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THE NEW THEOLOGY.

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PART I.

THIS modern phase of religious thought has succeeded in introducing itself to the Christian public, and in attracting to itself the general and interested attention of the Christian world. It has secured a measure of acceptance which imperils the prevalence of sound doctrine and threatens the future purity and efficiency of the church. Contemporary religious literature seems to indicate that it is much more popular in many quarters than the theology of the evangelical creeds. A brief outline sketch of it may not, therefore, be unseasonable or unacceptable.

The name of this theology—the *new* theology—seems, to a large extent, to be a misnomer. There is very little in it, if anything at all, which can correctly be called new. Almost every doctrine it inculcates is one with which theological discussion has long been familiar, and this is just what should be expected. The main heads of theology have for so many centuries been the themes of the study of multitudes of as able and learned men as the world has ever produced, that it may now very safely be said that human ingenuity has exhausted itself in its attempts to give them essentially new forms, or to invest them with essentially new significance. It is altogether probable that no one hereafter will ever be able to broach a radically new doctrine, or

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN VIRGINIA.

BY HON. W. W. HENRY.

AT best I can only hope to arrange this subject so as to recall in one paper the most important facts in the history of our church in connection with the memorable struggle which effected the entire separation of church and State, first in Virginia, and afterwards in the United States.

We can hardly appreciate the part taken by our church in this struggle without recalling the relations of the colony of Virginia with the Episcopal Church, and the training of the Presbyterians for the part they took in the contest.

By the early charters, under which Virginia was settled, the Church of England was established in the colony, and the people were taxed for the erection of churches and parsonages, the purchase of glebe lands, and the payment of salaries to ministers, who alone were authorized to perform marriage ceremonies. Not only so, but the people were required to attend church services under the penalty of heavy fines. As the settlers did not, for many years, include dissenters from that church, they would no doubt have been quite content to submit to this mixture of church and State had the ministers been worthy of their calling. But the bishops of London, who governed Virginia as a part of their diocese, sent to the colony many men as ministers whose lives were disreputable and whose preaching was of a low order, so that the pulpit was brought into contempt. Good, honest Bishop Meade, in his history of Old Churches and Families in Virginia, has not spared the Episcopal ministry of the colony, but has painfully disclosed their shortcomings. With an intelligent people, having the Bible in their hands, this condition of affairs could not be permanent. Dissenters appeared in different parts of the colony in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and their number grew rapidly.

As the Presbyterians were transplanted in Virginia from the northern part of Ireland, we will better understand the part

acted by our denomination in the struggle for religious liberty by recalling the circumstances under which Protestantism was planted and flourished in the Emerald Isle. During the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Ireland, prompted by their co-religionists on the continent, were in a state of chronic rebellion against England. Many forfeited estates were the consequence. Finally, in the reign of James I., the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel, the great leaders in these rebellions, left the north of Ireland and with thousands of their followers sought new homes on the continent. They left large tracts of land unoccupied and forfeited to the Crown; these were parcelled out among a body of Scotch and English brought over from the borderland of England and Scotland. Being mostly Scotch, they became known as Scotch-Irish. They made the north of Ireland, by nature the less fertile part of the island, far the more flourishing, and the difference between the Protestant North and the Catholic South of the island became as distinct as that between Scotland and Italy. This Scotch-Irish population has occupied a large page in the history of Great Britain and America. They developed in a remarkable degree the Scotch traits: stern integrity, high sense of duty, hatred of tyranny, and devotion to God. They were Presbyterians after the teaching of John Knox, and they suffered many persecutions for their religion. When James II. attempted to subject them to Roman Catholicism they resisted with the most determined spirit, and by sustaining, as they did, the world renowned siege of Londonderry it is believed that they made firm the throne of William and Mary, and thus saved the liberties of England. These monarchs acknowledged their indebtedness to the Protestant dissenters, and we find that early in their reign the act of toleration was passed which protected dissenters in the exercise of their religion and gave the Scotch-Irish rest. But in the reign of Queen Anne they were subjected to the test oath, by which every one in public employment was required to profess English prelacy. This oath was doubtless intended to suppress popery, but the English bishops used it to check Presbyterianism as well. To this was added burdensome restraints on their commerce and extortionate rents from their landlords, resulting in what is known as the "Antrim Evictions."

Following these, and commencing in the early years of the

eighteenth century, a tide of emigration set in towards America. Says Froude, "In two years which followed the Antrim Evictions thirty thousand Protestants left Ulster for a land where there was no legal robbery, and where those who sowed the seed could reap the harvest." The government, alarmed at the depletion, gave relief, and checked the emigration for a brief period. But in 1728 it began anew, and from 1729 to 1750 it was estimated that 12,000 came annually from Ulster to America. The great bulk of these settled in Pennsylvania, but some came from that State to Maryland, and many to Virginia. The characteristics of these people may be briefly summed up as follows: They were Presbyterians in faith and government; they were loyal to the conceded authority of the King, but they were not willing that he step beyond it. They claimed the right to choose their own ministers without the influence of the civil power. They practiced strict discipline in morals, and educated their children, teaching them faithfully the Bible and the Westminster catechism. They combined in a remarkable degree acuteness of intellect, firmness of purpose, and conscientious devotion to duty. Such a people, with the recollection of the religious persecution of their ancestors in Scotland and of themselves in Ireland, could but chafe under prelacy established by the civil power.

The first Presbyterian minister that came to Virginia, of whom we have an authenticated record, was Francis Makemie, who in the latter part of the seventeenth century established several churches in the county of Accomac. Of Scotch-Irish parentage, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Lagan in 1681. He first preached in Barbadoes, and afterwards in Somerset county, Maryland, and then, crossing the line, married and lived in Accomac county. It is believed that he was the first Presbyterian minister of the Geneva school that ever preached in America. In 1699 he obtained from the County Court of Accomac license to preach under the toleration act, which was the first acknowledgment that the protection of this act extended to America. He was a man of strong character and extraordinary talents, and his memory is indissolubly connected with the history of the great Presbyterian Church in America, which he planted. Early in the eighteenth century a number of Scotch-Irish settlements were made in Virginia, east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, in the present counties of Charlotte, Prince Edward,

Campbell and Nelson. In the year 1738 John Caldwell, the grandfather of the distinguished statesman John Caldwell Calhoun, on behalf of himself and many Presbyterian families who were about to settle in the back parts of Virginia, petitioned the Synod of Philadelphia to appoint a committee to wait on the Governor and ask his favor on them as settlers. Mr. Anderson, one of the committee, visited Governor Gooch with a letter from the Synod requesting that such "emigrants be allowed the liberty of their consciences, and of worshipping God in a manner agreeable to the principles of their education." Governor Gooch gave his consent, stating that he favored settlements on the western side of the mountains, and that their ministers should not be interrupted if they conformed to the requirements of the act of toleration by taking the oath of allegiance therein prescribed and registering the places of their meetings. It is believed that in pursuance of this permission Mr. Caldwell introduced colonies which planted the churches of Cub Creek in Charlotte, Buffaloe and Walkers in Prince Edward, and Hat Creek and Concord in Campbell. Numerous settlers came to the Valley of Virginia, and this hardy race in the back counties proved a protection from the Indians, who afterwards ceased to trouble the older settlements. Their frequent conflicts with the savages made them warriors, and their descendants have been distinguished in every war in which Virginia has engaged.

About the year 1741 some citizens from Hanover county came into possession of Boston's Fourfold State and Luther's Commentaries on Galations, and were so deeply affected by them that they ceased to attend the Parish Church, where they heard very different doctrine. Later a volume of Whitefield's sermons was brought to the neighborhood by a young gentleman from Scotland, and a considerable number met every Sabbath to hear them read by Mr. Samuel Morris. Soon several houses were built to accommodate the audiences, and the name 'Morris Reading Houses' is intimately connected with the rise of Presbyterianism in Hanover and the subsequent formation of Hanover Presbytery. Cited to appear before the Governor and Council for absenting themselves from the established church and attending dissenting preaching, some of the people found on the way to the capital a copy of the *Confession of Faith of the Westminster Assembly*, and when asked by the Governor as to the doctrines

they professed, they showed him the book. Governor Gooch, a Scotchman, thereupon recognized them as Presbyterians, and therefore entitled to toleration. It was to the churches thus planted in Hanover that the celebrated Samuel Davies came soon afterwards from New Jersey, and proved himself the master spirit of Presbyterianism in Eastern Virginia. His influence in the establishment of civil and religious liberty in America was powerful, in that he trained the youthful mind of its great advocate.

Mr. Samuel Morris removed from Hanover county to Campbell county. In 1789 Dr. Archibald Alexander, then a young man, accompanied his preceptor, Dr. Graham, from Lexington to Briery Church, on the border of Prince Edward and Charlotte counties, to witness a great revival of religion in progress in the country contiguous to that church. On their way they were entertained by Mr. Morris, and the following interesting account of the venerable pioneer of Presbyterianism in Hanover county is given by Dr. Alexander:

“As we approached through the fields we saw the old gentleman walking homeward as if, like Isaac, he had been meditating. He was at this time between seventy and eighty years of age, but had the appearance of firm health. But for his being bowed with age, his stature must have been six feet. His frame was large, his shoulders were broad, and though he was somewhat bald, the thick hair about the sides of his head was not gray. He had one son and a number of daughters. Mr. Morris gave Mr. Graham a detailed account of the origin and progress of Presbyterianism in Hanover before Mr. Davies came to settle there; the same I presume which he put into writing for Mr. Davies, who included it in a letter to Dr. Bellamy.”

The old gentleman had heard of the revival in Prince Edward and seemed much interested in it. He said he understood that one of the preachers, Mr. Lacy, “resembled Whitefield.”

We easily recognize in Mr. Lacy, the celebrated Drury Lacy, one of the most eloquent preachers of his time, whose powers of oratory were inherited by his two grandsons, two of the most eloquent pulpit orators of our time, Moses Drury and Wm. J. Hoge.

Presbyterianism means Calvinism organized upon the New Testament model, and Calvinism has always been identified with

the cause of civil and religious liberty. It cannot be otherwise, for Calvinism is founded on the omnipotence of God and the brotherhood of man. The Presbyterian Church in Virginia submitted to the laws of the colony and paid their taxes to support the establishment, but the flame of liberty increased in fervor in their breasts, and finally burst forth like a consuming fire, destroying the cords that had held Virginia in the thralldom of British tyranny.

In May, 1765, a young man brought up under the ministry of Samuel Davies, who was the pastor of his mother, entered for the first time the House of Burgesses. He was of Scotch descent, and inherited the manly qualities of his race. Parliament had just passed the Stamp Act, imposing on the colonies taxation without representation, and thus violating one of the fundamental principles of British liberty. He introduced, and by his surpassing eloquence carried through the House, a set of resolutions denouncing the Act, and, in fact, throwing down at the foot of the British Crown the gauntlet of battle. His act roused the continent and established the point of resistance to British taxation, which brought on the American Revolution. It was Samuel Davies who on that memorable occasion spoke through the lips of Patrick Henry, for he had first taught him the relative duties of government and people. From that time forth, Mr. Jefferson tells us, the orator became the leader of the revolution in Virginia, and his measures were carried by members from the back counties, which meant Presbyterian votes, as that church largely predominated in these counties. There came to their aid, however, the Baptists, Huguenots and Germans. That Virginia led the other colonies in the measures of the revolution is clearly shown by the letters which passed between the committees of correspondence. Thus we find Presbyterianism in Virginia a powerful agent in leading the colonies to independence.

The Virginians could not advance in their demands for civil liberty without at the same time advancing in their demands for religious liberty, for the two rested on the same basis.

During the Indian and French wars the Presbyterians made a decided advance in their progress towards religious liberty. Occupying as they did the territory exposed to the Indian raids, they were called on to do most of the fighting in these wars.

In the confusion created by war they were separated from their licensed places of worship, and without molestation they preached wherever it was convenient. After peace, in 1763, the custom was continued, and the government deemed it best to allow this privilege to its brave defenders. But later, in 1772, a bill was brought into the House of Burgesses for the purpose of regulating the worship of dissenters. Without being put upon its passage it was referred to the people. This bill restricted their worship to the day time. Hanover Presbytery strongly resisted it, and by a memorial of the 11th of November, 1774, protesting against its enactment the first demand for unrestricted Religious Liberty was presented to the legislative body of the colony. In this important paper the Presbytery pray for "that freedom in speaking and writing upon religious subjects which is allowed by law to every member of the British Empire in civil affairs, . . . and that they might enjoy the full and free exercise of our religion without molestation and danger of incurring any penalty whatsoever." And they add that "the subject is of such solemn importance to us that, comparatively speaking, our lives and our liberties are but of little value." This solemn demand was the beginning of that memorable struggle in the Virginia Assemblies, which, as it progressed, attached the establishment, and finally resulted in the complete separation of church and State. No action was taken on the proposed bill, as the House of Burgesses, by the flight of the Royal Governor, lost its power of legislation.

Soon the hour of Independence struck, and the Virginia Convention of May, 1776, led the way. After determining on Independence for Virginia, and ordering her delegates to the Continental Congress to move it for the continent, the convention appointed a committee to frame a Bill of Rights and Constitution for the new State. We have some account of the work in this committee from the pen of Edmund Randolph, a member, in the manuscript history of Virginia which he left. He tells us that "the sixteenth section of the Bill of Rights unfettering the exercise of religion was proposed by Mr. Henry." As reported by the committee, this section read as follows: "That religion or the duty we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, and not by force or violence; and, therefore, that all men should enjoy the

fullest toleration in the exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience, unpunished and unrestrained by the magistrate, unless under color of religion any man disturb the peace, the happiness or the safety of society; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love and charity towards each other." Here again the voice of Samuel Davies, reinforced now by the voice of Hanover Presbytery, was uttered through the lips of Patrick Henry.

But the word "toleration," though used in its most liberal sense, was liable to misconstruction, and James Madison, educated at Princeton under Dr. Witherspoon, moved in the convention the following substitute, which was unanimously adopted: "That religion or the duty we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, being under the direction of reason and conviction only, and not of violence or compulsion, all men are equally entitled to the full and free exercise of it according to the dictates of conscience; and therefore that no man, or class of men, ought, on account of religion, to be vested with emoluments or privileges, or subject to any penalties or disabilities, unless, under color of religion, the preservation of equal liberty and the existence of the State be manifestly endangered." We easily recognize in this section the declaration of the Westminster Confession of Faith, "That God alone is lord of the conscience."

Thus by the agency of two men of Presbyterian training this great principle became a part of the fundamental law of Virginia, the first State to thus recognize and guard it. It has since been copied into the Federal Constitution by the agency of the same men, and it has been made a part of every State Constitution of America, and been pronounced by one of her great statesmen "the chief corner-stone of the great American system of government," and by another, "The contribution of America to the science of government." Certain it is that Virginia, through one of Presbyterian training, led the continent in inserting the principle in her constitution, and in doing so answered the prayer of Hanover Presbytery, "that the people might have and enjoy the full and free exercise of their religion without molestation and danger of incurring any penalty whatsoever."

The reformation had stopped short of the divorce of church and State, and Virginia, to her lasting honor be it said, com-

pleted in America that great movement for purifying Christianity by rescuing the church from the debasing embrace of the State.

After adopting the Bill of Rights and Constitution and electing State officers, the Virginia Convention adjourned without undertaking to revise the laws of the colony. Now commenced the memorable struggle for the disestablishment of the Episcopal Church. The dissenters were believed to be in the majority in the State, but the Assembly was composed of two members from each county, and the counties nearest the bay and sea coast, being small in area, were more numerous than the back counties, and were Episcopal in their religion. The Episcopal members were in the majority, and the process of disestablishment was slow and painful.

The first Legislature of the State met in October, 1776, and there was laid before the body by Rev. Caleb Wallace the memorial of Hanover Presbytery on the subject of religious liberty, praying the repeal of "all laws which countenance religious denomination; that all of every religious sect may be protected in the full and free exercise of their several modes of worship, and exempted from all taxes for the support of any church whatsoever further than what may be agreeable to their own private choice or voluntary obligation."

The memorial is a clear and able presentation of the right of every citizen to religious liberty, and takes for its text the sixteenth section of the Bill of Rights. It was doubtless drawn by Rev. Caleb Wallace, the commissioner of Hanover Presbytery, who was a native of Charlotte county, a graduate of Princeton, and the pastor of Cub Creek Church. The Baptists also presented a memorial on the subject signed by a large number of citizens. The Assembly could not deny these petitions, as they were in accord with the Bill of Rights, and the aid of the dissenters in the war was indispensable. An act was passed exempting dissenters from supporting the Episcopal Church, repealing all laws against modes of worship, and leaving all denominations to support their clergy by voluntary contributions. But the body reserved for a future session the consideration of a general assessment for the support of religion. This occasioned another memorial of Hanover Presbytery, dated 25th April, 1777, which was presented to the next Assembly, earnestly pro-

testing against any assessment for the support of religion, declaring that the church of Christ did not need such a measure, and that it would lead to the subversion of religious liberty. This is also an able document and a clear and earnest statement of the objections to State aid in the support of religion, putting that support on the promise of its Divine author. In the summer of 1777 the Presbytery sent commissioners to urge their views on the Legislature.

This body continued its action, exempting Episcopalians from taxation in the support of their church from year to year until October, 1779, when it made the exemption permanent. The exemption of dissenters had been made permanent in 1776.

But the Episcopal Church had, during its establishment, become so possessed of valuable privileges, that the exemption of the people from taxation for its support did not complete its divorce from the State. Among these privileges was the sole right accorded its ministers in solemnizing the rights of matrimony, with fees fixed by law, the retention of the glebe lands bought with the people's money, and the right of Episcopal vestries to levy taxes for the support of the poor. The retention of these rights was a just cause of discontent with the dissenters, and we find them protesting against it. In April, 1780, Hanover Presbytery, fearing some action adverse to their principles, made a protest in a memorial to the Legislature, urging that body to abstain from interfering in church matters. At the October session the Legislature passed an act authorizing the county courts to grant licenses to dissenting ministers to perform marriage ceremonies, but confining the number of ministers so authorized to four in each county, and their authority to their several counties. The Episcopal ministers, however, were all authorized to perform marriage ceremonies, and were not restricted to their own counties. This unjust discrimination continuing, in May, 1784, the Presbytery sent to the Legislature a strong memorial complaining not only of this injustice, but also of the retention of the glebe lands, and of leaving in the hands of the vestries the power of taxation. They also complained of corporate rights exercised by the Episcopal Church in regard to property. Petitions were laid before the Legislature at its sessions of that year from several counties praying that a general assessment be made for the support of religion, and one

from the Episcopal Church asking that the glebe lands and all its other property be forever secured to it, and also that an act be passed to incorporate it, in order that all the spiritual as well as temporal concerns of the church might be regulated. Hanover Presbytery now committed its only blunder in the struggle for absolute divorce of church and State. French infidelity had gained a strong foothold in Virginia, and this, added to the poverty of the people resulting from their sacrifices in the war of the Revolution, had caused an alarming decline in the support of the gospel, and it was believed that the Legislature would order a general assessment for its support on the ground that the decline of religion endangered the foundation of the Republic. Accordingly, the Presbytery, at its October meeting, 1784, sent up a memorial in which, while protesting against religion as a spiritual system being under civil control, yet for the safety of the Commonwealth afforded by the Christian religion, assenting to a levy of taxes for its support. The bill proposed allowed the payer to direct what church should receive his tax, and in case of no direction it was to be applied to public education in his county. The Legislature at this session incorporated the Episcopal Church with the declaration that the other churches might also be incorporated if desired. It also relieved dissenting ministers from the previous restrictions as to the marriage ceremonies, and it submitted to the people the question of an assessment for the support of religion. At the May session of Hanover Presbytery that body retraced its footsteps and disapproved of any assessment for the support of religion. The body also called a general convention of the church to determine on proper action under existing circumstances. The convention met the 10th of August, 1785, and addressed a strong memorial to the Legislature protesting against the proposed assessment bill, the act incorporating the Episcopal Church, and the retention by it of the glebe lands. It also earnestly requested the enactment of the bill for the establishment of religious liberty drawn by Mr. Jefferson, and reported by the revisors in 1779. This bill had been drawn in 1777, when the author had the benefit of the able memorials of Hanover Presbytery of 1774, 1776 and 1777. How exactly this famous act followed the prayers of these memorials may be seen by comparing them with the act, which, after a long argumentative preamble, is as follows:

“Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge or affect their civil capacities.”

The memorial of 1774 prayed “for that liberty in speaking and writing upon religious subjects which is allowed by law to every member of the British Empire in civil affairs . . . and that they might enjoy the full and free exercise of their religion without molestation and danger of incurring any penalty whatsoever.” The other memorials only enlarged on this prayer, and Mr. Jefferson made no advance on the position of the Presbytery.

In the meanwhile the questions involved excited great interest in the State, and memorials for and against the assessment bill were circulated. The one prepared by Mr. Madison against the bill, who based his argument on the Bill of Rights, was the ablest, and it received thousands of signatures. So great was the majority of Presbyterians among the opposition that it became known as a Presbyterian movement. Edmund Randolph wrote to a friend 24th September, 1785, concerning the approaching session of the Legislature, “The Presbyterians will have a sufficient force to prevent the general assessment, possibly to repeal the act of incorporation. The delegates from those counties in which the majority is of that persuasion are expected with full and pointed instructions on both heads.” The Legislature refused to pass the assessment bill, and passed Mr. Jefferson’s bill, but it went no further at that session. At the session of October, 1786, the petitions for the repeal of the act incorporating the Episcopal Church and taking from it the glebe lands were very numerous, and but few in opposition. While the journal does not give the church connection of the petitioners, it is evident from the counties from which the petitions came that the Presbyterians were active in the movement. The Assembly yielded in part to the demand and repealed the incorporating act, but did not take the glebe lands from the church. The attack upon the peculiar privileges enjoyed by the

Episcopal Church continued, and in 1799 an act was passed having the following preamble:

"I. Whereas the Constitution of the State of Virginia hath pronounced the government of the King of England to have been totally dissolved by the Revolution, hath substituted in the place of the civil government so dissolved a new civil government, and hath in the Bill of Rights excepted from the powers given the substituted government, the power of reviving any species of ecclesiastical or church government in lieu of that so dissolved, by referring the subject of religion to the conscience; and whereas the several acts presently recited do admit the church established under the regal government to have continued so subsequently to the constitution, have bestowed property upon that church, have asserted a legislative right to establish any religious sect, and have incorporated religious sects, all of which is inconsistent with the principles of the constitution and of religious freedom, and manifestly tends to the re-establishment of a national church. For the prevention whereof, Be it enacted."

(Then follows the titles of the acts repealed.)

"And it is further declared that the law, entitled 'An act for establishing religious freedom,' is a true exposition of the principles of the Bill of Rights and Constitution."

The vestries were deprived of their supervision of the poor and power of taxation, and overseers of the poor were substituted in their stead by this legislature. It was not till 1602, however, that an act was passed depriving the Episcopal Church of the glebe lands. By this last act the struggle commenced in 1774 by Hanover Presbytery, was brought to a successful conclusion after twenty-eight years, and church and State in Virginia were completely divorced. The example of Virginia has been followed by the other States, and the principle of non-interference by the State with religion has been established and acted upon throughout America. Before the action of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island the most liberal colonies confined their liberality to the Christian religion, and excluded from civil rights those who did not profess it. Virginia was the first State to allow equal rights to her citizens, regardless of their religious convictions.

I have spoken of the French infidelity which overspread our

State after the Revolution. It is to the lasting honor of our church that while some who should have been defenders of Christianity came under its baneful influence, our denomination, with our two colleges, Hampden-Sidney and Washington, stood firmly against it. Reinforced by the great revival of religion, to which I have alluded, which was general throughout the State and reached beyond its borders, the destructive tide was stemmed until it ebbed and receded, let us hope, never to return.

Foote, in his sketches of the Presbyterian Church in Virginia, has given nearly all of the memorials of Hanover Presbytery in the struggle which ended in this glorious victory of Religious Liberty, and for ability and sound reasoning they are not surpassed by any papers issued during that period. We who enjoy the fruits of their victory should hold in highest honor the memory of our ancestors who fought the good fight and won the battle. I may mention as deserving of special honor in this regard Caleb Wallace, Samuel Stanhope and John Blair Smith, David Rice, James Waddell, John Todd, William Graham and Moses Hoge.

While this struggle was going on in Virginia a convention met in 1788 to consider the question of the ratification of the Federal Constitution. That convention, while ratifying the instrument, proposed, on motion of Patrick Henry, a series of amendments to it for the better protection of the rights of the States and of their citizens, and the representatives of the State in Congress were directed to move them in that body. The first of these embraced the principles of the Virginia Bill of Rights. Mr. Madison, in obedience to the convention and his pledge to his constituents, moved in the first Congress amendments to the constitution, and as a consequence ten amendments were engrafted on the instrument, the first of which provided that "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Thus we see that the great principle of Religious Liberty was engrafted in our State and Federal constitutions by the exertions of men of Presbyterian training.

In giving this concise history of the struggle for the divorce of church and State in Virginia, I have confined myself almost entirely to the part taken by the Presbyterian Church. It is proper for me to say, however, that the Baptists were constant,

unwavering, and very effective in the part they took for the same end. They had felt the heel of the oppressor more keenly than the Presbyterians, as many of their ministers had refused to apply for license to preach under the Toleration Act, and as a consequence were often imprisoned as disturbers of the peace. They found an advocate, however, in Patrick Henry, who appeared for them in court whenever it was in his power.

The Episcopal Church in Virginia has found that its disestablishment, so sternly resisted, has proved a great blessing. Deprived of the support of the State, it has developed new strength, and is to-day more vigorous and prosperous than it ever could have been under the colonial laws. It has drawn nearer to its Lord, and has found strength in leaning on his arm.

The victory for religious liberty in Virginia has had a glorious result, for, as we have seen, the fundamental principle on which it is based, namely, that religion is a personal matter between every man and his God, concerning which the State has no right to legislate, has not only prevailed in American institutions, but is being recognized more and more in Europe, and is destined to lead in the progress of free institutions the world over. The error of its denial has indeed clogged that progress in ages past, and has brought inestimable sorrow to our race. But the principle has the vitality accorded by our Creator to all truth, and

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers,
But error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers."

Count D' Aranda, commissioner of Spain in the negotiations for peace in 1782 at Paris whereby our independence was acknowledged, attempted to confine the United States to the territory between the Atlantic and the Alleghanies and to secure to Spain the Mississippi Valley. Baffled in his attempt, and full of dread of the young Republic, he wrote to his King, "This Federal Republic is born a pigmy. A day will come when it will be a giant, even a colossus, formidable to these countries. Liberty of conscience, the facility for establishing a new population on immense lands, as well as the advantage of the new governments, will draw thither farmers and artisans from all nations."

Spain in our day has seen to her sorrow the fulfillment of this

prophecy. Civil and religious liberty have drawn millions to our shore, fleeing from the tyranny of the Old World, and our progress continues with accelerated speed.

“Here the free spirit of mankind at length,
Throws its last fetters off, and who shall place
The limit to the giant’s strength,
Or curb his swiftness in the forward race.”