

Washington, March 30th, 1864.

His Excellency,
A. Lincoln,



Dear Sir:

According to your suggestion to Dr. Backus and myself I enclose you a slip containing what seems to be an official statement of the proceedings in the Rev. Dr. Armstrong's case. It is taken from the New Regime, Gen'l Butler's Official Organ in Norfolk. If this presents the whole case, it seems to me Dr. Armstrong ought to be released. No doubt he is in thorough sympathy with the South, as decided a rebel at heart as any member of the rebel cabinet; - but having taken the oath of allegiance under a promise of protection if he did so, and having so far as appears said nothing, done nothing in violation of his oath, is he not fairly entitled to the protection promised him even though

he thinks Jeff. Davis the greatest patriot in
the world and the Southern Confederacy
the grandest & most benignant government
ever established by mortals?

Pardon me, Mr. President, for saying that
I think the business of supplying churches
with pastors, which the War Department seems
disposed to undertake, will not only be
very difficult and troublesome, but rather
injurious than beneficial to the Government.

Yours truly,

P. D. Gurley.

P. S. I enclose with this a letter from
one of Dr. Armstrong's friends which
I received since Dr. Backus and
myself called to see you.

P. D. G.

THE CASE OF REV. JAMES D. ARMSTRONG.

Captain Edgar, the officer who investigated the charges of disloyalty preferred against Rev. James D. Armstrong reports as follows:

HEAD'QRS, DIST. OF VIRGINIA,
Provost Marshall's Office,
Norfolk, Va., Feb. 24th 1864.

COLONEL:—I have the honor of reporting, that after investigation, the Rev. James D. Armstrong, D. D., Pastor of the Prespeterian Church of this City is not loyal in any sense of the term. It is true he "took the Oath" in December last, but he declines answering some very important questions which would doubtless involve some other Rebel as arrant as himself. Most of his answers to my questions you will see prove him to be in perfect sympathy with the Rebels now. I therefore suggest that he be ordered before the Commanding General, that he may find the benefit of "Bread and Water," if he declines answering him, and to receive such other punishment as in his judgement he deserves.

His past and present high social position in the community and his reputation as a Devine of the first order makes his case more heinous in my humble judgement.— I report in favor of disposing him from his Pulpit and placing more loyal man in his place.

Accompanying, please find a record of his investigation made by me, Feb. 22nd, as witnessed by several of my Clerks, and a copy of a Thanksgiving Sermon preached by him on the "Vic ory of Manassas upon the recommendation of the Confederate Congress, July 21st, 1861. Now the Reverend Gentleman says he is opposed to bringing "Politics into the Pulpit."

"INVESTIGATION,"

Ques. Do you call yourself loyal man in letter and spirit to-day?

Ans. I prefer not answering.

Ques. What is the name of that gentleman who had taken the Oath and while coming out of the Custom House with you, made the remark that he "would like to spit upon Northern Yankees," or something to that effect?

Ans. I prefer not answering.

Ques. Have you ever in your Palpit alluded favorably to the Southern cause?

Ans. I preached a sermon on the recommendation of the Southern Congress.

Ques. Did you object at that time to doing so?

Ans. No, Sir.

Ques. Have you since the commencement of the War preached in your pulpit a sermon favorable to the Union cause, one that would please the loyal, and displease the disloyal?

Ans. No, Sir.

Ques. Where were you born?

Ans. In New Jersey. I came to Va., when 19 years old.

Ques. Have you determined in your mind not to pray for or allude to the President of the United States, the Authorities, the Armies and Navies thereof, that they may be successful in all their efforts to put down this wicked rebellion?

Ans. I have.

Ques. Do you think this is a wicked Rebellion?

Ans. No, Sir.

Ques. Have you since the commencement of the war, opened your church on any Fast or Thanksgiving day recommended by the President of the United States?

Ans. No, Sir.

Ques. Did you ever open your church in Jeff Davis recommendation?

Ans. There has been meeting for prayer.

Ques. Should the President of the United States within a short time recommend a day of Thanksgiving or Fast, with a view that Christians would unite in prayer for the overthrow of all Rebels in arms against the Government of the United States, would you willingly open your church and take charge of such meetings to that end?

Ans. I should not.

Ques. Do you look upon Slavery as a Divine institution?

Ans. I look upon it as allowable.

Ques. Did you look upon the hanging of John Brown as just and right?

Ans. I did.

Ques. Would you look upon the hanging of any of the prominent Rebels, Jeff Davis for instance, as just and right?

Ans. I should not.

Ques. Are you religiously and morally opposed to capital punishment?

Ans. I am not.

Ques. Do you look upon Jeff. Davis or any of his confederates as deserving any severe punishment for their public acts against the government since the commencement of the war?

Ans. I do not.

Ques. Do you sympathize with the Union Cause or with the Confederate?

Ans. With the Confederate's Cause.

Ques. Do you look upon Jeff Davis, Wigfall, J. M. Mason, and their former colleagues in the U. S. Congress just preceding the year 1860 as perjured men, and deserving a traitor's reputation for all time, until they show fruits meet for repentance?

Ans. I do not.

Ques. Did or do you now, regret the Federal loss at Smithfield a few weeks since?

Ans. I do not.

Ques. Do you think the attack upon Fort Sumpter by the rebels justifiable?

Ans. I prefer not answering.

Ques. Do you think the South justifiable in ever having fired on the Old Flag?

Ans. I do.

Ques. Should you know of any Blockade runners or secret mail carriers to or from the Rebels, would you give immediate information thereof to our authorities that they might be detected and punished as traitors deserve?

Ans. I would not have anything to do with it.

The matter having gone before Gen. Butler for hearing, he looked into the matter and the clergyman was sent to Hatteras.

His Excellency,

A. Lincoln,

President of the U. States.

From
Dr. Gurley
respecting
Dr. Armstrong.

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