few plain words,” and so now practically they will be *let off* from saying them without our yielding what we were so clearly entitled to claim at their hands. No one amongst us will object to an annual exchange of good wishes for the future between them and ourselves. And if they can afford to withhold from us the expression of their regret for past offences given, we certainly can well afford to do without it. That matter being thus finished and settled up, let us proceed to our next business.

ASSEMBLY OF 1880.

Historic old Charleston was nominated by Dr. Junkin as the place of its meeting. The Moderator said that Wilmington would like to have the Assembly, but he would take no step in the matter. Dr. Murkland said Baltimore would welcome them

heartily, but he did not wish to nominate it in opposition to Charleston. The choice of Charleston was unanimous.

THE BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER.

Dr. Adger made the following report from the Committee on Book of Church Order:

"The Committee appointed to examine the official returns from the Presbyteries of their votes on the Book of Church Order, have carefully performed that duty, and report to the General Assembly that an overwhelming majority of these courts have adopted the Revised Form of Government and Rules of Discipline as the law of our Church on those matters. The following table exhibits, in alphabetical order, the Presbyteries from which official returns are in hand, with a precise statement of the vote in each. In some cases the returns give us no figures, but we copy the expressions employed:

	<i>For.</i>	<i>Against.</i>	<i>Non liquet.</i>
Abingdon,	22	8	1
Arkansas,	21	—	—
Atlanta,	Adopted.		
Augusta,	18	4	1
Bethel,	22	5	—
Brazos,	4	3	—
Central Mississippi,	20	6	—
Central Texas,	11	10	—
Charleston,	13	2	—
Cherokee,	16	8	—
Chesapeake,	11	4	—
Columbia,	6	19	—
Concord,	Adopted without debate.		
Dallas,	Approved.		
East Alabama,	15	2	—
East Hanover,	26	1	—
Eastern Texas,	Adopted nearly unanimously.		
Ebenezer,	Adopted.		
Enoree,	18	13	—
Fayetteville,	17	17	—
Harmony,	32	8	1
Greenbrier,	23	1	3
Holston,	16	4	—
Indian,	Adopted unanimously.		
Knoxville,	3	11	—
Lafayette,	18	2	—
Lexington,	40	7	—

	<i>For.</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Non liquet.</i>
Louisiana,	10	1	—
Louisville,	23	2	1
Macon,	10	—	1
Maryland,	5	13	1
Mecklenburg,	Rejected.		
Memphis,	20	6	—
Missouri,	13	3	2
Montgomery,	23	10	1
Nashville,	16	20	—
North Alabama,	3	8	—
North Mississippi,	Adopted by two-thirds majority.		
New Orleans,	Adopted unanimously.		
Ouachita,	11	3	—
Orange,	37	7	4
Paducah,	Adopted unanimously.		
Palmyra,	Adopted.		
Red River,	5	4	1
Roanoke,	17	4	—
Savannah,	Adopted unanimously.		
South Carolina,	Adopted unanimously.		
South Alabama,	14	16	1
St. John's,	3	1	—
St. Louis,	23	5	—
Transylvania,	14	7	—
Tombeckbee,	12	2	—
Tuskaloosa,	20	—	2
Upper Missouri,	6	5	2
Winchester,	25	8	1
Western District,	6	8	—
West Lexington,	14	9	—
Western Texas,	12	13	—
Wilmington,	Adopted.		

"It will be observed that there remain seven more Presbyteries from which we have no official returns, namely: Chickasaw, Florida, Muhlenburg, Mississippi, Potosi, Sao Paulo, and West Hanover.

"The papers publish West Hanover as adopting by a vote of 16 to 9, and Potosi by a vote of 17 to 1, and Chickasaw by a vote of 9 to 7, and Florida by a unanimous vote. The papers say also that Mississippi has adopted the Book; that Sao Paulo has adopted, and that it is to be published by them in the Portuguese language, to set forth our Church to the people of Brazil; and that Muhlenburg declines to vote.

"According to all this testimony, therefore, most of which is official, it appears that one Presbytery, namely, Muhlenburg, declines to vote; in

one Presbytery, namely, Fayetteville, there is a tie vote; eight Presbyteries, namely, Columbia, Knoxville, Maryland, Mecklenburg, Nashville, North Alabama, Western District, and Western Texas, vote to reject: and the remaining fifty-six Presbyteries to adopt, some sixteen of them nearly or quite unanimously.

"The committee having had referred to them by the Assembly the overture from Abingdon Presbytery respecting the not binding of the new Book with the Confession or the Hymn Book for five years, and the overture from Paducah Presbytery moving the Assembly to incorporate the old Book's chapter on Preliminary Principles into the new Book as a preface, recommend that a negative answer be returned to both overtures."

The Rev. A. J. Witherspoon moved that the report be adopted. Dr. Park thought there must be a formal announcement to the Presbyteries by the Assembly before the new Book can become any part of our Church constitution. Dr. Adger said we are acting now under the provisions of the old Book, and shall so act until this report is adopted. But the old Book, where it treats of new constitutional rules (Form of Government, Chap. XII., §6), does not require the action proposed by the brother. It does say that before any new rules shall be obligatory they are to be transmitted "to all the Presbyteries, and returns be received from at least a majority in writing, approving thereof." This is all. There is nothing said about the Assembly ratifying what the Presbyteries have done. It is not called upon to enact anything about the matter. We have to count the votes and report the result, and when the Assembly shall adopt the report that a large majority of the Presbyteries have voted for the new Book, then immediately it becomes our law. But Dr. Park inquired what is to become of cases of discipline now in progress which were commenced under the old Book? What is to be done with them? Dr. Adger replied that the new points as to jurisdiction made by the Revision relate chiefly to appellate jurisdiction. Cases will come up for the most part just as they always did.

The report was adopted. Dr. Adger then offered the following resolution;

"*Resolved*, That while the General Assembly, in adopting the report of the Committee on the Book of Church Order, has declared that Form of Government and those Rules of Discipline to be of immediate force,

nevertheless it is the judgment of this body that, in the cases of appeal or complaint originating under the old Book, which may be coming up for adjudication by this Assembly at its present session, it is recommended no commissioners who come from any of the Synods appealed from should exercise the right of voting in those cases."

Mr. Hart of South Carolina—The resolution does not go far enough. It ought to apply to all pending judicial cases now issued.

Rev. Dr. Adger was tired of construing the lower courts as partisans, making a new case in every higher court as the case goes up. He thought it would do no harm for the cases already commenced to come up into the higher courts under the forms of the new Book.

On motion of Mr. Williams, Major Hart's amendment was laid on the table.

Dr. Boude said the new Book has been adopted by the Presbyteries. It is now law. We cannot set it aside. Dr. Junkin said the unanimous voice of the Assembly cannot set aside the law of the Church. The Presbyteries are all here, and we cannot say to them that we propose to set aside their law. Dr. Woodrow said the resolution was simply a recommendation advising certain parties to abstain from the exercise of some newly acquired rights during these sessions of the Assembly. Dr. Baird read the rule for amending the Constitution and gave its history. The General Assembly in Scotland had possessed the power to pass laws for the Church. The Government then packed the Assemblies so as to enact laws repugnant to Presbyterianism. At the second Reformation, the "Barrier Act" placed the power of making laws (so far as the Church has any such power) in the hands of the Presbyteries. Our rule (in the old Book) for amending the Constitution corresponds in nature and design to the Scotch Barrier Act. Dr. Park then offered the following substitute for Dr. Adger's resolution:

Resolved, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, meeting in Louisville, Ky., May, 1879, hereby declares that the new Book of Church Order has been adopted by a large majority of the Presbyteries, as shown in their official reports to this body, and said New Book of

Church Order is therefore declared to be the law of the Church from and after the date of the dissolution of this Assembly."

Dr. Adger objected to this substitute as unnecessary, because the vote of the Assembly has already declared the new Book adopted. But he would vote for the substitute if the last words were omitted, and he moved to strike out "*from and after the date of the dissolution of this Assembly.*"

Rev. J. L. Rogers—The Assembly has adopted the report of the committee which has made the new Book the law of the Church. The announcement has already been made in the report we have adopted. Then he had a very serious objection to this resolution. If we have a right to postpone its action ten days, we have the right to postpone it five years. We are merely a declarative body. We do not make the law. The Presbyteries have made it. The Assembly can merely declare it. It cannot suspend it.

Dr. Woodrow rose to a point of order, and contended that a reconsideration of the vote declaring the new Book adopted was the only way to reach the end aimed at.

The Moderator ruled that the report of the committee merely gave the information of the vote to the Assembly, and the Assembly has not yet authoritatively announced the adoption of the new laws.

Rev. J. L. Rogers, resuming his argument, claimed that in adopting the report of the committee the Assembly had already made all the declaration necessary, and so had already recognised the new Constitution. Having done this, we have no power to suspend its action for a single day.

Dr. Junkin thought if the ruling of the Moderator was the voice of the house, some of us had voted under a misapprehension. We ought, therefore, to vote over again.

Dr. Woodrow appealed from the decision of the chair. Forty-one voted for sustaining appeal and fifty-nine against it. The Moderator's ruling was sustained.

Col. Livingston asked if we adopt Dr. Adger's amendment what becomes of the equities that grow out of cases already in litigation? There are *rights* that will be affected by the *immediate*

adoption of the new Constitution. The Assembly has no power to make law. But what is law does not become operative until formally announced. We have a right to reconsider it. If we should find that many of the Presbyteries had adopted the new Book by informal votes, so it is not really adopted, we would reconsider the action. And we can reconsider this vote if in taking the vote you have passed an *ex post facto law* affecting the rights of those in course of process. You do a thing the Constitution of the United States forbids the civil powers to, and which justice and equity forbid an ecclesiastical court to do.

A motion to lay the whole matter on the table was lost.

Mr. Converse said the point he had wished to make was that, by reason of the judicial cases now pending, the vote declaring the new Book adopted should be delayed until these cases were disposed of. It is now too late to take that course. The new Book is now the law of the Church. But the appellants have prepared their cases and have a right to be heard under the forms which prevailed at the time they laid their appeals before this Assembly. The resolution ought to be modified accordingly.

Dr. Grasty thought the Assembly could not now go back and inquire whether the new Book is adopted.

Major Hart moved that the whole matter in regard to the question of the revised Book, which was then in order, be laid upon the table, to make way for a substitute. Lost.

Rev. W. W. Houston said: The only question arising is the adoption of a paper making the Revised Book the organic law of the Church. Now, can the Presbyteries adopt a book of their own accord? I do not see that this Assembly has adopted the Revised Book as yet. The sentiment of the Presbyteries has been ascertained, and it remains for the Assembly to decide the question finally. It is incumbent upon this body to proceed to enact that the Book shall become the organic law. The question then arises as to when it shall be declared the law of the Church.

Dr. Adger inquired of the last speaker if in his judgment it would be competent for the Assembly to say that this new Book shall not be the law? Mr. Houston in reply said, "I maintain that on this floor I have the right to refuse to vote for this Book.

I am independent. The remedy is with the Presbyteries; they can refuse to send us back here if they see fit, because we vote contrary to their ideas. Dr. Adger rejoined that the brother's answer and his argument reach the very point towards which all the arguments offered here to-day against the immediate authority of the new Book do manifestly tend. He says squarely what all these other brethren ought also to say out, that the Presbyteries do not make the law. He says distinctly, what they all should also admit, that the Assembly can adopt or not adopt the new Book, just as it pleases. He says we are not instructed. I join him in holding that we are not to come to any Assembly *instructed*, but that does not prevent the Presbyteries from exercising their right of adopting or rejecting constitutional rules. And the brother is certainly wrong in saying the General Assembly can make law. Let that part of the old Book be pointed out which squints in the slightest towards the brother's view of the question. The Presbyteries are our law-making power. It is necessary for us to follow their commands.

Mr. Houston—Have the Presbyteries approved or adopted this Book?

Dr. Adger—They have voted to approve and adopt. They have sent in their votes to us on the subject, and I think the jig's up.

Major Hart—There is little difference of opinion in regard to the adoption of the Book. The substitute proposes to postpone its operation for ten days. It could just as well and legitimately be postponed forever. This is a body which can enact legislation, and it can construe its own legislation.

Dr. Adger—Will you allow me to ask you a question?

Mr. Hart—I want to ask you first whether an offence in the old Book is identical with an offence in the new Book?

Dr. Adger—Teetotally different.

Mr. Houston—Then we will have an *ex post facto* law. I know of no law since *Magna Charta* that will try a man for an offence committed before the passage of the law.

Major T. Sparrow, of North Carolina, said he wished to propose a substitute that would tide them out of the trouble. If Dr.

Adger had reported next Friday instead of to-day, the difficulty would have been avoided. This Assembly could not disregard the fact that the Presbyteries were the law-makers. When, then, is the Book to become a law? I think it requires the action of this Assembly to make it the law. He wanted the question postponed until Friday.

The amendment of Dr. Adger to Dr. Park's resolution, both offered during the morning session, was put to the house and carried.

Rev. T. E. Converse moved the following amendment to Dr. Park's resolution: "Yet this Assembly recognises the right of those having judicial cases now pending in this Assembly to have the same issued in accordance with the forms of the old Book."

Rev. C. L. Hogue cited the practice of the civil courts.

Dr. Woodrow—There are certain principles of justice which every one should observe. When any man is tried in the Church, he is tried by the law. What law? Why, that which prevailed at the time of the commission of the offence. We are not trying to enact any *ex post facto* law. The mode of procedure has been changed from to-day. Any question arising has to be decided by all the Church, not by a part. This body certainly has not the right to disregard the action of the Presbyteries by usurping any power.

Mr. Rogers asked if cases could not come up just as they always did.

Dr. Adger—Certainly.

Mr. Converse's amendment was put to the house and lost.

Dr. Park's resolution, as amended by Dr. Adger, was then put to the house and carried.

Rev. J. L. Rogers offered a resolution directing the preparation of an index to the new Book of Church Order, and the publication of an edition of 3,000 copies, to be bound in a volume with the Confession of Faith. It was referred to the Committee on the Book of Church Order.

Rev. Dr. Boude moved that the Committee on Revision be directed to revise also the Directory of Worship, and report to the next Assembly. Referred to same Committee.

Dr. Murkland moved that the Rev. Dr. J. A. Lefevre, of Baltimore, be added to the Committee on Revision. Carried.

Subsequently the following additional report from the Committee on the new Book was presented and adopted :

The Committee on the Revised Book has considered the paper offered to the Assembly by the Rev. J. L. Rogers, touching an index to the Book of Church Order, and the publication of 3,000 copies to be bound up with the Confession of Faith; also the question referred to it of a revision of the Directory of Worship, and also the letter from a member of the East Hanover Presbytery, detailing certain typographical or clerical errors and alleged omissions, alleged to have been discovered by him, in the present edition in the Book of Church Order.

Your standing committee on the Revised Book understands that the Assembly has decided to revive the Revision Committee, having voted to appoint as a member of it the Rev. Dr. J. A. Lefevre. It would therefore recommend that the papers and questions named above be all referred to that revision committee; also, that that committee be empowered to cause to be corrected any and all manifest typographical or clerical errors which they may find or have pointed out to them in the present edition; also, that the Committee of Publication be instructed to have struck off from the stereotype plates as many copies of the Book in its present form as may be called for by purchasers; and also that the Revision Committee be authorised anew by this Assembly, as was done by a previous one, to prepare a revised Directory of Worship; and to make full report on all these matters to the next General Assembly.

It has become necessary in reviving the Revision Committee to reorganise it. Your standing committee would recommend that it consist of the following named ministers and elders: B. M. Palmer, G. D. Armstrong, Stuart Robinson, Thos. E. Peck, James Woodrow, *ministers*; Thomas Thomson, W. W. Henry, *ruling elders*.

For the Committee.

JNO. B. ADGER, Chairman.

On motion of Dr. Boude, the name of R. K. Smoot, *minister*, was added to this committee, and on motion of Dr. Peck, the name of Jno. B. Adger, *minister*, was added to the same as its chairman.

The reviewer may be pardoned, in view of his relations during the past and at the present to this revised Form and Discipline, if he here ventures to offer a few observations respecting it.

1. There probably never were two Church papers of no greater size than the Revised Form and Rules which occupied and shared the painstaking consideration and labor of so many different ec-

clesiastical thinkers. It is not the production of any man or any committee. Perhaps not less than one hundred of our most experienced and best qualified ministers have made substantive contributions to these two works, while several hundred others, some more and some less addicted to this kind of studies, have had a hand in bringing these documents to their present shape. Whole Presbyteries have worked on them, and that at more than one period. In fact it may be said with strict truth, that this new Book of Order is really the work of our whole ministry and eldership.

2. The benefit has been immense to our whole Church of the twenty-one years' study of Church Government, which this new Book has made necessary. Some who thought themselves wise and claimed to be especial lovers of peace, declared war against these harmless books as sure to be the occasions of strife and dissension amongst us, but we believe the conviction is now general, perhaps universal, that this was a false alarm. Our Church has been benefited, not damaged, by all the discussions the Book has occasioned. The whole ministry and eldership understand our system much the better for all this study of Church polity. Nor could such an amount of thorough and careful inquiry and consideration of these matters have in any other way been secured on the part of the office-bearers amongst us. For ourselves, the twenty-one years past seem to us to have been so profitably devoted to these questions, that one of the best wishes, as it appears to us, that any man could wish for our Church, would be that it might have occasion to occupy the twenty-one years that are to come in the very same way. And if it were not that some may consider it extravagant, we might venture the statement that probably pure, thorough, scriptural Presbyterianism—the system revealed by our Head in his word—is really better understood in our Church than in most of those which proudly float the Blue Banner.

3. During the twenty-one years our Church has been working upon this Book, it has many times appeared to be in great danger of final rejection. But the truth we suppose to be really this: that the Church never did favor the rejection, but the ad-

verse voting generally signified merely the desire for more thorough revision. And one thing very notable is that the Assembly has always in the extremity come forward to save the Book. Whatever men might say or do against the revision at home and in their Presbyteries, it was always so ordered in providence that when the commissioners came together in the Assembly the majority of them proved to be favorable to this work.

4. It is frequently a difficult task to get a very simple bill passed through the two houses of any legislative body. But in this case there were more than threescore Houses, and of hard-headed Scotch-Irish Presbyterians at that, through which it was endeavored to have passed two bills, you might call them, composed each of a number of chapters, and covering many difficult and disputed points. Humanly speaking, this was almost a hopeless undertaking, and yet in God's good providence it has been successfully brought about, and that with an overwhelming and most decisive majority.

5. And yet we are of those who hold that the Book is very far indeed from perfection. It is not what we ourselves desired. Several things are in it which by no means satisfy us, and some of these we hope to live yet to see corrected. And there are two or three such which we, for one, are ready immediately to join with others in the effort to amend. It is a great consummation to have adopted the Book, and now let us, with the Presbytery of New Orleans, hope that the Church will proceed to perfect it as much as it may be given her to accomplish.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE.

On the sixth day Dr. Read read the report of this committee. Fifty-nine out of sixty-six Presbyteries had sent up statistics in respect to this matter, answering to the call from the Assembly for such details. And, on the whole, there is reason for congratulation and hopefulness. Yet, from a careful analysis and comparison of these reports, it is manifest that the burden (if that is the proper word) of supporting and extending our Church is not distributed properly, but is left by some to be borne by others. In the Committee's judgment, there is a demand for enlarge-

ment and not contraction of our aggressive operations as a Church. And if by appropriate instruction and appeals; if by the education of a true Christian conscience among our people, and especially among our youth and children, in the consecration of themselves and their substance to the service of God; if by the encouragement of a steady and growing habit of true Christian benevolence among all our people, we can strengthen and enlarge each and all of our agencies, it would be, as the Committee believes, for the spiritual profit and enjoyment of the individual members of our churches, for the advancement of our prosperity as a branch of the Church of Christ, and for the glory of God.

It is true, that a well, fed by a feeble spring, may be pumped dry; and it is also true that the same well, seldom and sparingly drawn from, may become dead and foul with mephitic gases. A liberal heart devising liberal things is in a healthier state than a selfish penurious heart studying retrenchment toward God and his cause. The beneficence of the Church—its contributions—should doubtless be wisely and economically appropriated; but that kind of retrenchment which excuses or encourages indolence or parsimoniousness will dwarf individual piety—if there can be true piety with such a disposition—and will spread mould and blight upon our individual members and churches.

It is recommended that the several Presbyteries, pastors, and sessions take this matter into careful consideration, and promptly devise what may seem to them the best means, in their respective fields, to instruct and encourage their people in the duty and grace of systematic Christian benevolence.

OVERTURES.

Dr. Peck, from the Committee on Bills and Overtures, offered the following reports:

Overture No. 1. From the Presbytery of New Orleans, asking the Assembly “to take under its special consideration the matter of the religious instruction and conversion of seamen and boatmen.”

The committee recommend the adoption of the following minute, to wit:

First—The Assembly commends the efforts of the Presbytery of New Orleans to bring seamen under Christian influence.

Second—The Assembly recommends to the several Presbyteries who have access to this class of people to do all they can for their evangelisation.

Third—The Committee of Sustentation be, and is hereby, authorised to grant such aid as may be in its power to this enterprise, subject, however, to all the regulations which are given this Committee in making similar appropriations. Also, that the Rev. A. J. Witherspoon, Chaplain of the Seamen's Bethel, of New Orleans, be requested to coöperate with the Sustentation Committee in the furtherance of this important enterprise in our seaport towns and cities.

Fourth—The Assembly affectionately commends to the prayers and alms of its people that class of men that go down to the sea in ships and do business in its great waters, and invites them to pray for the coming of that day when the above classes of the sea shall be converted unto the Lord, and mariners shall become missionaries to carry the gospel to the distant parts of the earth. Adopted.

Overture No. 2. From the Presbytery of Central Texas, asking the Assembly to say whether the action of the last Assembly, in tabling without discussion a paper offered by Dr. Dabney on the subject of the relations of our Church to the General Presbyterian Council, is to be understood as actually or virtually surrendering our former position, or yielding up any or all the testimony made by us touching the matter contained in said paper.

The committee recommend the adoption of the following minute :

“The action of our Assembly in sending delegates to the General Presbyterian Council, and in tabling the paper alluded to in the overture of the Presbytery of Central Texas, is *not* to be understood as implying any change in our position upon questions of difference between ourselves and other bodies, or any surrender of our testimony.” Adopted.

Overture No. 3. From the Presbytery of Mecklenburg, asking the Assembly “to raise a committee to prepare a paper upon the doctrine of the Diaconate, with special reference to the agencies of the Church.”

The committee recommend that the request be granted, and that this Assembly appoint such a committee, to make a report to the next Assembly. Adopted.

The Committee was appointed with the Rev. Dr. Jno. L. Girardeau as its chairman.

Overture No. 4. From the Synod of Alabama, asking the Assembly “to declare lawful and valid the meeting of that body on the 28th November last,” which, in consequence of the prevalence of yellow fever, had been irregularly convened. The committee recommend that the request be granted, and that said meeting of the Synod of Alabama be declared lawful and valid. Adopted.

Overtures Nos. 8, 9, 10, and 11. Overture No. 8, from the Presbytery of Concord, No. 10, from the Presbytery of Ouachita, and No. 11, from the Presbytery of Montgomery, ask the Assembly to take measures to secure retrenchment of expenses in the management of its various schemes. Nos. 8 and 9 (the last named from the Presbytery of Ebenezer) ask particularly for the consolidation of the Committees of Education and Publication.

The committee recommend the adoption of the following answer to the foregoing overtures:

While this Assembly has not sufficient data before it to justify any important changes in the management of its various schemes of benevolence, or even to determine whether such changes are needed, yet, in deference to these overtures, hereby appoint a committee to investigate this whole subject and make a report to the next Assembly.

Second—The question of consolidation of the Committees of Education and Publication, referred to in overtures Nos. 8 and 9, is hereby referred to said committee.

The committee report further that in overture No. 8, from the Presbytery of Concord, there is a request that the Assembly will "consider and adopt the plan of biennial Assemblies alternative with biennial meetings of the several Synods." They recommend that this request be answered in the negative. Adopted.

Rev. S. Taylor Martin, of North Carolina, remarked that he did not wish the Assembly to act hastily, without sufficient information and careful consideration. His only object had been to have the question of retrenchment and reform thoroughly examined. He would therefore vote for the report.

The report was unanimously adopted.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures subsequently nominated the following committee on Retrenchment, and they were appointed: Ministers—A. C. Hopkins, S. T. Martin, R. G. Brank, C. W. Lane; Ruling Elders—D. N. Kennedy, W. D. Reynolds, W. T. Poague, Jas. Hemphill, Henry Merrill.

Overtures 6 and 7. An overture from the Presbytery of Abingdon and one also from the Presbytery of Louisville, in regard to the ordination of Mr. G. W. Painter by the Rev. J. L. Stuart.

The main facts in the case were as follows: Mr. Painter, a candidate under the care of Abingdon Presbytery, and for some years a teacher in connection with the mission in China, was ordained to the ministry of the gospel in that country by the Rev. J. L. Stuart, an evangelist and missionary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and a member of the Presbytery of Louisville.

There are two questions proposed to the General Assembly, viz. :

First—Is the action of Mr. Stuart in ordaining Mr. Painter valid ?

Second—If so, to which Presbytery, Louisville or Abingdon, does Mr. Painter belong ?

The committee recommend the adoption of the following minute in answer to these overtures :

First—The ordination of G. W. Painter by the Rev. J. L. Stuart, both of the missions in China, is hereby declared to be valid.

Second—Inasmuch as that Mr. Painter was a candidate, at the time of his ordination, under the care of the Presbytery of Abingdon, he is hereby declared to be a member of that Presbytery.

A committee is hereby appointed to report on the whole subject of the office and powers of the evangelist ; his relation to the General Assembly and the Presbytery at home ; his relation to the Church gathered among the heathen ; and his relation to his fellow-evangelists in the same missionary field ; and said committee shall report to the next General Assembly by a proposed additional chapter to our Form of Government, or otherwise. Adopted.

On this subject Dr. Murkland moved that the committee consist of Drs. J. A. Lefevre, J. L. Wilson, and T. E. Peck, to which Dr. Jno. B. Adger was added.

Overture 12. The Committee on Bills and Overtures would report an overture from the Synod of Texas, and an overture from the Presbytery of Western Texas, asking a repeal of the act passed at Mobile in 1869, authorising the appointment of private members of the Church to hold meetings under the control of Presbyteries. Your committee recommend that the request be granted, and suggest the following :

Resolved, That the action of the Assembly in 1869, authorising the appointment of exhorters under the control of the Presbytery, be and the same is hereby repealed. Adopted.

Overture 13. From the Presbytery of St. John's, asking that the General Assembly substitute for the present form of blanks for Presbyterial reports one suggested by the Presbytery.

Second—That the Assembly instruct the Secretary of the Committee of Publication to reduce one-half of the blanks of the Presbyterial reports to one-half the present size.

Third—That the Assembly instruct the Secretary of the Committee of Publication to cease the publication of blanks for sessional reports on Systematic Benevolence, and issue in their stead blanks containing the topics for narratives as adopted by the Assembly of 1877.

The committee would recommend that the first and second requests of the overture be not granted.

In answer to the third request, the committee would recommend that the Secretary of Publication be instructed to issue the blanks containing the topics for narratives as provided by the Assembly of 1877, and also continue to issue the blanks for sessional reports on Systematic Benevolence. Adopted.

Overture 15. Resolved, That the General Assembly be overtured to publish, in its Appendix to the Minutes, the amount received from the several Presbyteries, assessed upon them by the Assembly, together with a statement of the disbursements of the same.

The Committee recommend that the request be granted, with the difference that all the receipts by the Treasurer be published, together with disbursements from the entire fund. Adopted.

Overture 16. From the elders of Freeport and Euchee Valley churches, in the bounds of the Presbytery of Florida, asking this General Assembly to transfer said churches to the care of the Presbytery of East Alabama; also to change the boundary of said Presbyteries so as to make the dividing line between these Presbyteries to be the Choctawhatchie River.

Your Committee would recommend the request to be granted when the Synods of Georgia and Alabama shall consent. Adopted.

Overture 17. From the Synod of Texas, asking the General Assembly to dispense with an official reporter for subsequent Assemblies. The Committee recommend that the request be not granted. Adopted.

Overture 18. From Dr. James Park, of Knoxville, asking the Assembly to answer the following questions, to wit:

First—Is it competent for a Presbytery to adjourn to meet in the bounds of another Presbytery, either within or beyond the territorial limits of the Synod of which it is a consistent part?

Second—At a meeting of a Synod, if another Presbytery than that within which the Synod is sitting, desires to hold a session to complete unfinished business, or to transact new business, can it be done orderly and constitutionally over the motion of its Presbytery itself? or must it be by special dispensation of the Synod?

Third—Is it competent for one Presbytery to interdict the meeting of another Presbytery in its bounds without the dispensation of the Synod?

The Committee recommend the adoption of the following answer, viz.:

These questions can only be answered by reference to general rules or principles. A Presbytery consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each congregation within a certain district, and is therefore bounded by strictly geographical limits. In the judgment of this Assembly no Presbytery ought to meet beyond its own bounds without strong reasons, or without the consent, expressed or implied, of the Presbytery within whose bounds it proposes to meet, and, if the Presbytery be within the

bounds of another Synod, without the consent of that Synod also. The Assembly would recommend its Presbyteries not to hold meetings during the sessions of Synod, unless such session be necessary, or be ordered to be held by the Synod. Docketed, and subsequently laid on the table.

Overture 19. From Dr. James Woodrow, proposing the following question for answer by the Assembly, viz.:

“From whom is it proper for the General Assembly to receive overtures, according to the Constitution?”

The committee recommend the adoption of the following answer: In the judgment of this Assembly all overtures to the highest court of the Church ought to come from the lower courts, and not from individuals; and further, that the highest court ought not to be asked for advice and instruction (Form of Government, Chap. V., Sec. 6, Art. V.) in any case in which the said “advice or instruction” may be given with equal edification to the Church by a lower court. Adopted.

Overture 20. From the Synod of Kentucky, asking the Assembly to reconsider the action of the Assembly of 1878 approving the action of the Presbytery of Louisville “in restraining from the exercise of the functions of the ministry a minister deemed irresponsible for his words and acts by reason of unsoundness of mind, without the usual judicial process.” And the Synod furthermore asks the Assembly to make such a deliverance on the subject as shall obviate any liability to misinterpretation, or danger of the introduction of principles or usages at variance with the regulation of our standards and threatening to the rights and liberties of our ministers and people.”

The committee recommend that the Assembly make the following answer:

“While it might be competent for one General Assembly under such rules as the Constitution provides to grant a new hearing of a case which has been judicially decided by a previous General Assembly, yet, inasmuch as this memorial simply asks for a deliverance in a case adjudicated by the Assembly of 1878, this Assembly declines to grant the request of the memorial, for the reason that no deliverance *in thesi* can modify or set aside a judicial sentence.” Adopted.

But of all the overtures reported on by Dr. Peck, *number five* on worldly amusements was the one which had excited the deepest interest, and in fact created the most anxiety. A long and unprofitable and perhaps harmful debate was anticipated when the subject, connected as it had been with a case in Atlanta out of which it actually grew, should come up. Great was the relief afforded by the very admirable report submitted from Dr. Peck’s Committee, as follows:

Overture No. 5. From the Presbytery of Atlanta, asking the Assembly for definite instruction upon the following points, to wit :

First—Are the deliverances of 1865, 1869, and 1877, on the subject of worldly amusements to be accepted and enforced as law by judicial process ?

Second—Are all the offences named in them to be so dealt with, or are exceptions to be made ?

Third—Are the deliverances of all our church courts of the same nature and authority, so far as the bounds of these respective courts extend ?

In answer to these questions the committee recommend the adoption of the following minute :

I. This Assembly would answer the first question in the negative, upon the following grounds :

First—That these deliverances do not require judicial prosecution expressly, and could not require it, without violating the spirit of our law.

Second—That none of these deliverances were made by the Assembly in a strictly judicial capacity, but were all deliverances *in thesi*, and therefore can be considered as only didactic, advisory, and monitory.

Third—That the Assembly has no power to issue orders to institute process, except according to the provisions of Book of Discipline, Chapter VII., in the old, and Chapter XIII., in the Revised Book: and all these provisions imply that the court of remote jurisdiction is dealing with a particular court of original jurisdiction, and not with such courts in general. The injunctions, therefore, upon the sessions to exercise discipline in the matter of worldly amusements are to be understood only as utterances of the solemn testimony of these Assemblies against a great and growing evil in the Church. The power to utter such a testimony will not be disputed, since it is so expressly given to the Assembly in the Form of Government, Chapter XII., Section 5 of the old, and in the Revised Form, Chapter V., Section 6, Par. 6; and this testimony this Assembly does hereby most solemnly and affectionately reiterate.

In thus defining the meaning and intent of the action of former Assemblies, this Assembly does not mean, in the slightest degree, to interfere with the power of discipline in any of its forms, which is given to the courts below by the Constitution of the Church; or to intimate that discipline, in its sternest form, may not be necessary, in some cases, in order to arrest the evils in question. The occasion, the mode, the degree, and the kind of discipline must be left to the courts of original jurisdiction, under the checks and restraints of the Constitution. All that is designed is, to deny the power of the Assembly to make law for the Church in the matter of "offences," or to give to its deliverances *in thesi* the force of judicial decisions.

II. The second question, which is, "Are all the offences named in the deliverances of 1865, 1869, and 1877, to be dealt with in the way of judi-

cial process, or are exceptions to be made?" needs no answer after what has been said in answer to the first.

III. In answer to the third question relative to the nature and authority of our different church courts, this Assembly would say that the nature and authority of all our church courts are the same, so far as the bounds of these respective courts extend, subject, of course, to the provisions for review and control of the lower courts by the higher. The power of the whole is in every part, but the power of the whole is over the power of every part.

The perplexity about the nature of the deliverances in question has arisen from confounding two senses in which the word discipline is used in our Constitution. One is that of "judicial process," the other is that of inspection, inquest, remonstrance, rebuke, and admonition. The one is strictly judicial or forensic; the other is that general oversight of the flock which belongs to the officers of the Church, as charged by the Holy Ghost with the duty of watching for souls. The one cannot be administered at all except by a court of the Church; the other, while it is a function of that charity which all the members of the Church are bound to possess and cherish for each other, is yet the special and official function of the rulers, to be exercised with authority toward those who are committed to their care. In the judgment of this Assembly great harm is done by the custom of identifying, in popular speech, these two forms of discipline, or, rather, by forgetting that there is some other discipline than that of judicial process. Many an erring sheep might be restored to a place of safety within the fold by kind and tender, yet firm and faithful, efforts in private, who might be driven farther away by the immediate resort to discipline in its sterner and more terrifying forms. The distinction here asserted is recognised in the Word of God, and in our Constitution, for substance at least, in the directions given for the conduct of church members in the case of personal and private injuries. (See Chapter II., Article III. of the old Book of Discipline, and Chapter V., Paragraph V. of the Revised; also Matthew xviii. 15, 16.) If scandal can be removed or prevented in such cases more effectually, oftentimes by faithful dealing in private with offenders, than by judicial process, it does not appear why similar good results may not follow from the like dealing in the matter of worldly amusements.

There was at the first reading of the report some misconception of one part of it. Dr. Woodrow said the whole was so admirable that he hesitated to object to any of it. And yet while it is certain that ministers may admonish against wrong-doing, they may not have the right to admonish any particular wrong-doer. The Assembly itself cannot exercise the least power over any member of the Church without first trying him. Dr. Peck ex-

plained that some things are binding on all Christians by the law of charity while others are official duties. It is the duty of all Christians to help one another, but it is the special office of the deacon to attend to such duties. We are all of us to say to all men, Come; but it is the special duty of ministers to preach. It is the duty of every Christian to rebuke any church member when he sees sin upon him; but pastors have the official function of doing this very thing. They are to recall any of their flock who may be going astray and rebuke them for their evil ways. And it is also the official duty of ruling elders to do this. Dr. Woodrow rejoined that the Book of Order gives to *admonition* a special technical sense, but this paper uses the word in a popular sense which must breed confusion. The Church as a whole has already done what we are now attempting to do. It would be a mere piece of surplusage to adopt the report as it is now. First, we say "admonition" is reproof by a church court and then we say it is reproof by a minister. Dr. Adger called for the reading of the paper again, and said Dr. Woodrow seemed to him to misconstrue its purport. He could discover no inconsistency between the report and the Constitution. He read from the Revised Form on the ruling elder as follows: "Evils which they cannot correct by private admonition they should bring to the notice of the session." There is no conflict between this "private admonition" and the other "admonition" which belongs to the court. Moreover, it is the very language of the new Book which Dr. Peck quoted when he said that "all those duties which private Christians are bound to discharge by the law of charity, are especially incumbent on ruling elders by divine vocation, and are to be discharged as official duties."

Rev. J. L. Rogers then moved, with consent of Dr. Woodrow, to insert the word "private" before the word "admonition," and this was carried. Whereupon the paper was adopted, we believe, with entire unanimity.

In connexion with this matter may properly be considered the Assembly's action touching

THE SYNOD OF GEORGIA AND THE BLOCK CASE.

On the fifth day of the sessions, the same on which the report

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on "Wordly Amusements" was considered, but before its consideration, Dr. Woodrow moved to take from the docket the Records of the Synod of Georgia. It was carried. He said then that the Assembly ought always to know exactly what it is doing when it approves the records of any Synod, and he read the following from the Minutes of the Synod of Georgia at their sessions in Atlanta in 1878:

"The Committee appointed to report a paper expressing the opinion of the Synod in the case of the appeal before it, beg leave to report recommending that the following be adopted as the decision of the Synod in the case of appeal of Mr. Frank E. Block from the decision of the Presbytery of Atlanta confirming the sentence of the Session of the Atlanta Central church, by which he was suspended from the privileges of church membership. The Synod find:

"First—That laws exist in our Constitution which are applicable to all offences, including under that term popular amusements of all kinds, when these are in their own nature sinful, or from attendant circumstances become so.

"Second—That when common fame charged Mr. F. E. Block, a deacon of the Atlanta Central church, with having violated a law of the Church in connexion with dancing, it was the duty of the Session of said church to investigate this charge in obedience to commands of the General Assembly as contained in its deliverances made in answer to Drs. Ross and Dabney and the Presbytery of Atlanta, in the years 1865, 1869, and 1877.

"Third—That the proceedings of said Session, in conducting the trial to which this investigation led, were irregular, First—In failing to specify with sufficient particularity in the charge, what law of the Church had been violated. Second—In failing to observe the requirements of its Book of Discipline in Chapter IV., Section 5. Third—In including in the sentence specifications of offences not set forth in the charge.

"Fourth—That the decision of said Session was not sustained by the evidence.

"Fifth—Therefore, on these grounds, the Synod reverses the decision of the Presbytery of Atlanta in this case, and the sentence pronounced upon Mr. F. E. Block by the Session of the Atlanta Central church, and it restores Mr. Block to the privileges of church membership."

Dr. Woodrow then said, that in the whole of this trial, as conducted on one side, it was maintained that the deliverances of the General Assembly were church law. The Synod determined, by a large majority, that the Constitution was the law, and that it has no

right to interfere with any member of the Church of God, unless by that law. It was asserted by some in the Block case that there are injunctions, orders, and commands sent down by the Assembly, which must be obeyed by the lower courts. In discharge of the administrative power of the Assembly, it may utter commands, which must be obeyed at the peril of disloyalty.

We express the opinion that the Constitution, and that alone, is the law of the Church by which offences are to be tried, and that the deliverances of the Assembly are not to be counted as making or shaping the law of the Church. The Synod decided that the Assembly has no right to enjoin as to morals and duty, except as these injunctions are in consonance with the standards of the Church. The administrative injunctions of the Assembly (as conceded by all) *must* be obeyed by all. The injunctions on morals—are they binding in the same force on the lower courts? The Synod decided that this difference is to be recognised.

Rev. J. G. Richards thought it would be better to postpone the consideration of the report of the Committee on Synod of Georgia until after the report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures. His motion to that effect was carried.

Accordingly, as soon as the vote was taken on the report touching "Worldly Amusements," the question came up on approving the records of the Synod of Georgia, and they were approved.

COUNSEL IN JUDICIAL CASES.

The following resolution was offered by Dr. Adger and adopted by the Assembly:

Resolved, That where our Book says that an accused person may, if he desires it, be represented in the superior courts by "any member of the court" (or as the old Book expressed it, "by any minister or elder belonging to the judicatory"), the design, according to the judgment of this Assembly, is not to allow an array of counsel, but the privilege is to be limited to the aid which one advocate can give to him."

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SABBATH-SCHOOLS.

Reports had been received from sixty-five out of our sixty-six Presbyteries, the only Presbytery not reporting being Sao Paulo.

Of our 1,873 churches 1,044 have reported Sabbath-schools, which is an increase over last year. Nine colored schools are reported—an increase of six. Twenty-five Presbyteries report their schools in whole or in part under the control of Sessions. Many schools report their pastors as preaching regularly to the children. Only seventeen Presbyteries report their schools as making use of the *Earnest Worker*, *Children's Friend*, and lesson papers of our Committee, and only twenty-one report the Catechism taught in their schools. As might be expected, those schools which receive the supervision of our pastors and Sessions and which use our standards, give most unmistakable signs of prosperity.

“Your committee have considered with care that portion of the report of the Committee of Publication which related to the Sunday-school work, and recommend to the Assembly the following action thereupon :

“First—No part of the work of the Church to-day demands more careful supervision and control from the courts of the Church than our Sabbath-schools. The efficiency, thoroughness, and success of the work as an agency of Church progress, must be greatly promoted by its systematic organisation under presbyterial and sessional authority.

“Second—It is manifest that the Church should afford to those who are engaged in a work so important, so vital to its welfare, every facility to prepare themselves for its successful prosecution ; that our Presbyteries and Sessions should establish a higher standard of qualification for the teachers' work, encourage teachers to attain it, and afford them the means of doing so.

“Third—That in the multiplicity of books and the variety of Sunday-school aids that crowd themselves upon the notice of our schools, many of them having no Church responsibility or control, there can be safety for our Church and Sabbath-schools only in the closest scrutiny by our constituted authorities of everything that is used in our schools.

“Therefore the plan proposed by the Committee of Publication, and already adopted by many of our Presbyteries, is most heartily approved by the Assembly, and our Presbyteries are earnestly recommended to appoint Presbyterial Superintendents of Sabbath-school work, whose duty it shall be to take the supervision of that work within their bounds, gathering for the information of the Presbyteries and the Assembly the statistics, promoting the formation of institutes and normal classes for the training of teachers, scrutinising carefully the Sabbath-school literature used in the Sabbath-schools, and using such effort as they may to introduce the books and papers that have the approval of the Church.

“In order that there may be presented to the General Assembly and

the Church the facts full and complete in regard to this work, it is recommended that the first of January of each year the Superintendents of Sunday-schools report to the Committee of Publication the statistics of the work within their bounds, in order that full and accurate statements may be laid before the General Assembly."

Rev. H. Moseley, Drs. J. H. Nall, Hazen, Murkland, and Read, Rev. Messrs. F. H. Johnson and J. P. Smith, all spoke earnestly and instructively on the subject of Sabbath-schools. Dr. Nall and Mr. Johnson urged the coöperation of parents with the Sabbath-school teachers, and the importance of sessional supervision. Drs. Murkland and Read and Mr. Smith dwelt on the value of training children in Sabbath-schools in giving for the Saviour's cause. Mr. Smith said one hundred thousand children are in our church schools, but fifty thousand more who belong to us are ungathered and untaught. Eight hundred of the churches of this Assembly have no Sabbath-schools. On the other hand, he dwelt on the fact that the little children have contributed thirty thousand dollars for the cause of Foreign Missions.

Dr. Hazen said: It may be assumed that no agency of our Church is doing so much to mould the character of our children and youth as the Sabbath-school. Many parents remit this work to the Sabbath-school. The pulpit does not reach them. In view of it, he laid down three propositions: first, this subject imperatively demands the attention of the courts of the Church; second, it should be kept constantly under the scrutiny and authority of our Church courts; and, third, the teaching of the Sabbath-school teachers should be closely watched. In reference to these points, we find that many schools elect their own teachers; the Sessions pay no attention to them; the books used—the hymn-books—some of them teach doctrines absolutely false; some of these hymns about death are much nearer to heathen mythology than Christian doctrine; some of the Sabbath-school papers teach what is injurious. Ought not these agencies, then, all to be brought under the care of our Church courts?

Last year the Assembly committed the Sunday-school work to the Committee of Publication. The Committee recommends the appointment of a Sabbath-school Superintendent in every Presbytery, to organise institutes and normal classes, and interest the

churches in the work of training the teachers. We can see the necessity for some such work in our Church. We can coöperate to a certain extent with other denominations, but we must have our teachers trained as Presbyterians. We do not want to send them off to summer institutes and conventions to be trained. We want them trained under our Church. Some of our friends seem afraid that this plan tends to centralisation. It has been successfully tried in the Synod of North Carolina, which presents encouraging statistics. But we want more than statistics—we want training.

The difference between a Sunday-school convention and a normal class is this: the former is designed to get up enthusiasm; the latter is a class of teachers of a school studying systematically under a competent teacher, pastor or elder. The Board of Publication in Philadelphia have prepared an excellent series of papers for this purpose.

JUDICIAL CASES.

Two of these were before the Assembly. The first was that of Mr. I. W. Canfield. In 1877 the Presbytery of Louisville was led to investigate the question whether Mr. Canfield was or was not of unsound mind. After giving him due notice and hearing witnesses, it was decided that he was so far unsound as to be unfitted for the ministry, and Presbytery restrained him from preaching. Synod on appeal rescinded the Presbytery's action by a mere resolution, without a formal examination of the case, either as a question of appeal or complaint, or of general review and control. The Assembly of 1878 sustained the complaint of Rev. Stuart Robinson and others against the Synod by a vote of 106 to 2. And it declared that the Presbytery proceeded properly in restraining from the exercise of the functions of the ministry one deemed irresponsible for his words and acts by reason of unsoundness of mind, without the usual forms of judicial process; also that the Synod was incompetent to interfere with the right of a Presbytery to judge of the qualifications of its own ministers. (See Assembly Minutes for 1878, p. 629.) Thus he was re-manded to the position of a private member of the church.

Subsequently he brought charges of falsehood, slander, and disturbing the peace of the Church before Presbytery against Dr. Robinson. The charges were referred to a committee, of which Rev. T. E. Converse was chairman, and it reported them "litigious, trifling, and irrelevant." Mr. Canfield appealed to the Synod of Kentucky, and his son joined in the appeal. Synod decided that as Louisville Presbytery, in the exercise of its episcopal and visiting powers, had decided Mr. Canfield should be restrained from exercising the functions of the ministry, and as the Assembly at Knoxville had confirmed the action of Presbytery, the complainant was estopped from bringing or maintaining his proceeding therein. This as to I. W. Canfield. Touching W. Q. Canfield, his own absence barred his appeal, and indeed as he had never submitted to any judicial trial himself, and was not an original party, he could not appeal. Against the Synod's refusal to entertain his appeal, Mr. Canfield complained to the Assembly at Louisville.

The Judicial Committee made two reports on this case, one from a majority of seven through Col. J. A. Billups, ruling elder, chairman of the Committee, and the other from a minority of six through Mr. R. R. Howison, ruling elder. The majority reported that the case should be dismissed because the action complained of is not a subject matter of appeal or complaint. The minority reported that charges having been brought against a minister of Louisville Presbytery, and the Presbytery having decided not to entertain those charges, that decision was in the nature of a judicial action, and therefore was subject to review on appeal or complaint, and that religious freedom was endangered by denying this complainant a regular and orderly hearing.

In favor of the majority report, Col. Billups urged that before an appeal can be taken there must have been a decision of a case under judicial process; and also that no complaint can be based except on a judicial decision.* The action complained of in the Presbytery was not reached as the result of judicial process. The

*The reader will observe that this is one point where the new Book differs from the old. "Every species of decision" may now be complained of.

Presbytery acting as an inquest dismissed the charges, and had a right so to act, and neither appeal nor complaint can be taken against their action, which was not judicial.

Mr. Howison denied that Presbytery could act simply as a jury of inquest. If charges are brought before it by a competent person, and it dismisses those charges summarily, an appeal will lie. Mr. Canfield's unsoundness of mind might debar him from the ministry, but as a member of the church he may bring charges.

Col. Billups urged that the complaint was not from a decision rendered against Mr. Canfield, and therefore it is no complaint. Much has been said about liberty. But there is a great difference between denying a man an appeal from a decision against himself, and denying him the right to *persecute* another man. There must be discretion somewhere to determine whether a groundless prosecution shall go on or be stopped.

Mr. Howison said that Presbytery certainly has a discretion, but it is to be used properly, discreetly, and rightly, and that is a question for the higher court to determine.

Dr. Adger said courts have rights as well as individuals. The Presbytery decided the charges frivolous and not in self-defence, but persecution of another man. I stand by the Louisville Presbytery, and will not vote that frivolous and malignant charges must needs be entertained. And I claim that the Judicial Committee is to protect this court from cases which ought not to be introduced.

Rev. S. Taylor Martin (one of the minority of the Judicial Committee) said if the Judicial Committee was not to consider merely whether the appeal was regular, but also whether the matter was proper to be brought up, the report might have been different. In numberless cases the conviction is forced on the mind of a Judicial Committee that the charges are frivolous, and that mountains made of mole-hills, to the scandal of the Church, and yet those cases must be investigated, and the Judicial Committee cannot stand in the way.

Dr. Adger said, Let me ask the brother where he finds the law that restricts the Committee to looking simply at *regularity*?

Mr. Martin—It has been custom.

Dr. Adger—I deny that the Judicial Committee is confined to the consideration of regularity merely. It has the right to protect us. Mr. Howison has intimated that probably we shall soon see when the case is taken up that it will be dismissed. Then the Committee should have kept it out.

The question was put and the minority report adopted. The case was then taken up. The Moderator charged the court as usual. Col. Livingston of Georgia and Gen. Johnston of North Carolina, both ruling elders and members of the Assembly, appeared for the complainant. The records were read. Col. Livingston in his speech for the complainant urged the point that being debarred the ministry he still had the rights of a member, among which is the right to bring charges. The Moderator called on the Rev. Harvey Glass to respond for the Synod, and he made the point that Mr. Canfield being declared by his Presbytery and by the Assembly to be irresponsible for his words and acts, could not bring a case before any court; otherwise we are at the mercy of every idiosyncrasy and every idiocy, and our courts have no protection. The Rev. T. E. Converse also spoke in behalf of Synod, dwelling on the provision of the Book which requires that charges be not entertained from persons known to be malignant or litigious. Gen. Johnston closed for the complainant, urging that the proceedings were all brought regularly before the Presbytery, and that the charges were proper to be received, and that the decision not to receive them was proper ground of appeal. Then the members of the Assembly were all successively called on to express themselves, but it was agreed that no one should exceed five minutes in doing this. The greater part of the speakers held that Presbytery is endowed with discretion as to all charges brought before it, and that there was in this case no judicial decision, and therefore nothing to appeal from or complain against. The vote being taken, fifty-six were found to be for sustaining Mr. Canfield's complaint, but sixty-nine against sustaining it.

After mature reflection, we are confirmed in our judgment that this was a right decision, only we regret that the majority had not been very much larger. The Presbytery is the judge of the

qualifications of ministers to preach, and it is the judge of the fitness of individual members to bring charges or give evidence, and also of the fitness of the charges brought, or the evidence offered, to be received. If a student in divinity is refused licensure, he cannot under our old Book appeal to Synod, nor yet can he complain. The Presbytery is the sole judge of his qualifications. So if a member is not allowed to table charges, he can neither appeal nor complain under the old Book to Synod about it. The decision is with the Presbytery, and it is not in any sense a judicial decision, any more than the decision not to license or ordain a candidate. If a deranged minister is not fit to preach and may be restrained by Presbytery, so also after he is remanded to a private member's position, that derangement will most probably unfit him to be the accuser of a minister or other individual, and this matter is entirely within the Presbytery's discretion.

Touching the powers and duties of the Judicial Committee, it seems to us preposterous to say that it is bound to introduce every case which has been brought forward in a regular way. We may distinguish between what is *regular* and what is *in order*. We have known the Judicial Committee of a Synod to report that a case was not *in order* because the appeal itself was filled with vituperative abuse of the Presbytery appealed against. And the Synod sustained that report and rightly. We can conceive that one who appeals on good grounds from a lower to a higher court amongst us may by reason of excitement temporarily lose his mind, and in preparing his appeal, otherwise perfectly regular, say many things of many different kinds which would warrant a Judicial Committee in reporting the appeal as not *in order*. We submit that if there is no law for what we are saying, there ought to be. It is Presbyterian to do things by representatives. The court cannot directly look into every detail. We appoint a Committee on Bills and Overtures to take all overtures into consideration and prepare answers for Presbytery, or Synod, or Assembly to adopt. And ordinarily the report of such a committee is final, and it ought to be. Now the Judicial Committee in our system has or ought to have as much power and as large discretion as the Committee on Bills and Overtures. We have in

adopting the new Book on commissions certainly adopted this principle, that power may be given to such committees to decide such points. When the Presbytery of Louisville referred the charges brought by Mr. Canfield against Dr. Robinson to its Committee, and they reported that those charges were "litigious, frivolous, and irrelevant," was it a very great stretch of power or discretion the Committee exercised? Was it needful to detail the whole to the Presbytery? If so, what was gained by referring to a committee? We refer to committees to *save time and keep order*. And it would be very strange if liberty or justice or truth any more than order were endangered by this Presbyterian way of doing business by representatives.

The following is the minute adopted by the Assembly to set forth the significance of its decision in the case of Mr. Canfield:

The General Assembly, in refusing to sustain the Complaint, while recognising the right of every member of the Presbyterian Church to bring before the courts any matter of personal grievance or affecting the honor of religion, yet mean to affirm on the other hand the competency of the court to exercise a sound discretion as to the propriety of considering any such matter brought before it; and, so far as appears from the facts before the Assembly in this case, the Synod of Kentucky and the Presbytery of Louisville did not exercise this discretion improperly. But, though the General Assembly approves of the decision of the Synod in dismissing the complaint, it is not to be understood as approving of all the reasons assigned by the Synod for that decision.

The other judicial case was that of Ruling Elder E. E. Bacon, complaining against the Synod of Missouri. Mr. Bacon was a member and a former acting elder of the church at St. Joseph, Mo. The case grew out of the publication in a newspaper in St. Joseph, Mo., (the *Herald*.) of an article described by the Session as an offence to the church and an injury to the brethren, the responsibility for which lay with Mr. Bacon. The Session of the church charged that this publication was not only offensive, but was in violation of a covenant previously agreed upon between Mr. Bacon and his pastor, Dr. Campbell. The article stated that Rev. R. S. Campbell had been charged with crookedness in getting a revivalist to preach in the church, and with lying on general principles, by a Mr. Landis. In preparing to meet his

trial, Mr. Bacon claimed that a very large number of persons be cited as witnesses. The Session felt it impossible that all these persons could (in the nature of the case) have any knowledge of the case, and declined to cite them, yet holding themselves ready to receive any one whose testimony should, in the progress of the case, become necessary. Mr. Bacon also desired, after the court had been constituted, to challenge one member of the Session, but this was refused. He was found guilty and admonished of the offence, and suspended from the sacraments until the case should be finally decided.

From this he appealed to the Presbytery on seventeen grounds, such as the failure to specify accuser, the failure to call for a plea, the refusal to cite his witnesses, the ruling out of his questions to witnesses, the admitting as testimony a letter from a person not present to be qualified, prejudice on the part of members of the court, and inconsistency of the verdict with the evidence. The Presbytery took up the appeal, and reversed the decision of the Session upon these grounds. Mr. Sanders and Rev. H. P. S. Willis gave notice of complaint against this decision of the Presbytery.

The grounds of their complaint were, that Presbytery proceeded to trial at a *pro re nata* meeting, with a very small attendance, when the pastor of the church was absent in Europe; and allowed matters extraneous to the testimony and to the records to be heard before the Presbytery. The complaint asserts that the original charges were regularly made, and that the accuser was named, viz., the Session.

The Synod reversed the action of Presbytery and sustained the verdict of the Session, not, however, approving the refusal to cite witnesses. From this Mr. Bacon complains to the General Assembly, upon the ground that injustice has been done to him.

Mr. Bacon was allowed on Friday to state his case, which he did, as follows: The interests of the whole Church are concerned in this case. It is not fair to take exception to the smallness of its *pro re nata* meeting, for there were seven members present; at the previous meeting there had been but eight, and at the subsequent fall meeting there was no quorum present. The verdict

of only temporary suspension was unnecessary, because a speedy trial could be had; and the suspension has not been temporary, because eight communions have now elapsed. Temporary suspension was to last until I will make a formal engagement of peace. The verdict requires me to bury all my grievances against the church. I had no grievances against the church, but against Dr. Campbell. This is outside of the indictment, but within the verdict. The verdict was reached irregularly and without regard to constitutional rights. As to the Session, if delicacy forbade Dr. Campbell to act as Moderator, did it not forbid him to sit as judge? Dr. Campbell also testified in the case without previous notification. Two of the elders had expressed their opinion in the case, and were, therefore, incompetent to vote. Rev. Mr. Claggett's letter was admitted as testimony without his personal presence. To the second charge, therefore, there is but one witness, and this witness does not testify to any promises or compact. The first charge (*viz.*, publishing, etc.) does not specify that the publication was sinful. It does not show that I volunteered any publication, but simply answered the questions of the reporter, and asked him not to publish the matter of the difficulty. The preliminary suspension was severe and wrong. The refusal to cite witnesses was fatal. The ruling out of my question to a witness deprived me of testimony. This ruling seems to decide that a court can proceed to try a man, hearing only such witnesses as the court may choose.

The Rev. J. M. Cheney was called upon to represent the Synod, which he did substantially as follows—first, however, reading a letter from Mr. Claggett to the effect that he should not be mixed up in the quarrel:

It is with great hesitation that I undertake the case, because it brings me into antagonism with the venerable father who complains before you. Every word uttered by me will be uttered for him. I think no greater calamity could fall upon him than for this Assembly to remand the case to the Synod. I think I am speaking against time. I think every member has made up his mind. When I went to hear the case of the Session, I thought the Session had acted unreasonably, and the Presbytery right.

But when I went into the Synod, I thought otherwise. Now the complainant does not deny having given an interview to the reporter and communicated certain facts to the aforesaid reporter. I am sorry to have to revert to the testimony of Mr. Sanders, the young reporter, and Mr. Voltz, the night-clerk of the hotel. These two young men contradict each other in their testimony. They are youths who will stick by a friend. Whenever any question arose which would have damaged Mr. Bacon if answered, the latter said "I object," and the boys refused to speak. Let me refer to the compact entered into between Mr. Bacon and Mr. Campbell, the pastor. It is hardly necessary to say that a compact implies previous antagonism between the two. This venerable father had taken discord into his embrace. An attempt was made by Mr. Claggett, the evangelist, and Mr. Frazier, the elder, to effect a reconciliation between Mr. Bacon and Mr. Campbell. The four prayed together in the pastor's study, and they resolved to bury the discord. There is the sworn testimony of Mr. Claggett and Mr. Frazier, which shows that the discord was buried. But it was resurrected by Mr. Bacon and given to the reporter. It is evident that the compact was broken, and that in a most aggravating way. Mr. Bacon after giving the information said, "Don't publish any of this"—which admonition he must have known the reporter would not regard.

Mr. Bacon says that the court refused to cite certain witnesses, and he makes this one of the reasons for his complaint; but when the case came up and he was asked if he were ready for trial, he answered "Yes." Was he ready if twenty-three important witnesses were denied to him? If he had given some idea of the testimony and claimed that it was relevant, the court would not have hesitated to cite the witnesses.

The Rev. J. G. Fackler also spoke for the Synod: So far I have not yet spoken in the Assembly. If any one in this great Church court should speak on this subject, it is myself. My peculiar relations to the congregation would be affected by the disposal of this appeal. There are influences at work in this case which no man can fully explain, but which any man of sense can feel the moment he enters the atmosphere of that congregation. The

Session who tried this case, I know them, I know their love for the Church, their standing in the community. I received six of them into the Church. I know their desire for peace. Hence the mildness of the sentence. No unprejudiced man will dare to deny that they are intelligent and just and fair-minded; as businessmen, some of them, ranking among the most successful in the land. That Session knew things in connexion with the animus of this case, and the party on trial before them, that this Assembly can not know. But the Session knew it, and for months they and the whole church, at least ninety per cent. of it, had felt it most keenly. The desire of the Session for peace prompted them to decide upon the milder form of admonition, when they might have gone much farther. There had already appeared in the local papers the most scandalous articles about the pastor and the church. Mr. Bacon knew, the Session knew, everybody in St. Joe knew it. The fact of Mr. Bacon having ceased to act as an elder, by his general unacceptability, should have shut his mouth. He knew when that reporter, boarding at his own house, came to him for news about the Presbytery, and met him at the depot, what his object was. Why did Mr. Bacon go to that Presbytery? He was not a delegate. Why did he not refer the reporters to Mr. Sanders, who was a delegate and presumed to know what was done? The principle of *discretionary* powers in courts of original jurisdiction applies also to this case. The Presbytery then reversed the decision of censure. There is a decided contradiction in testimony between Sanders and Voltz, before the Session. Dr. Campbell was his own witness on the second charge. Col. B. B. Fraser and Claggett's letter are confirmatory of this. Mr. Bacon says the conduct of the Session is censured by the citizens of S. Joseph. What he means by citizens I hardly know. I know what the effect of sending this case back is likely to be, in part. I tell you deliberately, it will be disastrous, if not absolutely ruinous.

Dr. Woodrow arose in behalf of the complainant and spoke substantially as follows:

The desire has been expressed by the respondents that justice should be done by the Assembly. It is worth while, before

going farther, to inquire by what road we shall go to reach that end. Let us have the fact distinctly before us that we are not despots. We have passed beyond that earliest stage of society. We must proceed according to the Book of Discipline, and if we deviate from it, we are acting unjustly. Now in this case, on the one side is merely a weak individual, and on the other hand a powerful Synod. This man has been deprived of a dear right—the right to sit at the communion-table. It is said that he is a troublesome fellow in the Church. That may be, but you must not decide the case according to the impassioned speeches of those who spoke here to-day. It must be decided by the law and the evidence. There is no accuser, in the first place: no accuser is named, and the law expressly requires it. Mr. Bacon has been drawn before the court upon charges which no one would father. What is the first charge? It is that Mr. Bacon told a reporter of a newspaper the truth about a meeting, for all that appears to the contrary. Is there anything wrong about that? Would I be guilty of anything wrong if I were to tell one of the enterprising young reporters who sit at this table something that happened here at a late hour last night? There is no proof that Mr. Bacon told the reporter anything with a malicious intent. Mr. Bacon gave this young gentleman some few facts about the meeting, which he proceeded to dress up for a spicy article.

No part of the process was conducted according to law. One of the privileges given an accused party is that of summoning witnesses. Now, the Session refused flatly to summon the witnesses asked for by the accused. Another injustice done the accused was, that whenever he put to a witness such a question as "Did I do this, or say that?" the moderator of the Session ruled the question out. Why? We can not help thinking that it was fear lest Mr. Bacon should prove himself innocent. They were questions looking towards his exculpation. Though witnesses were not cited and questions were debarred, letters were allowed to be introduced against the accused without any authority.

I have gone over the points necessary to be presented in this

case. There are many other arguments I might employ, but I do not wish to trespass upon your time. This Assembly should not be influenced by unworthy considerations, nor swayed by threats. but it should aim to arrive at the truth, whatever the consequences may be, for God blesses the right. I hope, therefore, that our brother will be restored to the full privileges of the Church.

It was moved that members be limited to five minutes each in expressing their opinions.

An amendment was proposed that they be limited to one minute. Lost. Another amendment that they be confined to three minutes. Carried.

The roll was called and an expression of opinion was obtained from several members. A vote was taken, and resulted in forty-one votes for sustaining the complaint, and sixty-five against so doing. The following is the minute reported on this case:

Your Committee appointed to bring in a minute expressing the mind of the Assembly touching the complaint of Mr. E. E. Bacon against the action of the Synod of Missouri, would beg leave to report the following: The vote of the Assembly in not sustaining the complaint is understood as confirming the sentence of the Session of the First church of St. Joseph, but is not to be construed as giving its sanction to the irregularities in the conduct of the trial, namely: in declining to cite all the witnesses nominated by the accused, and in receiving as collateral testimony the letter of Rev. W. H. Claggett; but as expressing the sense of the Assembly as to the substantial justice of the sentence pronounced by the Session and confirmed by the Synod.

We cannot forbear to remark, that the irregularities on the Session's part in conducting this trial appear to us to have been simply monstrous. And we are utterly unable to comprehend how a body that was so largely filled with the desire to protect individual liberty in the case of Mr. Canfield making charges against others, should have been (as it appeared to us) quite indifferent to individual rights and liberty of conscience in the case of Mr. Bacon. He may have been troublesome to his pastor, and differed with him about different matters. That, however, may not have been altogether his fault. To differ with one's pastor is not necessarily a crime in the free Christian common-

wealth—the Presbyterian Church. We voted with the forty-one. If the fifty-six who were for maintaining Mr. Canfield's rights had been as favorable to Mr. Bacon, his case would have gone back to the Session and been reviewed. Let him patiently submit now, however, to what he may think, as we do, great injustice. Many other Presbyterians and Christians have had to do the same thing. To suffer wrongfully is often the lot of the best men. Behold, we count them happy which endure.

JOHN B. ADGER.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Conference Papers: or, Analysis of Discourses, Doctrinal and Practical; delivered on Sabbath afternoons to the Students of the Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J. By CHARLES HODGE, D. D. Edited by A. A. Hodge, D. D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Pp. 373, 8vo.

The editor explains the origin of these papers thus: The professors at Princeton Seminary have always been accustomed to hold a "conference" with the students on Sabbath afternoons, on "themes relating to the life of God in the soul, and to the practical duties having their root therein." The discussions were from the first mainly, and at last exclusively, in the hands of the Professors. Dr. Hodge's share in them was apparently extempore; but after his death evidences of methodical preparation were found in the existence of two hundred and forty-nine accurate briefs. These constitute the volume before us. As printed, they range from one to two pages 8vo. This brevity of course implies that each paper is, in part, but an outline of the author's designed train of discussion. The editor has classified them, without much regard to the date of their delivery, under ten heads: papers discussing, 1. God and his Attributes. 2. Christ, his Person and Offices. 3. The Holy Spirit and his Offices.