

THE
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No. III.

ART. I.—*Annual Report of the Board of Missions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America. Presented to the General Assembly, May, 1849.*

As a fruit of the Spirit of Christ in the church, and of the motions of that Spirit towards its proper manifestation, the Annual Reports of our Board of Missions are signs of the times. These yearly statements of the aims and results of our activity in the natural and legitimate direction of true Christianity, indicate a method and a scale of operations, honorable to the zeal and wisdom of the Board and its agents, and gratifying to the church; and while these operations are far behind the ability of the church and perhaps behind our advancement in some other things, they come from the spirit of the gospel, and are destined, as the gospel prospers, to a vast enlargement. While the same is true of the other Boards of our church, we would here offer a few hints concerning the ground of our system of Domestic Missions, for the sake of the bearing of our remarks on the nature and extent of our work.

ART. VI.—*The General Assembly.*

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America met, agreeably to appointment, in the First Presbyterian Church in the city of Pittsburgh, May 17th, 1849, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Alexander T. McGill, D. D., moderator of the previous Assembly, on Ps. lxxxvii. 7; "All my springs are in Thee."

The Rev. Nicholas Murray, D. D., of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, was unanimously chosen moderator, and the Rev. W. W. Hill, temporary clerk.

Church Music.

The Rev. Dr. Plumer presented the report of the committee appointed by the preceding Assembly on church music. This report contained an account of the labours of the committee, and of the progress which they had made in the prosecution of the work assigned them. It concluded with the following recommendation, viz:

"The Committee respectfully suggest to the General Assembly, that their Report and the Appendix be referred to a special Committee of their body, for examination, and if thereupon the Assembly should approve and encourage the further prosecution of their work, on the basis of the principles therein set forth, that authority be given to this Committee, as in the case of the Book of Psalms and Hymns (see the minutes of the General Assembly, A. D. 1842, page 44 and 45), to complete the work, and make the necessary arrangements for its publication and circulation, among our churches.

"The Report was followed by an Appendix, containing a list of the tunes recommended to be published by the General Assembly for the use of the Church."

The committee to whom this matter was referred subsequently presented the following report, viz:

"The Special Committee to whom was referred for examination the Report and Appendix of the Committee of last year, on Church Music, now respectfully report—

"That they find in the papers submitted, evidences of ability, industry, and progress, which designate that Committee as

the proper agents to carry out the object proposed, namely, to furnish a book of tunes adapted to our present psalmody, published in a convenient form or for general use in our churches. They therefore recommend the adoption of the following minute:

“1. *Resolved*, That said Committee on Church Music be continued, and, they are hereby authorized to go on at their discretion to revise, change, or enlarge, and complete the present selection of tunes submitted in the Appendix to their Report; to employ at all necessary expense, the proper professional skill to arrange the harmonics, and adapt the music to our psalmody, and to complete and print the book, through the Board of Publication. And the book so printed shall be laid before the next General Assembly.

“2. *Resolved*, That as the original Committee are now in progress, our ministers and members individually, and the Presbyteries, be still invited as before to communicate freely with said Committee, and make such suggestions as may aid in the completion of a book which may, as far as possible, be adapted to the widest and most approved use in our churches—that these suggestions be expressed, post-paid, before the first day of December next, to the chairman, the Rev. John M. Krebs, D. D., New York, and the Committee shall not put the book to press before that time.

“After some desultory discussion, it was on motion of Dr. Spring,

“*Resolved*, That the Committee be not required to submit the proof sheets of the book to the Presbyteries before publishing.

“The report was then adopted.”

A Common Paper for the Boards.

The Rev. Dr. Plumer offered the following resolution, viz:

“*Resolved*, That a Committee of seven be appointed, for the purpose of devising, if possible, some arrangements by which a monthly, or weekly periodical, giving important information respecting the Boards of our Church, and sustaining the cause of each of them, should be published, and that the Secretaries of said Boards be requested to lay before the said Committee so much of their respective reports as relates to periodicals, and

to give such other information on the subject as may be in their possession."

This matter was referred to Rev. J. W. Alexander, J. Krebs, I. S. Prime, C. Van Rensselaer, H. Boardman, T. L. Janeway, and Messrs. Walter Lowrie, and W. S. Martien, as a committee to report to the next Assembly.

Christian Union.

A committee had been appointed by a preceding Assembly to confer with delegates from various other Presbyterian bodies in this country, on the best means of promoting Christian union. Dr. Phillips, as chairman of that committee, presented the following preamble and resolutions, which had been adopted by the delegates above mentioned, when met in conference.

"WHEREAS, The Church of Jesus Christ constitutes one body, of which He is the Divine Head, and consequently should be so organized as to exhibit to the view of the world the appearance, as well as the reality of unity; and whereas the present divided condition of the Church is in appearance at least, inconsistent with her unity; therefore,

"*Resolved*, 1. That it is the imperative duty of the followers of Christ to aim at bringing about a union of all the different portions of the household of faith upon a scriptural basis.

"*Resolved*, 2. That in the judgment of this convention, it is not only desirable, but practicable, to effect a closer union than that which now exists among the bodies which are here represented, whereby they might more successfully accomplish the great work for which the church was established.

"And whereas, the views of the great system of evangelical truth, as exhibited in the standards of these different churches, namely, in the Westminster Confession and Catechism, the Articles of the Synod of Dordrecht, and in the Heidelberg Catechism, are substantially the same; therefore,

"*Resolved*, 3. That it is the duty of these churches to cultivate towards each other the spirit of fraternal affection, to exercise Christian forbearance, and to co-operate in all scriptural efforts to promote the common Christianity.

"*Resolved*, 4. That in the judgment of this convention, while the singing of God's praise is an interesting part of religious

worship, and while, for the present, it is left to the different churches to employ whichever of the authorized versions now in use may be most acceptable to them, the sacred songs contained in the book of Psalms are every way suitable and proper for that purpose, and any intimation that they breathe a spirit inconsistent with the gospel, is to be regarded as a reflexion upon their divine Author.

Resolved, 5. That where it is practicable, without any surrender of principle, an interchange of ministerial services be recommended, and that the different churches pay respect to each other's acts of discipline, and sustain each other in all scriptural efforts to promote the good order and to preserve the purity of the church.

Resolved, 6. That in the prosecution of the work of missions, it is desirable that these different churches, as far as practicable, should act in concert, the missionaries, in the exercise of their ministry being accountable to the particular body with which they are ecclesiastically connected.

Resolved, 7. That for the promotion of a better understanding and more intimate intercourse between these different churches, it is desirable that a correspondence be maintained, either by letter or by delegation, as may be judged most expedient.

Resolved, 8. That these resolutions be recommended to the consideration of the different churches represented in this convention, that they may report their judgment in the premises, to a future convention to be held in the city of Albany, on the first day of November next, at eleven o'clock, A. M."

On motion of Mr. Nevin, this report was accepted and referred to a committee, who subsequently reported the following resolutions, which were adopted.

"The committee appointed to examine the proceedings of the conference composed of ministers of different Presbyterian bodies which met in April last, to consider the subject of Christian Union, present the following resolutions to the consideration of this Assembly :

"1. Resolved, That the subject of Christian Union, among all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, taking him as their Prophet, Priest, and King, is one of increasing importance in this age, and one which should be prayerfully

and zealously prosecuted until the various branches of the Church of Christ become one in appearance and action, as they are now one in spirit.

"2. Resolved, That while we do not undertake to examine the resolutions of the Conference so critically as to be able either to approve or condemn every form of expression used therein; nevertheless, we do most cordially approve of the spirit and aim of all their proceedings; and rejoice moreover at the unanimity with which the representatives of so many branches of the Church, arrived at their generally just and valuable conclusions.

"3. Resolved, That the former committee of the Assembly, with such additional members as may be now appointed, be continued; and they are hereby authorized to meet and act in such future conferences as may assemble to promote this important object; of which action they shall make a report to the next General Assembly."

The only thing which elicited any debate in reference to this matter was the fourth resolution adopted by the Conference, which declares that "the sacred songs contained in the book of Psalms, are every way suitable and proper for that purpose, [viz., singing the praises of God,] and any intimation that they breathe a spirit inconsistent with the gospel, is to be regarded as a reflexion on their divine author." Some of the members thought that this language implied that the book of Psalms was of itself all the church needs, or indeed should use in singing the praises of God. Others, on the other hand, understood the resolution as expressing simply these two ideas: first, that it is right to use the book of Psalms in the worship of God, the sacred songs which it contains being suitable for that purpose. And secondly, that the spirit which they breathe is not inconsistent with the gospel. On these points, it is presumed, all Christian men are agreed. It was with this understanding the resolutions were adopted.

The American Bible Society.

The Rev. Mr. Prime, one of the Secretaries of the American Bible Society, on motion of the Rev. Dr. Phillips, was heard before the Assembly in reference to the plans and operations of that important institution. In the course of his interesting address, he stated the following facts. During the last year

six hundred thousand copies of the scriptures had been distributed by the Society. The destitution in some parts of the country, however, was still lamentably great. A delegation from Ireland represented that if an hundred thousand copies of the scriptures could be furnished, they could be immediately placed in the hands of Roman Catholic readers. In answer to this demand the Society furnished as large a supply as could be spared, which "is now on the ocean carrying the bread of life to that spiritually starving population." Ten thousand dollars have been sent to France, which have been employed in printing the gospels and Acts which are used as school books. In Italy the bible has been smuggled over the Alps, and a Bible Society is now established in Florence. The Society is engaged to furnish means to print the bible in Turkey, Syria, and India. The resources of the Society are inadequate to the extent of the demand. Some agents state, that not more than two in five of the churches within their field, contribute to this object; others say one in five; others, one-half.

Dr. Plumer then moved the adoption of the following minutes, viz.:

"The General Assembly, impressed with a deep sense of the infinite value of the Holy Scriptures, and the importance of their prayerful and diligent study in the family; recognizing the right of every man to read the word of God for himself, and consequently regarding the obligation as imperative and perfect, to send the bible to those who are destitute: beholding with grateful astonishment, the whole world suddenly and completely thrown open for the circulation of the scriptures, obstacles having been recently and marvellously removed, so that the word of God has free course among all the nations of the earth: having heard with painful emotions that there are hundreds of thousands of families in our beloved country without a bible, in some of the old States one family in every ten, and in other States one in five being actually destitute, while Ireland, France, Italy, Austria, and other Roman Catholic countries, are sending to this land for bibles, and multitudes are flocking daily to our shores from foreign lands, who ought to be supplied with the bread of life; that our missionaries are asking and receiving aid from the American Bible Society, to enable them to print the bible for the heathen, among whom

our missionaries are labouring: that in Turkey, Syria, Persia, India, China, and other distant parts of the world, the bible is in process of publication, and its circulation among the Moham-medans, Armenians, and Pagans, is restricted only by the want of means to prepare and spread it; therefore,

“Resolved, That the General Assembly earnestly recommends to the churches under its care, to use all diligence to supply the destitute in their vicinity with the Holy Bible, and to contribute annually, according to their respective ability, to aid the American Bible Society in its noble exertions to give the word of God to the whole world.”

This motion gave rise to a somewhat protracted discussion, which related principally to two points: the distribution of the scriptures among slaves, and the extent of the actual destitution of the word of God. In reference to the former point, Dr. Plumer said, “I hold in my hand the thirty-second report of the Bible Society. On p. 135 there is a good list of contributions to the slaves, amounting to near \$1,000. The Society lately received a communication asking for bibles for slaves in Florida, and I never heard of these demands being refused. On p. 61 I find an account of the distribution of the bible among coloured persons and slaves, and I will read part of the report to show the union of feeling among those who have the good of their fellow men at heart.”

Rev. Mr. Gildersleeve said: “I am now, and have been for twenty years, a manager of the Charles'on Bible Society, and I have personally given to every slave that came in my way a copy of the scriptures. It is the unanimous feeling of all the members of that Society to give the bible to all slaves in that region of the country.”

It is gratifying to know that there was not on the floor of the Assembly, and probably is not a minister in our church who does not heartily unite in the recognition of “the right of every man to read the word of God for himself.” If this right exists, then the obligation is undeniable to teach all men to read, and to give them the means of access to the words of eternal life, which are addressed to bond and free, wise and unwise. On these points of Christian duty there is, we trust, no diversity of opinion in the Presbyterian church.

bible to
slaves

Board of Foreign Missions.

The following is a brief abstract of the report of this Board, as presented to the Assembly.

“Receipts of the year, \$110,081—being greater than in any former year.

“Expenditures, \$110,207.

“Publications—*Missionary Chronicle*, 8,150; *Foreign Missionary*, 14,750; *Annual Report*, 7,850; *Letters to Children and to Sabbath Schools*, 12,000.

“New Missionaries, 21—of whom five are ordained ministers, two licentiates, one physician, and one printer.

“Among Choctaw, Chickesaw, Creek, Seminole, Iowa, Otoe, Omaha, and Chippewa Indians, eight ministers of the gospel, one physician, one native licentiate preacher, five male and five female teachers, one farmer, one carpenter, and the wives of the missionaries; about three hundred scholars, of whom two hundred are in boarding schools; sixty-three native preachers reported in connection with the churches.

“In West Africa, three ministers of the gospel and two teachers; schools at three of the stations; church at Monrovia.

“In North India, three missions—the Lodiana, Ferrukhabad, and Allahabad, with nine stations; twenty-five ministers of the gospel, one of them a native, and most of them married; and seventeen native converts employed as catechists and teachers; two printing-presses, with book-binderies, and fonts of type in four languages, from which upwards of 10,000,000 pages of the Holy Scriptures and religious tracts were sent forth during the year ending November 1, 1848; scholars about 1200—of whom 150 are supported by the missions, and about 600 more are in schools of a high order; churches at several stations, and 112 native church members reported.

“In Siam, two ministers of the gospel, both of them married, and a physician.

“In China, three missions, one of them unoccupied at present; nine ministers of the gospel, one physician, one superintendent of the press; about one hundred scholars—of whom sixty are supported by the missions; church at Ningpo; printing press, with moveable metallic types, from which about 4,000,000 pages of the Sacred Scriptures and religious tracts were issued.

“Among the Jews, two ministers of the gospel.

“In Papal Europe, efforts made to promote the spread of the gospel, by sending moneys to approved persons in France and Geneva, to be expended for that purpose.

“*Summary.*—Missions in seven general fields of labor, viz: the Indian tribes, Africa, India, Siam, China, Europe, and the Jews; ministers of the gospel, forty-nine; physicians, three; licentiate preachers, two; male and female teachers, twelve; carpenter, farmer, &c., four; native Christian teachers and catechists, not fully reported; schools at most of the stations; eleven churches; printing presses at four stations; the returns of the European missions not included.

“While so much has been accomplished—and during the last year more than twice as much money contributed to the cause as was given ten years ago—yet it was painful to find so many churches and so many Christians neglecting the missionary work. The Board, however, was in a prosperous state; they had no debts to embarrass them; there had been no diversion of funds from other objects; the advance that had been made was not at the expense of other institutions in the church; and we were called to go forward in this work of the Lord. The medical skill and experience of Christian physicians, are doing much for Christianity. Missions are established among the Jews, the mind of that people being at present very unsettled on religious subjects.”

It is doubtless a very common impression that it is strange the amount contributed to the Foreign Board is greater than that which is contributed to the Board of Domestic Missions. People ask why should more be given to send the gospel abroad, than to propagate and sustain it at home? Mr. Lowrie, when presenting the report of the Board of Foreign Missions, adverted to this subject, and very clearly pointed out the oversight on which this impression is founded. There is probably twenty times as much money contributed in our church for the support of the gospel at home as is given to send it to the millions of perishing heathen. Think of what is annually paid in the erection of churches, in the salaries of ministers, in the distribution of religious publications and of the sacred scriptures, and in the numerous other enterprises which have for their object the extension and support of religion among our own people. How

small a pittance, compared with the aggregate of these contributions, is the amount devoted to all these objects in the foreign field. The comparison is often inconsiderately made between the sums received by the two Boards, foreign and domestic, and because the former receives the larger sum, it is inferred that more is done for foreign than for domestic missions. It is, however, forgotten that the Board of Domestic Missions does nothing but contribute a certain sum towards the salary of those whom it commissions; whereas the Foreign Board is charged with the entire support of its missionaries, and besides this has to print and distribute tracts, religious books and copies of the sacred scriptures, to sustain boarding and day schools, academies or colleges, to erect buildings, and to provide all the apparatus of every kind necessary for the complicated work of establishing the church among the heathen. All these sources of expense are in this country met by other means than by drafts on the funds of the Domestic Board. It is a great mistake, therefore, to suppose that the church is doing more for the heathen than for our own land. It is probably not doing one twentieth part so much. This is no proof that we are doing too much for the Domestic Board, but it is a proof that we are doing too little for foreign missions.

Mr. Lowrie introduced to the Assembly a chief of the Iowa tribe of Indians, who addressed the house through the Rev. Mr. Irwin, who acted as his interpreter. Mr. Irwin was then himself heard, of whose address we give the report as printed in the Presbyterian.

Address of Mr. Irwin.—"As this is a subject of great interest to us, I will make a statement of facts, which may assist you in the conclusions to which you may come.

"It has been my privilege to be a servant of the church for twelve years among the western Indians, during which time I have had full opportunity of knowing the condition of the station.

"There is nothing which causes so much hindrance as the little help at our stations. I will give you a few facts. We have at our stations, including the missionaries' children, fifty of a family, and for that family we have but two girls to help us in the kitchen; and the Corresponding Secretary tells me we are better provided for than other stations. Our wives often

become sick, and we become sick also, and have to attend to the kitchen ourselves. It is no disgrace to tell you that I have stood over the wash tub many a day; I have gone into the kitchen and cooked in the best way I could.

“You do not know these things. You want ministers and missionaries, and educated men; but there is a disposition to overlook these little matters; and let me tell you, the great matters are made up of the little matters. We want help of this kind more than we want help of any other description; and by sending us such help as girls for the kitchen and stewards, you just send the help we want; and you give the missionaries an opportunity to do their proper work. You do not want your missionaries to go into the kitchen. It is work that can be done by others; and it would be economical to send out pious families and pious men of limited means and capacities, in whom is the spirit and disposition of Christ. They will leave us time to teach the children and preach among the Indians, and travel among them, and tell them the way of life.

“We labour under great embarrassment. We live on the margin of a slave state; and we could procure assistance from the coloured people, but if it were our disposition to hire these, the slave holders have no disposition to let them come to us, for fear of losing them. The lower class of families are very poor help, and they are of that kind as to render scarcely any assistance at all; and we want you to go home and inquire among the people for those that will labour—not gentlemen and ladies who do nothing.”

It is a question which every member of the church should put to his conscience, whether we, as a church, are doing our duty in sending educated men to teach the gospel to the heathen, and then so poorly to sustain them as to render it necessary for them to stand at the wash tub. This is no degradation to them, but it is to the church who allows its missionaries, whether foreign or domestic, to be reduced to such straits. This is not that justice and equality which Christ has enjoined; equality, not as to income, but as to adequate support, which it is the obvious duty of the church to provide for all those whom she sends to preach the gospel, in her stead, to the people.

The following resolutions were adopted at the suggestion of

the committee to whom the Report of the Board of Foreign Missions had been referred, viz.:

"1. *Resolved*, That the report of the Board affords to the Assembly very great cause of gratitude and thankfulness to Almighty God, and they would take encouragement from the past to increased effort for the future.

"2. *Resolved*, That while the general prospects of the Board are thus encouraging, as manifested by their enlarged operations among the heathen, and the increased contributions of the churches at home; yet the Assembly learn with pain that so many of our churches are doing nothing for this great cause; and they would most affectionately exhort the ministers of all our churches to urge upon their people their high privileges as well as imperative obligation to contribute of their substance to the furtherance of this noble work.

"3. *Resolved*, That in the deaths of two highly esteemed members of the Board, of two beloved missionaries while in the active field, the Assembly would see the hand of a wise and sovereign God; and they would learn from these providences to fill up the present day with usefulness, for the time is short.

"4. *Resolved*, While the Assembly rejoices to believe that the Board is highly efficient in the discharge of the duties committed to it, yet they would recognize the inefficiency of all human power to carry on this work, and they would call upon the whole church to be earnestly engaged in prayer to God for his blessing upon this great work.

"5. *Resolved*, That the Assembly would repeat the exhortations given in past years to the churches on the subject of the Monthly Concerts, reminding them of their duty to attend upon this meeting, and of the necessity of connecting with it a collection for the purpose of sending the gospel to the perishing heathen.

"6. *Resolved*, That the report be approved, and referred to the Executive Committee for publication."

Board of Domestic Missions.

Dr. Spring, chairman of the committee to whom the report of this Board was referred, submitted the following minute, viz.:

"1. That the report be adopted and published under the di-

rection of the Board, and that an abstract of it be inserted in the Appendix to the Minutes of the Assembly.

"2. *Resolved*, That it be earnestly recommended to the churches to make an annual collection for the object, and that the Synods and Presbyteries adopt such measures as in their judgment may best promote the designs of the Board.

"3. *Resolved*, That it be earnestly recommended to the churches to give their aid in the work of church extension, and that annual collections be made for this fund, distinct from that of Domestic Missions. This new feature in the plan of Domestic Missions proves the wisdom with which it has been conducted, and its great success strongly commends itself to the confidence of the Assembly.

"4. *Resolved*, That in the judgment of this Assembly the religious instruction of the coloured population in the Southern States calls for increasing attention and more vigorous effort.

"5. *Resolved*, That in their instructions to their missionaries the Board be directed to pay a due regard to Presbyterial rights, and that in the quarterly reports of their missions, no greater burthen be laid upon them than is necessary to keep the Board informed of the fidelity with which they fill their appointments.

"6. *Resolved*. That while the Assembly regret that a cause so rich in results already secured, and so full of promise, has failed to secure that universal patronage which it deserves, they express their devout gratitude to God that it is so obviously on the advance. It is but ten years since the seed was but "an handful of corn on the top of the mountains." We have realized the promise: "He that goeth forth weeping, bearing goodly seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The resources and the success of the Board have increased more than two-fold within that period. Grateful praise and earnest prayer are due to the Lord of the harvest.

"7. *Resolved*, That the Assembly cannot refrain from saying, in their judgment, there is no department of their benevolent operations that has stronger claims upon the affections, prayers and energy of their fellow Christians and fellow countrymen, than the work of Domestic Missions. The magnitude of the work itself—the growing population of our country, from foreign,

as well as other sources—the fact that this vast field is submitted exclusively to the cultivation of American churches, together with the consideration that the American Church occupies so wide a place in the opening purposes of heavenly mercy to our world, call loudly upon the churches to consider their weighty responsibility in this matter, and to prosecute with augmented vigour, the great enterprise of supplying this land with the pure gospel.

“In concluding their report the committee have only to remind the Assembly that in accordance with a rule already adopted, it is incumbent on them to make such arrangements as shall, by the Divine favour, secure a discourse before the next General Assembly, on the subject of Domestic Missions.”

The only point which excited debate was that included in the fifth resolution. Some members seemed to think that there was something derogatory to the standing of a minister, and something inconsistent with his responsibility to his presbytery, in his being commissioned as a missionary by the Board and required to report to them. The general sentiment however seemed to be that there was no inconsistency between a minister's relation to the Board as a missionary and his relation to his presbytery as a presbyter. The two relations are distinct and compatible. All our foreign missionaries report to the committee in New York, and yet are as ministers responsible to their presbyteries. It was thought there was nothing derogatory in this, any more than there is in the military officer reporting to the war-department. The resolution as reported was adopted.

Towards the close of the sessions of the Assembly Dr. McGill introduced the following preamble and resolutions:

“WHEREAS a vast accession of territory to these United States and a rapid increase of population throughout the whole extent of our land, and the great multiplication of feeble churches that must arise if we are faithful at all to the claims of our country and our church, demand with unparalleled urgency, immediate, expansive, and strenuous exertions on the part of our Board of Missions: And whereas neither the present excellent and faithful Secretary who has conducted this great interest with signal ability and indefatigable toil, nor any other single individual is able to meet this overwhelming responsibility; and whereas it is highly important that the utmost unity, simplicity,

and economy should be studied in the prosecution of such a work, Therefore,

“*Resolved*, That the Board of Missions be required to appoint a co-ordinate Secretary as soon as they can obtain a suitable person for that office.

“*Resolved*, That the committee located at Louisville, with similar powers to that at Philadelphia, be dissolved, and that a general agent act in the field to that committee, intrusted now under the immediate direction of the Executive committee of Philadelphia.”

Dr. McDowell, Secretary of the Board, being called upon for an expression of his views on these points, declared himself in favour of the appointment of an additional Secretary, but opposed to the dissolution of the Louisville committee. In this view of the matter the Assembly concurred; the former of the above resolutions was adopted, the latter rejected.

Education Board.

The report of this Board, (which embraced a view of the operations of the church in relation to the whole department of education,) in the absence of the Secretary on account of severe illness, was read by Dr. Phillips. We regret that we have no abstract of this important document at hand. It contained abundant evidence of the efficiency and laborious devotedness of the agents and Secretary of the Board. Indeed when it is remembered that in addition to the superintendence of all those operations which have the support of candidates for the ministry for their object, the whole department of parochial schools, academies and colleges, so far as they are assisted by the church, is thrown upon the officers of this Board, and that in addition to all this the Secretary has the editorship of Presbyterian Treasury, a work in itself sufficient for one man, there is reason to apprehend that the health of those concerned will sink under such burdens. It is surely a mistaken policy and a short-sighted economy to break down the servants of the church, by overburdening them. We say this, not because we think the church indisposed to grant adequate assistance, but because the officers of our Boards are, in many cases, too backward in asking it.

Dr. Phillips offered the following minute which was adopted :

“The Committee to whom was referred the Annual Report of the Board of Education, recommend that it be approved, published under the direction of the Board, and commended to the careful perusal of all the churches; and they recommend the adoption of the following resolutions, viz:

“1. WHEREAS, It is the prerogative of God to call men to the work of the ministry, and to bestow upon them the essential qualifications for the offices; and whereas there is a pressing demand for an increased number of pious and educated ministers; Therefore, *Resolved*, That it is the duty and privilege of the Church to obey this command.

“2. Inasmuch as God works by means, and ordinarily blesses the faithful exertions of his people to secure a competent ministry; and whereas there are to be found young men of piety and talents, to whom he has given hearts to devote themselves to his service in the ministry, but who have not the pecuniary means necessary to defray the expenses of their education; Therefore, *Resolved*, That it is the duty of the Church, whose work they are willing to perform, to search them out, and provide funds for their education, and as far as they can do it, instrumentally to aid them in entering the ministry.

“3. *Resolved*, That it be earnestly recommended to our Presbyteries to exercise great care in receiving candidates for the ministry, and a constant supervision over them during the preparatory course of their education.

“4. The Assembly would again recommend to ministers and elders the establishment of primary schools, academics, and colleges, in which our youth may receive Christian and religious education.

“5. To enable the Board to prosecute their important work, and to follow up the successes which God has given them in it, the assembly would, and hereby do most earnestly request all their churches to contribute annually to their funds.”

Board of Publication.

The report of this Board was read by the Secretary, the Rev. Mr. Leyburn. The principal facts which it contained may be found in the following abstract.

“The Board of Publication, during the year ending March

31st, 1849, have issued 261,750 copies of books and tracts. In this number are included 25,000 copies of seventeen new works, and 14,000 copies of thirty-three new tracts. The remainder is made up of re-issues of works before on the catalogue.

“Very considerable changes and improvements are making in getting up the books and tracts. The binding has been somewhat varied to suit the prevailing tastes; more attention is now paid to illustrating, especially children’s books; and a considerable reduction has been made in the prices of most of the works. The Board are taking advantage of their increasing experience, and endeavouring in every practicable mode to render their publications attractive and available to all. Increasing attention has been paid to books for children; but great difficulty has been found in obtaining such works as would interest this class, without entering the regions of fiction to an extent from which the Board feel themselves conscientiously debarred. Much more would nevertheless have been accomplished during the year in this, as well as other departments of their operations, but for the fire, which having destroyed forty-five entire works, required that the labour of several months should be directed to replacing them.

“The wisdom and propriety of an organization such as this, is made more apparent every year. Previous to its origin, a Presbyterian library could not be obtained in the land. Regular book publishers were unwilling to undertake books of this description, and actually declined applications made to them for this end. The Board entered a new and untried sphere. It was afraid to risk a failure in what seemed so good an undertaking; and the result has been eminently successful. The amount of sound doctrinal and practical instruction which has already been conveyed throughout our whole Zion, is of itself far more than enough to compensate for the labour, time, and money which have been expended.

“The Board have entered fully on the colportage system, as the only means of effectually circulating their publications to the widest extent. If annual collections are afforded them by the Churches, they are ready to employ colporteurs, and furnish them with books and tracts, for sale and gratuitous distribution, wherever such labours are demanded. The efforts to secure funds for rebuilding have materially interfered with the incipi-

ent arrangements for colporteur enterprise. Nevertheless, something has been done. About forty colporteurs, including students, have been employed. They have laboured in the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina, and Rhode Island; and the Synods of Virginia and Pittsburgh, and several Presbyteries are carrying on the work for themselves. Most of the colporteurs of the Board, however, have been too short a time in the field for the results of their labours to appear in this report; but they will be of the most cheering character.

“Frequent and earnest applications, and such as ought not to be refused, are made to the Board for donations in aid of needy ministers, feeble churches, and Sabbath schools, especially from the newer portions of the country, and these are increasing as the Church and country expand, and these publications become better known. And yet, how can the Board to any extent respond to them, unless furnished with annual contributions from the churches? Thousands of dollars are annually given by our people for the support of colporteurs and the circulation of books and tracts, to institutions with which we have no ecclesiastical connexion; why should not at least equal liberality be shown to our own Board. Are not our publications equally valuable? Do they not occupy the same general evangelical ground, but also offer such instructions for our own people as in the nature of things can be furnished from no other source? It is earnestly hoped that the churches will not withhold from the Board that aid which is so indispensable to its efficiency. The total amount received during the year is \$67,315.08, including \$10,528.49 paid on subscriptions for rebuilding, and \$17,138.26 received from the insurance companies principally for damages on stock.”

Dr. L. W. Green, from the committee to whom this report was referred, offered the following resolutions, which were adopted.

“1. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly reiterate the expression of our entire confidence in the Board, our deep conviction of its importance to the vital interests of the church, and our extreme gratification at the increasing energy and widening influence of its operations.

“2. *Resolved*, That, next to the pulpit, the press is the great

instrumentality placed in our hands for moulding the opinions and deciding the destiny of the present and future generations; and in view of the condition of our country, and all the aspects of the age in which we live, the Presbyterian church, as a branch of the church universal upon earth, is solemnly called by her allegiance to her Head, to employ with far greater energy and combined co-operation than heretofore, this potent instrumentality for the diffusion of those precious truths, so ably embodied in the standards of our church.

“3. *Resolved*, Therefore, that we solemnly express our fixed conviction that the Board of Publication ought to be viewed by all our people as one of the great schemes of the church, for the illumination and salvation of the world, co-ordinate with the Boards of Education, and of Domestic and Foreign Missions capable of being elevated by the wise liberality of the church, to the same commanding position and extensive influence, and as such we earnestly recommend it to the cordial and systematic support of all our congregations.

“4. *Resolved*, That the system of colportage adopted by the Board is not only a valuable auxiliary, but, in the present condition of our country, with its advancing population, sweeping rapidly beyond the reach of a settled ministry and all the means of grace, must be considered a necessary means of the widest diffusion and most effective influence of our publications, and the General Assembly have heard, with peculiar pleasure, that many of our candidates for the ministry are engaged during the interval of study in the prosecution of this important work, so full of benefit to others, and still more of valuable instruction to themselves; we would, therefore, urge the Board to pursue, with redoubled activity, this department of their labours, and throw themselves upon the liberality of the churches for any additional expense which may be necessarily incurred.

“5. *Resolved*, That the increasing demand for our publications, from Parochial and Sabbath Schools, and the deluge of fictitious narratives and sentimental religionism pouring in upon our children from every quarter, should direct the intense attention of the Board to the preparation of works adapted to the capacities and wants of youth, and fitted to aid and guide the teachers in the performance of their arduous and important duties.

"6. *Resolved*, That while we highly approve the principle of the Board to publish valuable works in a durable form and of the best materials, without regard to price, we would strongly express our deliberate conviction that cheaper editions might often accomplish a more valuable result, and obtain for our publications a wider circulation and more effective influence.

"7. *Resolved*, That it is earnestly recommended to all our congregations to take up regular collections annually, in behalf of the Board of Publication."

The resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Judicial Case, No. 1.

Dr. Plumer, from the judicial committee, reported on the case of the appeal of W. H. Marquiss, against the Presbytery of Nashville, as follows:

"The Judicial Committee report that they have examined certain papers entitled an appeal and complaint of W. H. Marquiss against the Presbytery of Nashville, with other papers belonging thereto; and unanimously recommend the adoption of the following minute:

"1. That the Presbytery of Nashville having fully exonerated the appellant from all blame in the matters respecting which he was charged before the session of the church of Clarksville, his character is unimpeached, and that he is now, and has been ever since the action of Presbytery in his case, entitled to a dismissal from the church at Clarksville, whenever applied for, in order to connect himself with any church in the vicinity of his present residence, and that there is nothing in the action of Presbytery in relation to the charges preferred against him which furnishes grounds for appeal or complaint.

"2. In relation to the spirit and temper manifested in the progress of any trial, the judicatory alone before whom the matter regularly comes, is competent to form an opinion, and that the mere record of this opinion, even if erroneous, is not a ground of appeal or complaint.

"3. In relation to the publication of a pamphlet by Mr. Marquiss, pending the decision of his case, the Presbytery of Nashville did no more than repeat the judgment of the General Assembly, given more than once concerning such publications.

and as the Presbytery passed no sentence upon Mr. M. for this step, there is no ground of appeal or complaint.

"4. That the high character of the appellant, and all those to whom these papers relate, is a guaranty to the General Assembly that they will henceforth study things which make for peace, forbearing one another in love.

"5. That the papers be returned to the persons from whom they were received."

The second of the above resolutions elicited considerable debate, but was finally adopted. Notice of dissent or protest was given by several members, but at a subsequent meeting, the chairman of the judicial committee moved a reconsideration of that part of the report, which motion being carried, he moved that the second resolution be stricken out, which was agreed to. The objection urged against the resolution was, that it asserted in too broad a form that no expression of opinion by a judicatory of the temper and spirit of a person on trial could be a ground of complaint or appeal. It might be admitted that in the case under consideration, the expression of its disapprobation, recorded by the Presbytery of Nashville, was perfectly proper, but it was urged that cases might be supposed in which great injustice might be done by such records.

Second Judicial Case.

This case was an appeal by Rev. J. Leroy Davies, from a decision of the Synod of North Carolina, affirming a decision of the Presbytery of Concord, suspending him from the gospel ministry, on the following charges and specifications, viz.:

"Common fame charges the Rev. J. Leroy Davies with conduct not only unbecoming in a Christian, but highly derogatory to the character of a Christian minister, and seriously reproachful to religion, in the following particulars, viz:

"*Specification 1st.*—Insubordination to the Presbytery, in his continuing to preach; and encouraging the building up of a branch of Prospect church, within the reputed bounds of Centre, without the consent either of the Presbytery, or of the Session of Centre, almost immediately after the dissolution of the pastoral relation by the Presbytery, and very shortly after his confessions of sin, professions of penitence, and promises of

subordination and circumspect deportment made to the Presbytery, at the close of his recent trial.

Specification 2d.—False representations and fraudulent measures in his procuring the transfer of members from Centre to Prospect church; in his reporting to the Presbytery at Marion some sixty-one members, as received into Prospect on certificate, some of whom had neither applied for a dismissal, nor authorized such application; and in his reporting to the church of Prospect some sixty-one additions on certificates, the most, if not all, of whom were from the church of Centre, of whom he had not authority from the Session of Centre to grant more than two or three certificates of dismissal.”

The following was the sentence of the Presbytery in this case:

“That in view of all the facts and circumstances, in view of the testimony spread upon the minutes in the case, and in view of the clear connection of his conduct in this case with his previous trial and confessions, therefore—*Resolved*, That the Rev. J. Leroy Davies be, and he is hereby suspended from the office of the gospel ministry, until he give to this Presbytery satisfactory evidence of his penitency for the crimes of which he has now been convicted.”

The Notice of Appeal, which had been placed before the Presbytery by the Rev. J. Leroy Davies, was then read, as follows:

“I hereby give written notice to the Presbytery of Concord, that I intend to appeal, and I do hereby appeal, from the judgment this day rendered, to the Synod of North Carolina, which appeal and reasons thereof I intend to lodge with the proper officer, within the time specified by the Constitution.

“June 8, 1848.

J. LEROY DAVIES.”

An extract from the minutes of the Synod of North Carolina was then read.

The Rev. Dr. Plumer acted as counsel for Mr. Davies, and Messrs. Rockwell and Wilson for the Synod and Presbytery, After the parties had been fully heard the roll was called for the judgment of every member, and the vote was taken on the question, “Shall the appeal be sustained in whole or in part?” It appeared a majority of the house voted to sustain in part. A committee was then appointed to bring in a

minute expressive of the judgment of the Assembly in the case; which minute, as finally adopted, is as follows:

"1. Resolved, That in regard to the first allegation against Mr. Davies, viz: of insubordination and schismatical conduct, the decision of the Synod in his case be confirmed.

"2. Resolved, That while the Assembly do not approve the conduct of Mr. Davies, in relation to the transfer of members from the church of Centre to the church of Prospect, in their judgment, the charge of misrepresentation and falsehood is not sustained, and in this particular they sustain the appeal of Mr. Davies.

"3. Resolved, That while Assembly adopt the preceding resolutions, in their judgment, there was error in the Synod of North Carolina in expressing a judicial opinion in relation to charges against Mr. Davies which did not come before them.

"4. Resolved, That in view of all the circumstances of the case, the decision of the inferior judicatory be reversed; and that Mr. Davies be, and he hereby is restored to the functions of the sacred office, and that he be solemnly enjoined hereafter more scrupulously to consult the peace and unity of the church."

Western Theological Seminary.

Rev. Thomas L. Janeway presented the following report in relation to this institution, which was adopted.

"The Committee to whom was referred the 22d Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Western Theological Seminary, present the following resolutions, viz:

"1. That the said Report be approved, and printed in the appendix to the minutes of the General Assembly.

"2. That the Assembly learn with pleasure that the same excellent and worthy Professors are continued, in the good providence of God, to labour in this important institution, and that their efforts in training candidates for the work of the ministry are still blessed, and that a respectable body of students have been gathered into the Seminary, whose proficiency in learning and piety is matter of devout praise to God.

"3. That the Assembly are happy to learn that the endowing of the two Professorships is likely to be realized, and the great embarrassments through which the Seminary has waded have ceased, and that by leases of property, unemployed for the pur-

poses of the institution, hope to command yet greater means for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, in the assistance afforded to pious men in preparation for their great work.

"4. The Assembly have heard with regret the afflictive visitation of God, which scattered the students for a period, and laid two of them low in death, and we receive it as an admonition to work while the day lasts, and God permits us to engage in his holy and blessed service.

"5. That as the institution has been located and continued by successive Assemblies in Allegheny, it is just that not only the Synods which have, for more than twenty years of unrelieved toil, borne the burthen of its support, but other portions of our church may be expected to aid in completing the endowment of an institution from which so many ministers have gone forth to labour in the West, and in which some of the earliest and best beloved of the missionaries of our Board have been trained. And as the prospects of the whole church are identified with its interests equally with other seminaries, *this* may properly expect the sympathy and receive the benefactions of our people."

Princeton Theological Seminary.

The Rev. T. L. Janeway presented the annual report of the Directors of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J.; also several letters from the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., tendering his resignation of his office as Professor in that Institution, and the Report of the Directors, stating their action in regard to Dr. Miller's resignation. These papers were referred to the following committee: Messrs. Plumer, V. D. Reed, Janeway, Williamson, Wallace, S. Steele, Gilchrist, Smock, *ministers*; and W. Lowrie, J. H. Brown, and Henderson, *elders*.

This committee made the following report:

"I. In relation to the general report of the Directors, the committee recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

"1. Resolved, That the thanks of the whole church are due to the Lord of the harvest, in raising up and inclining to the ministry, the number of one hundred and fifty young men, who have been connected with the Seminary during the past year, and that their examinations have been so thorough and satisfactory.

"2. Resolved, That the Assembly has heard with pleasure of the prevalence to a cheering extent of the missionary spirit in the institution, and earnestly hope that all having control of the students will continue to cherish in them the most enlarged views of the work of the ministry.

"3. Resolved, That the nominations for Directors to fill the places of Drs. Spring, W. A. McDowell, William Neil, W. D. Snodgrass, Joseph McElroy, G. W. Musgrave, and Rev. S. Beach Jones, together with John T. Woodhull, M. D., A. W. Mitchell, M. D., and Hugh Auchincloss, Esq., for three years, and for the unexpired term of Mr. James Donaldson, which is one year, be now received, and a time fixed for the election.

"4. Resolved, That the Report of the Directors be printed in the appendix to the minutes of the General Assembly.

"II. In relation to the tender of resignation of his Professorship by the Rev. Dr. Miller, they recommend the adoption of the following resolutions by the Assembly, viz.:

"1. Resolved, That the Assembly unites with the Board of Directors in expressions of thankfulness to God, that he has spared the life and health of the venerable Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government for so many years, and that our beloved church has enjoyed the benefit of his valued instructions and labours from the infancy of this Seminary to this time.

"2. Resolved, That the Assembly unites with the Board in recording their grateful sense of the manifold faithful and most important services which the venerable Professor has rendered to our church, and to the cause of truth and righteousness, and they beg to assure him of their cordial sympathy in the bodily infirmities which have led him to seek a release from the duties of this office.

"3. Resolved, That the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., be, and hereby is entirely released from all obligation to give instruction in each and all of the departments of his Professorship.

"4. Resolved, That Dr. Miller be requested to give such instruction, and perform such services, as, on consultation with his fellow Professors, may be convenient and agreeable to himself.

"5. Resolved, That the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., shall continue to enjoy intact the salary and all the other rights of his

Professorship during his natural life, under the title of Emeritus Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government.

“6. Resolved, That this Assembly, upon the adoption of this report, will receive nominations, and fix a time for the election of a Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government.

“7. Resolved, That the Board of Directors of the Seminary be authorized to send an agent or agents to any and every part of this church where they think proper, for the purpose of receiving a sum to pay the salary of the Rev. Professor, which is fixed at \$2,000.”

This report was adopted unanimously. Nominations were then made for the professorship of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government. The Rev. James W. Alexander, D. D., of New York; the Rev. Dr. Plumer, of Baltimore; the Rev. Dr. Spring, of New York; the Rev. Thomas Smythe, D. D., of Charleston, S. C.; the Rev. Nathan L. Rice, D. D., of Cincinnati, Ohio; the Rev. Nicholas Murray, D. D., of Elizabethtown, N. J., were nominated. Drs. Plumer, Spring and Murray all declined to be considered candidates. The Assembly then united in prayer for the guidance of the Head of the Church. After this it was resolved that a majority of all the votes cast should be necessary to the choice of professor. The election was made the first order of the day for Saturday morning, allowing, agreeably to rule, two days to intervene between the nomination and election.

On Saturday morning the ballots were collected and counted, when it appeared that the

Rev. J. W. Alexander, D. D., had received 110 votes.

Dr. N. L. Rice, 34 “

Dr. Thomas Smythe, 16 “

Dr. N. Murray, 4 “

Dr. G. Spring, 1 “

On motion, it was resolved, that the Moderator and Dr. Phillips be a committee to inform Dr. Alexander of his election, and to prosecute this call before the Presbytery of New York.

Posture in Public Prayer.

The Presbytery of Philadelphia presented an overture asking the Assembly to adopt measures for arresting or abating

the growing evil of sitting during public prayer. The committee of bills and overtures presented on this subject the following report, which was adopted, viz :

“While the posture of standing in public prayer, and that of kneeling in private prayer, are indicated by example in the scripture, and the general practice of the ancient Christian church, the position of sitting in public prayer is nowhere mentioned, and by no usage allowed, but, on the contrary, was universally regarded by the early church as heathenish and irreverent, and is still even among the modern and western nations, an attitude obviously wanting in the due expression of reverence—therefore this Assembly

“*Resolve*, That the practice in question be considered grievously improper, wherever the infirmities of the worshippers do not render it necessary; and that ministers be required to reprove it with earnest and persevering admonition.”

We hope this subject will receive from the churches the attention it deserves. Whatever concerns the proprieties of public worship, concerns the interests of religion and the glory of God. It cannot be denied that the feeling of reverence will express itself by appropriate outward signs, and therefore the absence or neglect of those outward expressions is evidence of the absence of the inward feeling. It is no less true, that as the feeling produces the outward expression, so the latter tends to cherish the former. There is, therefore, in the very constitution of our nature a reason why that posture should be assumed in prayer which is expressive of devotion. In all ages and countries standing, kneeling, and prostration or bowing down, have been recognised as the proper expressions of reverence. These, therefore, are the only suitable postures for prayer. Accordingly we find in scriptures all these recognised and sanctioned. Sitting is irreverent, unnatural, unscriptural, and therefore offensive and injurious. There may be room for debate which of the three postures above mentioned, is most suitable for public worship—but there can be none whatever as between either of them and sitting. In favour of standing we have the clear authority of scripture, the example of the early church, and the distinctive usage of our own denomination. It should therefore be enjoined and urged with all due authority by those who have the oversight of the churches.

Slavery.

Several memorials on this subject were placed in the hands of the committee of Bills and Overtures, which report the following resolutions on the subject, which were adopted almost unanimously.

"1. *Resolved*, That the principles of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery, are already set forth in repeated declarations, so full and explicit as to require no further exposition.

"2. *Resolved*, That in view of the civil and domestic nature of this institution, the competency of secular legislatures alone to remove it, and in view of the earnest inquiry and deep agitation on this subject, which we observe in one or more commonwealths of our country, where slavery exists, it be considered peculiarly improper or inexpedient for this General Assembly to attempt to propose any measures in the work of emancipation.

"3. *Resolved*, That all necessary and proper provision is already made for the just exercise of discipline upon those who violate the mutual duties of master and servant, and the General Assembly is always ready to enforce these provisions, when the unfaithfulness of any inferior court is made manifest by record, or appeal, or complaint.

"4. *Resolved*, That we rejoice to believe that the action of former Assemblies, so far from aiding or allowing the iniquitous oppression of man by his fellow man, has been steadily promoting amelioration in the condition of slaves, by winning the confidence of masters, in our freedom from fanaticism, and by stimulating the slaveholder and his pastor alike to labour in the religious instruction of the blacks.

"5. *Resolved*, That it be enjoined on Presbyteries situated in slaveholding States, to continue and increase their exertions for the instruction of slaves, and to report distinctly in their annual narratives to the General Assembly, the state of religion among the coloured population."

The Rev. H. Nevin presented a protest against these resolutions, which was admitted to record without answer.

Support of Aged Ministers.

This subject was brought before the Assembly by an overture from the Presbytery of Elizabethtown and was warmly

urged especially by several of the elders on the floor of the house, especially Mr. Barnet, of Dayton, Ohio, and Mr. Inglis, of Georgia.

The following preamble and resolutions were finally adopted on this subject.

“WHEREAS, There are many disabled and superannuated ministers in connexion with the Presbyterian Church, and the widows and families of Presbyterian ministers who are in indigent circumstances; and as the church increases, their number is likely to increase; and whereas it is the duty of the church to provide for those who have devoted their time and spent their energies in her service, and also for their families; and whereas no local provision can effectually meet this object, and no efficient general provision has ever yet been made, Therefore,

“1. *Resolved*, That in order to constitute a fund for the support of the widows and families of deceased ministers, and for the relief of superannuated and disabled living ministers, it is hereby enjoined on all our Synods and Presbyteries to take such action as may secure a contribution annually.

“2. *Resolved*, That a column be added to the table of statistical reports for these contributions.

“3. *Resolved*, That the funds thus contributed be placed in the hands of the Board of Trustees of the General Assembly, to be distributed by the Board of Publication, upon the recommendation of Presbyteries, as the funds for Domestic Missions, Education, and Church Extension are now appropriated.

“4. *Resolved*, That in order to the founding of a permanent fund for this same object, special contributions and legacies be invited from all parts of the church, the principal of which shall be safely invested by the Board of Trustees of the General Assembly, and the interest be added to the General fund, provided for in the foregoing resolution.”

Examination of Ministers.

“An overture from various ministers and elders, objecting to a resolution of the General Assembly in 1837, making it imperative on Presbyteries to examine all ministers who make application for admission into their bodies, and praying this Assembly to repeal that resolution, or change it from its imperative

form to one of recommendation; or send it down to the Presbyteries by overture, to have it added as another section to the tenth chapter of our Form of Government.

“The committee recommend that, inasmuch as the General Assembly must have power to enjoin upon Presbyteries the performance of any duty which they are confessedly competent to do by the provisions of the Constitution, and in requiring which, no right is violated, and nothing constrained, but the discretion they had in ordinary circumstances; and inasmuch as the general utility of that resolution is not yet called in question, even by the respected memorialists themselves, therefore the Assembly decline acceding to this request for the present.

“This report was adopted.”

Weekly Paper.

The Presbytery of Huntingdon sent up an overture on the subject of a cheap weekly paper, and the Rev. Mr. Sickles introduced a resolution instructing the Board of Publication to publish a specimen number of such paper, and to continue the publication as soon as a sufficient number of subscribers should be obtained. The whole subject was finally referred to Rev. Mr. Nourse, Rev. Dr. W. Lord, Dr. Van Rensselaer, Dr. McKinney, and Messrs. W. Lowrie, and J. H. Brown, to report to the next Assembly.

This subject excited a good deal of interest and is doubtless one of great importance. It may be viewed in different aspects. It may be considered financially, as a mere matter of business. Can a good paper be sustained and afforded at a dollar a year? This is a question which different business men would answer in different ways. When the expense of paper, of composition, of editors, and contributors, and the loss from wear and tear and bad debts, are taken in view, it would seem to be impossible that one dollar would afford adequate remuneration for such a work. Then again, those papers which charge \$3 00 or \$2 50, in many cases, barely sustain themselves. The fact that \$2 50 has been fixed upon in all parts of the country as the average price of a weekly religious paper, is a strong indication that such is a fair price, and that the desire to obtain the profit and pleasure of such a publication at a less price is unreasonable. It is a desire to enjoy the labour of others without

paying for it. But on the other hand, the expense of publication decreases very rapidly when the number of copies is increased. There is reason to hope that such a number of subscribers for a dollar paper might be obtained, and such terms of payment insisted upon, as to make the experiment in a financial point of view successful. Besides, there are dollar newspapers, (unconnected with daily papers) which are sustained. The financial question therefore is open to debate. This is a field in which a man of wise enterprise might perhaps succeed.

A second and more serious aspect of this question relates to the publication or editing of such a paper. The objections to placing it in the hands of the Board of Publication are such as these: The publication of a weekly paper, of large circulation, is an immense concern, involving great labour and attention. This is too great a burden, it may be said, to impose on that Board which already has its hands full. All such enterprises succeed better in private hands than in the hands of corporations or boards. There is a great deal of risk and many tentative efforts to be made, which a man is willing to make in his own business, which a corporation would be slow to undertake. There is and must also be the lack of that impulse of self-interest for which alas! zeal for the church is seldom an adequate compensation. Then again, who is to be the editor? When a newspaper is to be the mouth-piece of an individual, its authority and influence are great. What will it be when it is the mouth-piece of the church! Who is the man whom you mean to invest with the power to express the mind of the church on all questions once a week to 50,000 or 100,000 readers? Men talk of the undue power of our Boards and Seminaries, what would the power of all the Boards and all the Seminaries in the land be, compared to the influence of such an organ? The London Times is spoken of as a fourth estate in the British empire. If we had an official paper, with such a circulation as is anticipated its conductors would be invested with an influence, for good or evil, which would make them a substantive estate in the church. The power of the press while free, dispersed, and open to competition, is legitimate and healthful; but when concentrated and exalted above competition, it becomes a very different affair. This suggests what perhaps is the gravest ob-

jection to this plan, and that is, that it would destroy all competition. A dollar paper edited by a Board, at the centre of information, sustained by official influence and patronage, would supersede all the local papers of the land. A very large circulation, it is admitted, must be secured to admit of such a paper being sold at one dollar per annum. No paper confined to one district of the church can command such a circulation, and therefore no such paper could be afforded at such a price. All publications of the kind restricted in their circulation, must disappear before the great central organ. The question then is, whether it is better to have one paper or many? Whether all the good done by these numerous publications, each adapted to its peculiar district, can be accomplished, or adequately compensated, by one paper conveying one view of all matters to every part of the church? We doubt this very much.

This whole question, however, is in a great measure new to the church. It ought to be fully discussed. We have expressed the views of the subject which suggest themselves at the moment to us. We have no prejudices, and no fixed judgment on the matter, and are open to conviction. As far, however, as we can see at present, we think it would be better to leave the subject to private enterprise. It is not properly a church business.

Preaching without Notes.

Mr. E. T. Baird presented the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, This General Assembly has reason to believe that the practice of reading sermons in the pulpit is on the increase among our ministers; and being decidedly of opinion that it is not the most effective and acceptable method of preaching the Gospel. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That we do earnestly repeat the recommendation of the Assembly of 1841, that this practice be discontinued as far as practicable, and affectionately exhort our younger ministers, and candidates for the ministry, to adopt a different method, as more scriptural and effective, and more generally acceptable to God's people.

"Dr. Plumer moved to lay the resolution on the table

"Division was called for, and 56 voted to lay on the table and 76 against it.

“Dr. Plumer : When such a subject as this is taken up by an Assembly, it is absurd to expect to do any thing for the edification of the church of God, by means of a mere resolution : and if this resolution is adopted, does not the Assembly thereby express by their vote that Samuel Davies was not a pattern of preaching—that he who never, on any solemn occasion, entered the pulpit without having every word written, with a determination not to depart from his manuscript, who was the best preacher of his day—the man who has left behind him the best gospel sermons which were ever printed, that he to whom the king of Great Britain listened with awe—that this servant of God knew not how to preach to edification ; and that Dr. Chalmers did not do right who always laid his manuscript before him. The best sermon I ever heard from Dr. Archibald Alexander, of Princeton, were from his manuscripts. What do you do by this vote ? Do you change the practice of the church ? Do you effect any thing but to put an instrument in the hands of certain self-conceited members of the church, to find fault with their minister. Whenever I preach on the Trinity, or any abstruse doctrine of the gospel, when I want to weigh every word, and give sound doctrine to my people, I will use a manuscript. I will do it when I please. I never will consent to take instructions from such a quarter. I’ll carry my manuscripts where I please, and use them when I please. I am not responsible for this to the Assembly, or to any man, or body of men. The only effect of legislation on this matter will be vexation.”

After considerable discussion the resolution was adopted. We are of the number of those who think all such legislation unwise and derogatory to the character of the Assembly. Such matters lie beyond the legitimate sphere of their action. Their votes on such subjects can change no man’s practice, and therefore only serve to lessen the dignity of the body that passes them. In some parts of the church one method of preaching is preferred, and in others a different. Such preferences cannot be altered by the resolutions of any ecclesiastical body. Besides this, the sentiment expressed is one sided. No one mode of preaching is best for all men, or for all circumstances. Men must be left free to follow their own tastes or talents, and to adapt themselves to the circumstances in which they are placed. To

force the same method on all, would be like making all wear clothes of the same size and pattern.

There are three different modes of preaching which have their peculiar advantages and disadvantages. The first is that of mental composition, when not merely the heads or outline of the discourse, but the whole sermon is fully elaborated and impressed on the mind before going into the pulpit. This is the method in which the great speeches of such men as Webster and Calhoun, Lord Brougham and Sir Robert Peel are prepared. And in this way some of the first preachers of our own and of other churches are accustomed to indite their discourses. This is perhaps of all methods the best. It is however laborious. It requires great mental discipline, and great self-denial to carry out this method. It is also expensive. Discourses thus prepared perish usually with the delivery. We have heard it said by some who adopt this method, that it is as difficult for them to preach an old sermon as to make a new one. This is a great disadvantage. For so much depends on the bodily and mental state of the man when called upon to prepare a discourse, that if he must always depend on his present state, and have no provision laid up from whence to draw, he must often labour to great disadvantage.

The second method is to write out the discourse, and then commit it, or familiarize the mind with it so as to read it more or less freely. There are indefinite degrees of confinement to notes in the delivery of a written sermon. This has been the plan adopted by many of the greatest preachers the world ever knew. This was the method of Bossuet, Massillon, Bourdaloue, Saurin, of Edwards, Davies, Tennent, Chalmers. Even Whitefield and Wesley often adopted this method. This plan is laborious. There is indeed such a thing as extempore writing, as well as extempore speaking. But most men when they write, must think. The very process of putting their thoughts on paper gives them a definite form. Writing is the very best method of mental discipline. And the exceptions are so few to the remark, that no man understands a subject on which he has not written, as not to need being taken into account. Writing sermons and using notes more or less in their delivery, we therefore believe to be one of the very best means of securing not merely instructive and effective sermons, but a studious and

progressive ministry. We hail the increase of this method as proof of the intellectual progress of our church, and as one of the best omens of its true prosperity. We heard one of the most popular preachers of Alabama, if not the most popular in that or any of the southern states, say, that he always wrote his discourses, and that all the most promising ministers of his part of the country were in the same habit. While this method secures studious habits, intellectual progress, and instructive preaching, it has the further advantage of associating itself naturally with the other methods. It is impossible that a minister should write all the sermons he is called upon to deliver. Those most addicted to writing, probably deliver two discourses without notes to one with. Their weekly lectures, funeral and occasional sermons, are seldom or never written. It is said a young man asked the late Dr. Richards how many sermons a man could write in a week. The Doctor replied, a first-rate man could write one, a common man two, and that he knew some men who could write a dozen. The danger is not that writing will become too common, but that speaking without writing, which every minister must do so frequently, will supersede the more laborious method of preparation.

The third method of preaching is what is properly called extempore. By this we mean the plan of depending on the moment not merely for the language, but for the thoughts. This, of course, admits of degrees. The common method of extempore preachers is to think over a subject, and frame a general outline of the discourse in their minds, and leave the filling up to be suggested at the time of delivery. This previous preparation may be carried so far as to merge this plan into the first above mentioned; or it may amount to nothing more than may be done in a few minutes.

This is the easiest of all methods of preaching. There is not one man in a thousand who cannot attain the gift of extempore speaking. This is proved by the fact that all Methodist and Baptist ministers make the attainment. So do ninety-nine hundredths of all men who enter the ministry in other denominations. It is the lowest of all attainments, requiring nothing beyond composure, which, to some men, is natural, and by others is soon acquired. As it is the easiest, so it is the laziest of all methods. A man may teach, or farm, or engage all the week

in what business he pleases. He wants but a few minutes before service on Sabbath, to be prepared for an hour's flow of words. As it is the laziest, so it is the most unprofitable method both to speaker and hearer. Some men of natural eloquence will occasionally stir up the emotions of an audience and produce a powerful effect, but the general run of such preaching is vapid common-place. None but a man of rare abilities, of large and varied attainments, of mature and well digested knowledge, should venture to turn the spigot of his mind, and let the thoughts that first come run out for the nourishing of the people. If the sole object of preaching was excitement, there might be some reason in preferring a method whose only advantage is fervour. One of the speakers on the floor of the Assembly, asked how a lady would make out, who should undertake to scold from notes. The very illustration betrays the lowest possible conception of the office of a preacher. A preacher is no scolder, nor is he a mere exhorter, but a *διδασκαλος*. Teaching is his peculiar official duty; and none but a very thoroughly informed, or an inordinately conceited man, would think of teaching any grave subject extempore—least of all, the awful mysteries of God. These remarks have reference of course to extempore preaching, properly so called; and not to mere preaching without notes, after due preparation. The main thing is preparation. And it is because writing, in the great majority of cases, is essential to the habit of proper preparation for the pulpit, we are so desirous it should not be neglected. All the tendencies are towards such neglect, and the authority of the Assembly, in our humble judgment, was far more needed in the other scale.

QUARTERLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Earth and Man: Lectures on Comparative Physical Geography, in its Relation to the History of Mankind. By Arnold Guyot, Professor of Physical Geography and History, at Neuchatel, Switzerland. Translated from the French, by