

THE  
PRINCETON REVIEW.

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No. III.

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- ART. I.—1. *Introduction à l'Histoire du Bouddhisme, India.*  
Par E. BURNOUF. Paris, 1844.
2. *Manual of Buddhism.* By R. SPENCER HARDY.
3. *Eastern Monachism,* by the same.
4. *Notices of Chinese Buddhism.* By Rev. J. EDKINS. Shanghai: Published in the North China Herald, 1855-6.

IN the antiquity of its claims and the wide-spread influence of its dogmas, Buddhism comes to us as one of the most imposing systems which man has ever devised. Commencing with India, where it held sway for more than a thousand years, it sent its missions into Cashmere and Thibet on the north, to Ceylon on the south, to Birmah, Siam, Java, China and Japan, on the east, and to this day, though driven from the country of its birth, it holds sway in nearly every country of its adoption; while the number of its votaries far exceeds that of any other religious system on the globe.

To have sustained itself so long and so successfully, this system must have had some power of adaptation to the wants of mankind, and must also have found those in the course of its progress who have advocated its principles both with learning and zeal. Though it may now appear to us as a decayed and worn-out system, it has had its youth and vigour. The time was, when Kings and Emperors thought it their highest glory

The terrors of the Lord, with other lines of moving appeal, are arrayed with power before the ungodly and thoughtless. It would give us pleasure, if we had room, to transfer some of these passages to our pages. But they are passages having no special relation to his philosophic or theological peculiarities. They would at least, be quite as fully developed from the system he impugns. They are not the new things which are not true; but the true things which are not new. To these we could wish he had devoted himself, instead of developing a new philosophy of moral government by which to explain them. Here lies the fountal source of his errors. And so must it ever be with our human excellency of speech or wisdom. One word which the Holy Ghost speaketh, one ray of divine light shot by him into our sin-darkened souls, is worth more than all that wisdom by which the world never knew God.

We have believed, therefore have we spoken; plainly indeed, but with all that respect for the dead which is consistent with fidelity to the living, and to that, in our view, inestimably precious truth which is attacked in these pages as our readers have seen, in no soft or honeyed phrase. Dr. Taylor has passed beyond these conflicts, and is not under our review. His works are now given to the public for the purpose of moulding its opinions. They are of course on the same footing as other publications, amenable to the bar of impartial and faithful criticism. They compel the defence of what they assail.

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ART. V.—*The General Assembly.*

THE General Assembly met, agreeably to appointment, in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 19th, and in the absence of the Rev. Dr. Scott, the Moderator of the preceding Assembly, the Rev. Nathan Rice, D. D., was, on motion of Dr. McGill, chosen to preach the opening sermon, and to preside until a Moderator be chosen. Dr. Rice preached from 2 Cor. v. 7, "We walk by faith, not by sight."

The Stated Clerk reported, that he had received official

information of the organization of ten new Presbyteries, viz. Lewes, which was organized by order of the General Assembly; Potomac, Synod of Baltimore; Roanoke, Synod of Virginia; Omaha, order of Assembly; Western Reserve, Synod of Ohio; Hillsboro', Bloomington, and Saline, Synod of Illinois; and Siam, to be connected with the Synod of Albany. This is a missionary Presbytery in the country of the same name in Asia. These Presbyteries were ordered to be enrolled, and their Commissioners present received.

The Rev. WILLIAM L. BRECKINRIDGE, of Kentucky, was unanimously chosen Moderator, and the Rev. J. R. MANN, of New York, Temporary Clerk. Rochester, New York, was selected as the place for the next meeting of the Assembly.

*Demission of the Ministry.*

The Assembly of 1858 had sent down an overture to the Presbyteries, proposing an additional section to our Book of Discipline, providing that in certain cases a minister in good standing, might be permitted (or required) to demit the exercise of his office. Dr. Rice, as chairman of the Committee to whom the responses of the Presbyteries to this overture were referred, reported that one hundred and seven Presbyteries had replied, of which twenty-two were in the affirmative, and eighty-three in the negative. The overture was, therefore, rejected. Whether this decision expresses the mind of the church as to the whole question of demission, or simply as to the propriety of adopting the particular overture submitted to its judgment, we do not know. We hope the latter. We, although in favour of the recognition of the right and duty, under certain circumstances, of a minister's laying aside his office, should have voted against the adoption of the overture in question, because, as it appeared to us, it was inconsistent with itself, and failed to accomplish the desired end. At some future time, we hope, the question may be submitted to the church in its simple form.

*Church Extension.*

During the entire period covered by this report, the Committee laboured under great embarrassments, arising from the heavy liabilities with which they began the year, and the unpre-

cedented influx of applications. In 1857-8 only one hundred applications, calling for \$45,000, were received; while in 1858-9 there were one hundred and forty-one, calling for about \$62,000. These one hundred and forty-one applications were from churches in the bounds of thirty-one Synods, eighty-one Presbyteries, and twenty-nine States and Territories. During the year the applications of thirty-two churches, amounting to \$13,370, were stricken from the file, because the applicants had failed within two years to furnish the Committee with the necessary information. There remained on the file, April 1st, 1859, awaiting the receipt of additional facts, ninety-one applications, calling for at least \$41,000. Including sixty applications brought forward from the previous year, two hundred and one applications, calling for \$87,000, were before the Church Extension Committee, during the twelve months ending April 1st, 1859. Only five applications were declined during the year.

Notwithstanding these embarrassments, God prospered the work of church building, through the Committee, during their fourth fiscal year. Every appropriation was *paid* as soon as it became due without borrowing a dollar. Appropriations amounting to \$20,504.90 were thus *paid* to seventy-six churches, or eleven more than during the preceding year. Appropriations amounting to \$23,970.15 were *made* to eighty-three churches, or seven more than the year before. These eighty-three churches were in the bounds of thirty Synods, sixty Presbyteries, and twenty-five States and Territories. Apart from special donations, the average appropriation to each church was \$239.90. The receipts were \$29,342.34, or about \$4,600 more than during the previous year. The expenditures were \$23,538.68. The liabilities incurred, but not yet fully matured, exceed the means on hand, April 1, 1859, \$1,234.41.

The average cost of two hundred and fifty-five different church edifices to which the Committee have voted aid on their own responsibility since July, 1855, is \$2,097 each. The average number of members in the different churches aided, is thirty-four to each.

The Committee has continued to distribute the funds entrusted to them, as equitably as possible, over the whole church. In addition to the fact that the eighty-three appropriations of

the fourth fiscal year were scattered over thirty Synods, sixty Presbyteries, and twenty-five States and Territories, another fact ought to be mentioned, viz. that since July, 1855, the Committee have declined to make an appropriation to only *five* of the 280 different churches that have furnished the necessary information. Four of these five asked for sums entirely beyond the ability of the Committee, and one was a Union church.

Your Committee have continually felt it to be very important to obtain a full view of the destitution and wants of the church, in their department of labour. This information they have sought repeatedly, and in different ways. Finding all other methods inadequate, they, during the year under review, addressed a circular to all our churches with whose condition they were unacquainted. This circular contained, among others, the following inquiries, viz. Does your church own a house of worship sufficient for its present wants, and free from debt? In building your house of worship, (if you have one,) did you obtain aid outside of your own community? If you are without a suitable church edifice, can you secure one without the aid of the church at large? The replies we have received, and the information we have derived from other reliable sources, enable us to report the condition of two thousand two hundred and sixty-seven churches, or of about *two-thirds* of the whole number of churches now in connection with the General Assembly. Of these 2275 churches, five hundred and fifty-three, or nearly one in four, have no house of worship. Twenty-six churches worship in Union houses; one hundred and sixty-eight report their houses of worship as insufficient for their present wants; one hundred and ninety are in debt; seven hundred and seventy-seven had aid from abroad in building their church edifices; and three hundred and seventy-three cannot build without aid from the church at large. We have the names of all these different churches on file in our office.

These simple but startling facts show, more clearly than anything else, the magnitude of the Church Extension work, and we commend them to the earnest attention of the Assembly and the church.

Secretary Coe addressed the Assembly, asking, Will this

Committee likely be able to supply all reasonable demands of the church in the manner for which they were created? He thought it would, for there has been a constant healthful advance in the contributions of the churches—in the first year about \$10,000, the second \$23,000, the third \$25,000, and the present year about \$30,000. This work systematizes the contributions of the church, and turns them to the best account.

In four years 275 churches have been aided at an average cost of \$2,097 each. Such a work seems greatly needed, for about one hundred new churches are organized every year; and out of 2,267 edifices belonging to our church, 937 are more or less crippled by debt, or in insufficient houses. The churches aided lie about equally north and south of Indianapolis.

The Rev. H. J. Van Dyke introduced the usual series of resolutions in the commendation of the Committee, and of the important work to which their labours are devoted. These resolutions were supported by the Rev. Dr. Palmer and the Rev. W. W. McNair. Mr. Van Dyke then proposed another resolution, intended to restrict the application of feeble churches to the Committee on Church Extension, and to discountenance the solicitations of aid for special enterprises. The Presbyteries of New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Allegheny City, had sent up memorials calling the attention of the Assembly to this subject. This resolution gave rise to an animated and protracted debate, and was finally rejected. As might be expected, the pastors and churches to whom these applications are made, were in general disposed to urge the adoption of the resolution, while the representatives of the feeble churches took the opposite side. There can be no doubt that our city churches are very much annoyed by the frequency and importunity of applications for aid. Nor can it be questioned that some of these applications are unreasonable. But on the other hand, there must be many cases which cannot be met by any established organization, and where the alternative is assistance or death. It is the prerogative of poverty to beg; the privilege of wealth to give, and its right to refuse. It is best to leave the door open. It is far more that weak churches should be preserved from perishing, than that strong

ones should be spared annoyance. There are many humble spires pointing heavenward through our western wilds, which never would have raised their heads, had it not been for other aid than that which comes through the regular committee.

*Foreign Missions.*

The Rev. Dr. Wilson, Chairman of the Committee on the Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions presented their report.

The Rev. Dr. Lowrie, Secretary of the Board, said that we should consider that our Boards are as much a part of the business of this Assembly as is the North-western Seminary, which, like Aaron's rod, threatens to swallow up all others. It has more than once, in times past, been asked that at least one entire day of each session should be given up to this great work of Foreign Missions. He firmly believes that such a usage would exert a most happy influence on all subsequent proceedings. A great deal of labour is expended in our Annual Report; and yet, after all, it presents very inadequately the subjects treated of. They cannot be satisfactorily disposed of in a brief notice. A missionary's sailing, new fields of labour, &c., thus briefly touched upon, often really deserve to be brought far more fully before the Assembly. He feared we were disposed to put off this great subject with a mere routine show of duty and respect. He wished to call particular attention to the cause for thanksgiving for success afforded us. The work is progressing as never before. Never have there been such indications of the favour of God's providence, and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on missionary labour. There is India, which was in such a deplorable condition at the last meeting of this body; that country is now at peace, and the missionaries are sending loud calls for more labourers. Yet on account of the return of missionaries, ill health, &c., the number of our missionaries there is about sixteen less than one year ago. When the field is wider open than ever before, this deficiency is greatly to be lamented. Dr. Lowrie mentioned several interesting facts, indicating the operations of the Spirit of God on natives who had never seen a missionary. They had merely received the Scriptures—one had been studying

the word of God for six years, and they had come to the conclusion that this was the true religion. Is not this a wonderful indication of the presence of God's Spirit preparing for a great work among that people? What an opening! What a call to the church!

Look, too, at the opening of China—the greatest event of the age. The last intelligence received before he left the Mission House brought information of the conversion of twelve of the Chinese at Ningpo. Look, too, at the opening of Japan. In our Indian missions, too, in our own land, there is much to encourage. But there are missionary brethren here who can speak of these things. He wished the members of this Assembly could be present at the meeting of their Executive Committee, to see the straits in which they are sometimes placed when new missions are called for, or reinforcements, and the state of the funds apparently forbids it. He rejoiced to say that notwithstanding the hard times, the receipts from the churches had been larger somewhat than last year. But the coming year is the year to test the question as to what our church is willing to do to meet the claims of this great object. More young men are offering themselves than ever before, and it will not do merely to give to this Board as much as heretofore; much more is needed. And is there not an imperative claim upon us to listen to the “sound of the going in the mulberry trees,” in the signs of the times? He was glad to say that this cause had been steadily growing in the hearts of our people. Twenty-six years ago this Board received but about ten thousand dollars. But still, what are we even now doing compared with what we might do, and ought to do? The greatest discouragement to the Board as to the churches, is found in looking over the tables in the Appendix to the Annual Report, and seeing some of our largest and oldest churches, with able ministers, which are sometimes doing little or nothing for this cause in a whole year. This Board should at least have a hearing before God's people. He would ask, is it not reasonable that this cause should be presented at least once a year, and the opportunity given to contribute to this cause? There have been individual cases of benevolence, which in some instances have been very marked and touching. One of these



occurred lately in the contribution of twenty dollars by the poor widow of a minister. This spirit is a token for good, showing that the Lord is among his people. He hoped that even if the Assembly should dismiss this subject from the house after a short consideration, they would by no means dismiss it from their hearts.

Rev. Mr. Speer, late missionary to China, said when Jesus Christ had shed his blood on the cross, and had risen from the dead, he spake, during the forty days preceding his ascension, about the "things pertaining to the kingdom." Let us do the same. Other subjects here are important, but none more important than this. He had been twice called back from his field of labour by such ill health as he had thought would before this have taken him to the Assembly above.

How changed the aspect of the mission field in late years! When he first went to China some years ago, the first words were, "Kill him!" He never spent such a night of anguish as one of the first he spent in Canton. But that city has since reaped its recompense, and cannon balls have opened the way there for the gospel. He would remind the Assembly that the Chinese are not savages. Even in San Francisco there have been Chinese gentlemen of education and culture, who will compare favourably with any member of this house. Mr. Speer then read an extract from the paper of a Chinese merchant there, remonstrating against the effort to drive them away from California, or interfere with their rights, and protesting against their being degraded in public opinion to the level of negroes and Indians, the article evincing great intelligence and ability. He also remarked upon an appeal he held in his hand, from the Chinese of California to Congress, referring to the teachings of our religion as reason for our showing them as strangers—more leniency and kindness, and reminding us that material progress is not everything. You have in this small paper evidence of the high mental character of this people.

Brethren, let us ask what response will be given by our church to the appeals of Providence in the signs of the present times. He rejoiced in the revival, because of the promise it gives of increasing the supply of missionaries, and he rejoiced in that Elders' Prayer-meeting which is held here day after

day. It was cheering to see this awakening amongst our laymen.

The Rev. Mr. Gardiner said the eyes of the church, and, to some extent, of the world, are upon this Assembly, and our action on this, as well as other subjects, cannot fail of great influence. He believed there is an increasing interest in this cause, and he believed this results, in some measure, from the diffusion of more intelligence on the subject among our people. We have learned more and more to sympathize with our brethren in foreign lands. He could not refrain from bearing his testimony to the labour and zeal of our brethren who conduct this Foreign Board. The present report he considers the most interesting ever presented to this body. It brings unmistakable evidence that God is doing at least a great work of preparation among the nations for the reign of the Redeemer. He alluded to several of the different countries and stations where the Board's operations are presenting increased encouragement.

Mr. Spring said his heart had been stirred within him as he had listened to the call from our brother, the Secretary.

The Rev. Mr. Wilson, missionary from Africa, said he would read a resolution from the Presbytery of Western Africa, which, whether it was written by a negro or not, he knows there are negroes there who can write in a manner comparing favourably with the papers by Chinese read here this morning. He then read several very well written resolutions from that Presbytery, expressive of deep interest in behalf of the advancement of Christ's kingdom, giving thanks for the revival in America, hoping for its extension to Africa, &c., and calling on their white brethren beyond the waters to come over and help them. This, said Mr. Wilson, is the voice of Africa. Shall we not listen to it? They appeal particularly for the 200,000 within the boundary of Liberia, but there are millions of heathen around them. And what are we doing? We have nine missionaries in that vast population! According to a like ratio, if carried out in this country, we should have but three ministers of the Old-school church in these entire United States! And there is the same destitution throughout the heathen world. We, as a church, have but seventy-three missionaries in all the pagan nations—about ten millions to

every missionary of our church! God has brought us into peculiar relations to Africa, and that country into a peculiar relation to us. We are bound to no other heathen land by such ties. There are sons of Africa rising up amongst us to go back with the gospel to their fatherland; but this is not enough. We cannot, as yet, leave the work entirely in their hands. There is an imperative need for white labourers, especially to take charge of the education of coloured missionaries on the spot.

The Rev. Mr. Mattoon, from the Siam Mission, said: This work of Foreign Missions has become the great work of our church. That work is no longer to be kept up by mere sympathy with the sufferings of the missionaries, nor by reports of progress. The duty of the church does not rest upon such considerations, but upon the revealed will of God to his people. He wished he could lay before this body some of the difficulties which are to be encountered in carrying the gospel to heathen lands. Take his own place of labour as an illustration. Imagine a city of 300,000 in the midst of 4,000,000 inhabitants, and with no Christian land bordering on it, with no Christian churches, no Bibles, no Christian publications, and no people of God; but even then you will not have completed the picture. You must imagine also in that city 250 heathen temples, with their 10,000 priests, and their thousands and thousands of images. He had been in a temple containing 16,000 idols. He had seen an idol 145 feet long, surrounded by 900 smaller ones. Yet among this whole people of Siam you, as a church, have but *two missionaries!* That people have no proper conception even of the terms in which we attempt to convey to their minds the principles of our religion. With this great work of spreading the gospel devolving upon a few, you need not wonder that they cannot at once come back with victory perched upon their banners. A British statesman has gravely stated that you cannot induce the Chinese to give up his "tail," or the Siamese the tuft of hair on his head. How much less will they readily give up their superstitions and religion! But still we believe God's promises and purposes, and we sow in hope. With God a thousand years are as one day. But the great work is to be instrumentally done by the church.

He asks the sympathy and prayers of this Assembly and this church in behalf of the few labourers he had left behind him in the missionary field. Those brethren look with eager eyes for the doings of this Assembly, to see what is said and done here to cheer and help them in their arduous work.

The resolutions of the Committee were then unanimously adopted, and the Rev. Dr. Thornwell was called upon to lead the Assembly in prayer for the cause of Foreign Missions.

*Domestic Missions.*

Rev. Dr. Musgrave, Corresponding Secretary, spoke with reference to the Report. The receipts for the past year were more than \$11,000 above the average of the previous five years. The financial year was closed, exhibiting a balance of some \$26,000—being about \$8000 greater than the previous year. Under the most favourable circumstances the Board did not expect to close the year with a balance exceeding \$16,000; but, under the providence of God, the sum stated was the unprecedented amount. The appropriations were more uniformly greater than during the five previous years. The receipts were larger than anticipated, yet they were not larger than was desirable. Though God had blessed the labours of the Board, being kinder to us than our fears, let us pray for his continued and increasing favours. It had been the invariable custom of the Board to pay promptly the salaries of missionaries immediately upon their reporting themselves. It was desirable to add a little more to the salaries of missionaries, and to increase their number. In some sections of the country, on account of the failure of the crops, missionaries will need more money, and to plant new missions the resources of the Board must be strengthened. It was proposed to locate an Executive Committee of the Board at New Orleans, and a like one at some point in the North-West. In that case we shall have a Secretary at Philadelphia, to superintend the work in the East; a Secretary at Louisville; a Secretary at New Orleans, and a Secretary at Chicago, or at some other North-western point—each superintending the work of his especial region. The Board was not in want of machinery—it was in want of men. The demand for home missionaries was greater than the sup-

ply. We must pray to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth more labourers. The number of candidates for the ministry was increasing, for which he thanked God. He proposed that the Board pledge themselves to commission every man recommended by a Presbytery. We can only use what we have got. We cannot distribute \$200,000 when we have only \$100,000. We can only give what the churches enable us to give, and pledge ourselves to give employment to every man who comes recommended. To be sure, we could not say to A B, Go to Texas, or go to Oregon. He would reply that he would choose his own place. The Board could only offer fields of labour to those who, in the service of their Master, would avail themselves of them. But if every minister was employed, still there would not be enough. The average salaries of the missionaries during the past six years had been increased forty-three per cent. A man in ordinary business who had made this addition to his income would probably consider that he was doing very well. Besides, the Board had increased the number of missionaries, and had a heavy balance in the Treasury. The Board had been instructed by the Assembly to dispense with collecting agents. The plan inaugurated in 1854 had worked admirably. The number of contributing churches had increased fifty a year for the four years preceding the past two. The check during the last two years was certainly to be attributed to the failure of the crops and consequent financial embarrassment. In seasons of prosperity the increase will be renewed. The Board, to fulfil its mission, needs the sympathy and co-operation of the pastors of the church. Let them go practically to work, with earnest prayer to God, and next year we shall have a large advance in our funds to devote to domestic missionary purposes.

Rev. Dr. Humphrey, Chairman of the Committee on the Annual Report of the Board of Domestic Missions, presented their report. They respectfully invite the attention of the General Assembly to the topics which follow.

#### I.—THE PROGRESS OF THE WORK.

This has been gradual but steady. During the last six years, the number of missionaries has risen from 515 to 600, and the

annual receipts at the treasury have increased from \$81,000 to within a fraction of \$100,000. Within this period, the Board, in conformity with the prevailing doctrine of the church touching the divine ordinance of almsgiving, has dispensed with the agency system, and placed its reliance for funds wholly upon what is known among us as the Plan of Systematic Benevolence. Nothing in the history of the Board is more satisfactory than the successful conduct of its affairs through this transition period.

#### II.—THE LIMITATION OF ITS PROGRESS.

It must be continually borne in mind, that one of the most serious limitations imposed upon the progress of the work, is the want of labourers. It becomes us humbly and reverently to acknowledge our absolute dependence upon the Lord of the harvest, and then to give thanks to his blessed name, for the recent effusion of his Holy Spirit on our congregations and schools of learning, whereby we have good hope that the Master is about to multiply labourers for his vineyard.

#### III.—THE OVERTURE FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

An overture from the Synods of Texas and Mississippi, respecting the missions in that region, laid before the last Assembly, and referred to the consideration of the Board, is on the table of the Assembly, and this Committee submits herewith a resolution on the subject.

#### IV.—INVESTIGATION PROPOSED.

It is now thirty-one years since the Board received its present organization. In the meantime, changes, every way remarkable, have occurred, in the state both of the country and the church. The territorial limits of the Republic have been enlarged, so as to include Texas and the Pacific coast, and the intermediate region. Many new states have been admitted into the Confederation; vast regions which in 1828 were almost unknown to our geography, have become inhabited by our people; the population of the country has more than doubled. The church also has been multiplied two-fold in all its outward elements, to wit, in the number of its Presbyteries, Synods, ministers, congregations, and communicants. The faci-

lities for the spread of the gospel, moreover, were never before so numerous, nor the fields so broad and inviting. And more than all, the repeated effusions of the Holy Spirit have imparted vigour and purity to the inward life of the church, and are so preparing it for its work.

In the judgment of the Committee, the time has now come when the General Assembly should examine thoroughly and carefully the Constitution of the Board of Domestic Missions to the end, that it may, if possible, be more closely adjusted to the present posture of our affairs, and be inaugurated and equipped for the immense work now before the church in the home field.

The Committee, therefore, submit to the consideration of the Assembly the following resolutions:

*Resolved, 1.* The General Assembly gratefully recognizes the blessings of the Head of the church upon its Domestic Missions, and upon the labours of the Board to which the care of these missions has been entrusted.

*Resolved, 2.* The Assembly finds in the history of the Board every reason to cherish the settled conviction of the church respecting the ordinance of alms-giving, and its proper administration by the office-bearers; and it exhorts all the congregations under its care to maintain this ordinance as a part of religious worship.

*Resolved, 3.* The Board is instructed to establish in the city of New Orleans an Advisory Committee, with a District Secretary, whose duty it shall be to set forward the work of missions in the South-west—the details to be arranged by conference between the Board and said Committee.

*Resolved, 4.* The Board is also empowered to make a similar arrangement at the North-west, if, after consultation with the brethren in that region, such a measure shall appear to be advisable.

*Resolved, 5.* The attention of the Board is particularly called to the Pacific coast as a field of missions.

*Resolved, 6.* A Committee of ——— members shall be appointed by this Assembly, with instructions to confer with the Board, and report to the next Assembly what changes in the organization and methods of the Board are necessary, in

order to its greater efficiency and wider usefulness. This Committee is particularly charged to report on the expediency of the following measures:

The reduction of the number of members in the Board, and its organization somewhat after the form of the Committee on "Church Extension."

The removal of the Board to some place nearer the centre of the Western missionary fields.

The establishment of several Executive Committees and Corresponding Secretaries in different parts of the church, these officers to be invested with co-ordinate powers; or,

The establishment of a single central Executive Committee, with Advisory Committees and District Secretaries, as provided herein for the South-west.

The Committee will consider the question as to how many officers will be needed in the Central Board, and the division of labour among them.

The Committee will also report upon any other matters which they may find within the range of this inquiry.

This report led to a very protracted and interesting debate. The third resolution, directing the appointment in the city of New Orleans of an Advisory Committee, and of a District Secretary, was met by a resolution recommending, or requiring, the appointment of a similar Committee in the North-west, and of another in California. This of course brought up the whole question of the organization of the Board, and of the best method of conducting its operations. In a matter of so much importance, and involving so many interests, personal and ecclesiastical, hundreds of missionaries and their families being directly concerned in the success of the Board, and hundreds of destitute places, each having special claims in the estimation of those immediately cognizant of their wants, two things would seem to be inevitable. First, that some places should think themselves slighted, or unfairly dealt with; and, second, that new plans of operation should suggest themselves as remedies for the deficiencies or neglects which were found or felt to exist under the present system. It is wonderful, therefore, that the Board of Domestic Missions has not been pulled to pieces by these conflicting forces long ago. Our other Boards



go on comparatively unobstructed. They sail in a calm and open sea. But the Board of Domestic Missions has to navigate amid a thousand islands and shoals. Every member of the Assembly has a right to be a pilot, and every one tries to get his hand on the wheel. This is natural and unavoidable. The good sense and piety of the church have hitherto, by the grace of God, preserved the Board from being shipwrecked, and from the necessity of altering its principles and modes of operation at every successive meeting. Every little while, however, there is more or less of a storm. Now California is neglected, or the South is overlooked, or the claims of the North-west inadequately met. Sometimes the Board goes too fast, and gets into difficulties, so as to be unable to meet its obligations; sometimes it goes too slow, and fails to spend even the money in its treasury. Some propose to meet all difficulties by removing the seat of the Board; others by destroying all centralization, and having independent committees, north, south, east, and west, and north-west, and south-west. Others again think the Board a nuisance, and insist that all we need is a committee. Some seem to believe that five men, if called a Board, will do nothing; but if called a Committee, will astonish the world by their efficiency. We cannot think there is so much in a name. Our missions, whether foreign or domestic, are really conducted by the executive committees of the Boards. The Boards themselves might well be dispensed with, for two-thirds or four-fifths of the time; but occasions must now and then occur, when a body larger than the committee and smaller than the Assembly is desirable or indispensable. When such occasions do occur, if you have no Board, *i. e.* no body capable of being called together, and devoting days, or weeks, if necessary, to investigation and deliberation, you will be forced to create one, *pro re nata*. It is impossible that the Assembly can discharge this service. To abolish the Boards, and commit everything to executive committees appointed by the Assembly, is in effect to make those committees in a great measure independent and irresponsible. In Scotland, they have committees, and no Boards, intervening between them and the Assembly; but they have a standing commission of the Assembly—a body not larger than one of our Boards—always ready to exercise a

supervising and controlling power over these committees. If we do away with Boards, we hope we shall carry the matter through, and have a commission.

It is very natural that brethren, living in the midst of our destitutions, should think that a committee near at hand would be more efficient, and more ready to listen to their applications, than one located a thousand miles distant. The appointment of such committees, as it appears to us, would tend to the following results: 1. To supersede the Presbyteries in their appropriate work. Those Presbyteries are on the ground; they know their own necessities, are alive to their own wants. To place over them a committee appointed either directly or indirectly by the Assembly, is to take out of their hands their proper duty, and lay the burden upon a body not so well able to bear it. 2. These committees must be either advisory or self-determining. If the former, they are unnecessary and cumbrous; if, on the other hand, they have authority to commission and locate missionaries, and determine their compensation, then it will be impossible to have a common treasury. No one committee can know what resources are at its command, or how far other committees have drawn on the common stock. All unity of action must be destroyed. A committee in one district may expend or promise five or ten times the sum to which it is entitled on a fair division of the resources at command. 3. This must inevitably lead to each committee being thrown on its own resources; and the very idea of a common life in the church, and a common obligation pressing all parts equally, must be given up. The West must depend on the West; the South on the South; and the East on the East. Instead of these committees, with their several organizations, involving a great outlay of time and money, we see not why every desirable object may not be attained by the appointment of exploring agents. Agents for the mere collection of money are unpopular and unnecessary, under the operation of an effective plan of systematic benevolence; but agents may be needed, whose duty it shall be to explore each an extended district, assist in the organization of churches, in exciting and directing efforts for the raising of funds, and especially in reporting to the executive committee of the Board the most

eligible places for missionary labour. If the church is one, it must act as one; and this supposes a central administration, a common treasury, and an equalizing distribution, so that the abundance of one part may supply the deficiencies of another.

Besides these objections which had reference to the organization of the Board, there were others bearing on its mode of action and the conduct of its officers. These were urged with a great deal of warmth, not to say acrimony. Of the justice of the charges thus presented, we know nothing more than can be learned from the report of the debates on the floor of the Assembly. And we think it due to the Board and its officers to say that, judging from the data thus afforded, the charges were triumphantly met by the Secretary, Dr. Musgrave. The power of that gentleman in debate, which has so often been exhibited in our ecclesiastical bodies, as well as his energy, diligence, and skill in the discharge of his official duties, prove that he is one of the ablest men in the church. His title to be thus regarded was fully vindicated by his speech in the last Assembly.

Any man who occupies a public office in the church, whether as pastor or secretary, may easily satisfy himself what are the moral principles which should govern brethren in bringing charges against one of their own number. He has only to ask himself what would, in his estimation, justify a man in arraighing him before the public or an ecclesiastical body, for his official conduct. He would doubtless say—1. That the charges should be grave and specific. He would feel aggrieved, should any one rise in Presbytery, and charge him with want of wisdom in his dealing with this or that inquirer, or with neglect of preparation for some particular duty, or with the vague and general fault of lack of energy, diligence, zeal, &c. If a congregation is dissatisfied with a pastor on such general grounds, they can obtain redress by requesting him to resign; or if the church is convinced that one of its executive officers is deficient in ability or diligence, it is easy and proper to put a more efficient man in his place. But any pastor, professor, or secretary, would feel in his own case that charges, which are either trivial or indefinite, should not be publicly presented. 2. He would also feel that any charge thus exhibited, should

be well ascertained and authenticated. 3. That not only should all proper means be used to ascertain the truth of the charge, but to redress the evil complained of, before an appeal is made to the church, or to the public. These are not arbitrary rules; they are moral principles, and their violation must work manifold evil. So far as the accuser is concerned, it injures his character and his reputation. It is not enough that he is a member of the Assembly, having a right to call its Boards and officers to account. That is not the point. The question is, How does he exercise that right? Does he submit to be guided in the exercise of his admitted prerogative, by those moral principles which he expects and demands should be observed by others in their conduct towards himself? Nor is it enough that he disclaims all unworthy motives, and professes his attachment to the Boards, and his zeal for their purity and efficiency. All this might be said by any one who should rise in Presbytery and deliver a harangue against the inefficiency, want of zeal, or success of one of his fellow-pastors. Such professions are altogether inoperative in arresting the judgment which every fair-minded, conscientious man pronounces on him who indulges in a public assembly in trivial, uninvestigated charges against the ministers and officers of the church. This is not the only evil. Such charges tend to weaken confidence, and thus to cripple the Boards in all their operations; and must tend to drive from their service men of ability and feeling. How far these principles were violated by some members of the last Assembly, every one must judge for himself.

Dr. Musgrave was not a member of the Assembly, but was permitted to speak in reply to the accusations directed against his policy and conduct. The following is the report of his remarks as found in the *Presbyterian*.

Rev. Dr. Musgrave expressed thanks to the house for the courtesy extended to him, in permitting him to address the Assembly. He had not expected to speak again, and therefore had not taken notes of the speeches that had been made, and would have to depend upon his memory; and if he had mistaken, or did not remember aright, he begged to be corrected. He was reminded of a saying of Dr. Nevins, that if Christianity had not been of God, it would long ago have been destroyed

by its friends. He could apply the same remark to the Board of Domestic Missions; if it were not of God, it had long ago perished under the attacks of its friends. He was glad, however, that the brethren had delivered themselves so freely. They doubtless feel *better*, and I do not feel *worse*. Indeed, he sympathized with much that had been said; and with those who had said it. He knew that our missionaries who have come here with complaints, and with a little disposition to find fault, are honest and earnest in all they say. They have difficulties and trials, and are apt to think that more might be done for them. But it is our grief, as well as theirs, that we are not able to do for them all that they need. We would fain increase their number in every field, and increase their allowance to their entire satisfaction; and if the Board had it in their power to do so, it would be done. But the means are not forthcoming.

He would have to pay his respects to the speakers one by one; not that he meant to be personal, but as he had taken no notes, he would have to aid his memory by associating the several persons with what they said. He had no personal feelings to gratify; he felt no resentment at the somewhat severe criticisms that had been passed upon the Board. He doubted not the brethren honestly felt that they ought to say what they did; and he should reply to them with candour and frankness. And first, as to the brother from Minnesota, (Mr. Riheldaffer,) who complained that that field had been neglected, and that a due proportion of funds had not been allowed them. He would simply state the fact, that owing to the importance and alleged expensiveness of that brother's particular field of labour, the Board had allowed six hundred dollars—just three times the usual amount to that brother—and continued all he asked till his church became self-sustaining. And in no instance that he knew of had the Board failed to do for other parts of that same general field all that, in the circumstances, and with the means at their disposal, it was possible to do.

He next paid his respects to the gentleman who sat just here (near the speaker,) the gentleman from Brooklyn (Mr. Van Dyke.) That gentleman, in a *tone* which the speaker could not interpret, had said that we had not granted all the

applications that had been *duly* made; he gave particularity to the phrase "duly made." So far as he recollected, there was no application refused which had been *duly* made. The brother denies this, and referred to cases to substantiate his denial. The brother took exception to the use of the phrase, "so far as I recollect." Now, he had a frank explanation of this. You will remember that we have two Executive Committees, one at Louisville, and one at Philadelphia. Applications are made for missionary aid to both, and it is difficult for the members of one Committee to have such intimate knowledge of the details of the transactions of the other, as to be at all times able with certainty to recollect, so that we had to speak with the caution used. And you will remember that we expect the Presbyteries to recommend all the appointments made within their bounds, and no application is *duly* made unless made through the Presbytery, and according to the rules laid down for the direction of the Board, and approved again and again by the General Assembly. So that it will be perceived the phraseology which was repeated with such mysterious peculiarity, is just such as our rules and circumstances render proper. He had met Dr. Hill, of the Louisville Committee, to-day, and inquired of him whether he recollected of any application having been rejected by that Committee, and he assured him that he believed none had been rejected. There was another thing in that speech that needs explanation. It was that we had tied up that big balance at the end of the year, and had accumulated it by refusing to appoint missionaries upon proper application, and by curtailing the allowance of missionaries. Now, he had to say that neither was *true*. It was impossible for such a state of the case to be true, as the books will show. Dr. Musgrave went into an explanation of the receipts of the Board, to show that at one part of the year the receipts had fallen off. During the first two months they had fallen off between \$6000 and \$7000, and during the first ten months had fallen off \$14,000 up to January. And, indeed, the balance which we are blamed with hoarding, was accumulated during the last two months of the fiscal year, and mainly during the last.

Now in this connection he wished to say another thing—that the impression was attempted to be made, that whilst we had

that large balance on hand the Board had rejected three or four applications to go to California, and had stinted the missionaries this side of the Rocky Mountains. Now, that there were so many applications was news to him. He did not know it before, and believed it not to be true. There was but one, a student in one of our Theological Seminaries, who applied to the Board to be sent to California, at the time the receipts had so fallen off as to embarrass our operations. He was not yet through his theological studies, and we said to him, If you will wait until about January, and the funds will warrant, we will send you. Some time after we got a letter from this young man, informing us he had a prospect of settlement in New Jersey, and that he wanted to know whether he was to be sent to California, or had better accept a call in New Jersey. In view of our circumstances, and in view of some things personal to the young man, the Executive Committee advised him to stay in New Jersey; and this is the case out of which so much has been made. He adverted to the criticism upon that part of the Report which referred to the operation of the plan of Systematic Benevolence. It had been laid to the charge of this Board by the brother from Brooklyn, that there were seventeen hundred churches that had not adopted that system, and that in our report we alluded to the financial crisis as accounting for a falling off in receipts a part of the year. But is the Board of Missions to blame if the recommendations of the Assembly are not adopted by the churches in regard to Systematic Benevolence? Why single out the Board of Domestic Missions, and blame us for the fact that the plan of Systematic Benevolence has not done all that could have been desired? Why hold out the idea that the Board of Missions is unpopular because so many churches have failed to contribute to its treasury? Do not other Boards make the same complaint? Did not the Board of Publication make a similar reference to the monetary crisis? Is it candid, is it fair, to draw such an inference—that because so many churches have failed to contribute, it is because of dissatisfaction with the administration of the Board, whilst other Boards complain of the same thing? Is not the number of churches that do not contribute to the other Boards as great as that which fails to

contribute to this Board? Why not give the statistics of all the Boards in this behalf?

Let me pay my respects, said Dr. Musgrave, to the gentleman from Wisconsin, (Mr. Heckman.) There was a gentleman living in the State of New York who wished to go to Wisconsin. The Synod applied to the Board to appoint him the itinerant missionary of the Synod. They asked the Board to give \$600, and he was to gather \$200 from the field; but we were to underwrite for the whole \$800. We demurred to do the latter, but finally consented, upon being assured that we would be asked to pay only the \$600. We were obliged, however, ultimately to pay the whole amount. The Synod asked his re-appointment next year; the Board declined doing it on the same conditions; but at the request of a Presbytery, commissioned the same man as a missionary at Stevens' Point, with a liberal allowance. Dr. Musgrave gave a full detail of this matter, which the reporter could not catch entirely. He proceeded to show that, of all the States within our bounds, Wisconsin had a larger proportion of men and funds bestowed upon her than any other State. And it was hardly grateful for them to come up in such a fault-finding spirit. And yet he could not much wonder. Living out there, and seeing the destitutions around them, they were so absorbed in their own field and their own work, as to forget that there were other fields equally destitute and needing aid. They were zealous, hard working brethren; they were ardently desirous to win souls and spread the cause, and their own field seems so big that they cannot so well see any other. Such earnest asking for more men to be sent he had never heard, and such importunate beggars he had never met. He admired their zeal; but must remind them that the Board cannot give them all the men nor all the money. It is the duty of the Board to *equalize*, as far as possible, the distribution of the funds; and not withhold from one part of the wide field in order to give more than their share to another.

Now, he would say a word in regard to the suggestion, modestly put forth, doubtless, by brother McNair, that the action of a Presbytery should be *final*; and that the Board has no right to review the recommendations of the Presbyteries.



Now, it so happens that some of the Presbyteries are almost entirely composed of missionaries. He proceeded to show the practical operation of the adoption of this principle in such cases. The members of Presbytery are voting the amount of salary, not of other men, but of themselves. One brother thinks he cannot get along without so much, and another without so much; and thus they agree to fix the amount of their own allowance from the Board; and if the Board has no discretionary power, it will easily be seen, that so long as there is human nature in man, each Presbytery would be likely to demand more than their proportion of the funds, and if their request is yielded to, others must be left without any. We are willing, perfectly willing, that the committee which has been proposed may be appointed, and may suggest something that may increase the efficiency of the Board. He cared not what modifications the Assembly might make, if they were only wise and practicable. He and the other members of the Board had no selfish interests to subserve; all they wanted was to have the Lord's work in this great enterprise well done.

Let this plan of Systematic Benevolence be adhered to if you think it best. It is of the Assembly's inauguration, and if worked well, will accomplish all you wish. But we are not wedded to it; and if the Assembly can make any improvement either in the constitution or the efficiency of this Board, we shall most heartily rejoice. He had like to have forgotten an amendment offered by his beloved brother Smith, requiring the Board to appoint every suitable man that applies to go to California. If the Assembly deemed it wise and equitable to adopt it, the Board would obey; but he respectfully asked the house to calculate the results of such an order. If the Board shall be ordered to commission all that the Presbyteries in California might ask, and at the rates of allowance which they might think necessary, there would be a trying deficiency, he feared, for the missionaries on this side of the Rocky Mountains, unless vastly larger receipts can be had. Twenty or thirty thousand dollars sent to that State, would leave but a small dividend for the remaining States. To send but fifteen or twenty missionaries to California, would abstract a large sum. We all love the Board of Domestic Missions; even the brethren who have

severely criticised it. Let us show our love by telling of its good deeds, as well as of its failures—by coöperating and building it up, rather than pulling it down.

If, instead of coming here to find fault and complain of the Board for inefficiency, these missionaries had come and gratefully told us of what the Lord had done through their instrumentality; told us of their trials and successes; told us of what the Board had done for them, as well as what they had not done; if they had stirred our hearts by describing the crying wants of their field, and reciting what had already been accomplished, how they would have encouraged and strengthened us, and how much benefit might have been reflected upon them and their labours! But, doubtless, they do feel a cordial love for the Board; and if some of them have seemed to complain, it is rather to be attributed to their earnest zeal to accomplish more, than to any lack of grateful sentiment for what God has done. He thanked the Moderator and the Assembly for the courtesy extended to him, in permitting him thus to defend the Board, of which he is one of its officers; and expressed the hope that the whole discussion would result in good to the cause we all love.

Of the specific complaints against the Board, the two which seem to have been most strenuously urged were, first, that too large an unexpended balance was left in the treasury; and, secondly, that a young man who had applied to be sent to California, was refused. As to the former of these, it was answered, first, that the sum constituting that balance was in great part received during the closing months of the financial year, and could not safely be counted upon as the ground for enlarged operations; and, secondly, that it was already needed to meet the obligations of the Board. As to the other complaint, it was answered, that the appointment of the young man in question was only deferred at the time of application, and not refused; that it was a personal, and not a presbyterial application; and that there were, subsequently, doubts created as to his fitness for that field of labour. It is perfectly obvious that the Committee cannot be called upon to appoint every one who may offer his services for any particular field, even when such offer is sustained by the recommendation of a Presbytery, much

less when it comes only from the man himself. The Presbytery looks at its own wants; the Committee has to look at the wants of the whole church, and therefore cannot be made the organ of recording and executing the decrees of each separate Presbytery.

The recommendations of the Committee on the report of the Board were substantially adopted. One of their recommendations was, that a committee of investigation be appointed to examine into the organization and operations of the Board, and report to the next Assembly. We wait with no little solicitude for the action of that committee.

*Board of Publication.*

Rev. Dr. Chapman, Chairman of the Committee on the Board of Publication, presented the following resolutions, which were adopted:

*Resolved, 1.* The Assembly desire to record with gratitude the favour extended to this enterprise by the Great Head of the church. They would reiterate their sense of the high value of the Board in counteracting the pernicious effects of a useless, vicious, and infidel literature, by disseminating far and wide the seeds of a true theology and vital piety. In these respects the Board of Publication is a valuable arm of the church, and has proved itself to be an efficient and honoured instrumentality in the hands of God's servants.

*Resolved, 2.* The great object of the Board's organization and efforts is the widest possible circulation of the pure, undisguised, complete truths of God's blessed word. It would use the press as a mighty agency in sending abroad on moral wastes the pure and refreshing streams of light, knowledge, and salvation. It aims to furnish the church and the world a literature through whose pages shall gleam the great and precious doctrines of our Confession and Catechisms—doctrines which have cheered the church in the past, and which constitute the hope of the world in the future. Its publications, whilst cultivating charity, liberality, and the largest measure of love to all who bear the Master's image, still display a cordial, affectionate, tenacious adherence to the distinctive principles which have ever marked us as a church.

*Resolved*, 3. It gives the Assembly great pleasure to mark and record the increased evidence which God is rolling on the world, of his favour toward the colportage effort. These humble and self-denying men are doing God's work; they deserve and should receive the aid and the sympathy of God's people. With the books of the Board in their hands, and with the love of Christ and of souls warming their hearts, they often, as pioneers, go before the missionary and the minister, preparing the way of the Lord. Thus greatly do they aid in diffusing, amid regions of moral darkness, Christian light and knowledge. The Assembly would therefore earnestly urge on the churches under their care, the importance of this arm of the enterprise, exhorting them to increased liberality in their contributions, that the operations of colportage may be enlarged, and that the publications of the Board may, through their instrumentality, be more widely diffused.

*Resolved*, 4. The General Assembly with great pleasure notice, among other publications of the Board, "The Letters of John Calvin." They doubt not that this rich and varied correspondence will throw new light and increased brilliancy upon the labours and character of that distinguished servant of God, and his illustrious compeers; that it will be a fruitful source of delight and information to all who are interested in the history of the great Reformation.

*Resolved*, 5. The Assembly rejoices in the opportunity of expressing its approbation of the efforts made by the Board to meet the wants of the youth of our land, as regards Sabbath-school Libraries. These have too often and long been carelessly, sometimes ignorantly chosen. The imprint of the Board is a guaranty of their merit and character. The publications of this kind are judicious, attractive, and sound. The Assembly recommend, that in the purchase of libraries, either for gifts to feeble churches or for use at home, these books of the Board should have the preference.

*Resolved*, 6. The Assembly would especially commend *The Home and Foreign Record* to a more general patronage throughout the church; trusting that in its diligent perusal, members of the communion might catch more of the spirit of

missions and of Christian benevolence so richly pervading its columns. They also recommend *The Sabbath-school Visitor* as a most excellent publication to be circulated through our Sabbath-schools, and among the children of our charge.

*Resolved*, 7. That in view of the reasonable representations of the Board of Publication, in their Annual Report, the Assembly consider that the performance of the order of the last Assembly, for expunging hymn 336, and inserting some other, had best be postponed till the way may appear clear for a careful revision of the whole book of Psalms and Hymns.

The Committee recommend the approval of the Annual Report of the Board of Publication, and that a copy thereof, with these resolutions, be handed to the Executive Committee for publication.

Rev. Mr. Schenck, Corresponding Secretary of the Board, said—The Board of Publication is engaged in a great work, though a very quiet one. Its publications go all over the country, and to other countries; yet who can adequately trace them? Probably nearly 4,000,000 souls annually are reached by the truth from the pages of this Board. In the brief period of its existence it has circulated publications enough to have given the gospel to every man, woman, and child in this country. And this truth is the sound, substantial system which we believe, as a church. We do not, indeed, teach our people to be bigots; but we do desire that our children and young people shall be taught to understand and love their own denomination and its doctrines. These publications are also doing a great work in our families. What pastor has not felt their influence in strengthening his hands? How many doubts and difficulties do they meet and remove, which can hardly with propriety be brought into the pulpit! And what an assistance do pastors themselves derive from these publications, in enriching their sermons and elevating the tone of their preaching! The work accomplished by the tracts alone, too, is a most important one. The number of these little messengers sent abroad the last year has been doubled—doubtless owing to the glorious outpouring of the Spirit throughout the land.

As to Colportage, it was reported last year that it had

become necessary to reduce the number of colporteurs, on account of the hard times. The number is now being again enlarged, and he could say the quality of the colporteurs was improved by having dropped some of the more inefficient in the reduction.

As to the receipts, there has been a diminution of *sales*, owing to the reduced number of colporteurs and the pressure of the times; but the receipts by donations to the Board from the churches exceed the last year nearly \$6000. A larger number of churches have contributed than ever before—the increase over the previous year being somewhat over one hundred. This is very cheering.

The Secretary then earnestly called upon the Assembly, through the churches, efficiently to co-operate in the Board's measures, through contributions, seeking out proper colporteurs, purchasing and recommending the books, and by sincere and humble prayer. Those engaged in this work feel sometimes that it does not receive that share of the prayers of God's people which it should have. How seldom do we hear prayer offered for the press! The power of God's Spirit is indispensable to the efficacy of printed truth, as well as of that which is preached.

The Rev. Drs. Smith and Anderson, and the Rev. Messrs. Graves and Banks spoke in support of the report of the committee.

Rev. Dr. Edwards said he had in his mind some things which he thought ought to be said and heard by this Assembly. We are all here to deliberate as well as to vote. He wished to say that he fully responds to the words of commendation of this Board spoken here to-day. He hopes it will be taken for granted that the Board of Publication is not only desirable, but indispensable. He loves and honours the Board of Publication. He is not a member of that Board, a fact which has some meaning when you remember that a Committee is a *transparent* body, whilst Boards are *screens* through which the public cannot always see. His knowledge, therefore, is only that of an outside observer. What he had to say would be simply in the way of suggestion. He regretted to say that some things are omitted in the Annual Report which he would like to have

seen in it. He would like to have known the number of contributing churches, compared with the whole number of churches. He would like, also, to have known the fiscal concerns of this Board in more detail. But he would take the best facts he could find, and say something upon them. Here is a Board calling for benevolent contributions. It receives from \$20,000 to \$25,000, and in disbursing this it spends about \$12,000!—about sixty per cent. is thus laid out in working the machinery. Could or would any private publishing concern stand this? Look at some of these expenses. Here is the Corresponding Secretary, who receives \$1000 for general services, and \$1500 more for supervising Colportage; and yet another gentleman is reported as receiving \$1500 per annum as Superintendent of Colportage. Might not the office of Corresponding Secretary and that of Superintendent of Colportage be merged? Then there is a Treasurer at a salary of \$1000 per annum. His work was formerly performed gratuitously. Now we give \$1000 for it, although the service requires but three-quarters of an hour a day. Might not this office and that of book-keeper be also merged.

Then there is the *Home and Foreign Record*, which has a circulation of only eighteen thousand in our whole church. He would ask whether there may not be private interests willing to clog the wheels of this *Record*, on purpose the better to promote their own ends? There is also the *Sabbath-School Visitor*, published in one city, and edited in another—a paper whose character, as well as that of the *Record*, he deploras as unworthy of the church. Can we not have an editor to take charge of these papers, and make them what they should be?

But there is another point. The Report asks leave to add certain doxologies to the Hymn Book. Now there was an overture offered in the Presbytery of Philadelphia to the General Assembly, asking for this very thing; when, strange to say, the Board of Publication opposed it, and defeated it. Now that same Board comes here, and asks permission to do it themselves. What is the meaning of this? Does the Board intend to *edit* our book of praise? Yes, sir; they have already done that. They have tampered with the doxologies, and placed

them under a new arrangement. These are things which should be looked into. It should have the serious attention of this Assembly, and we should know how this great institution is managed, and how the funds of the church are used. Is this Board of Publication administered with due economy, and with that judgment and wisdom which it demands? The impression is very distinct on his own mind, that the Board of Publication claim to be the peculiar proprietors of our Hymn Book; claiming to edit and alter it at their pleasure. He referred to the several changes that had been made in the doxologies, and endeavoured to support his impressions. The Board, even when the General Assembly direct them to make an alteration in the Book, and specify the change, reply that it will cost something to do it; and instead of yielding obedience to the last General Assembly, they come up to this one with reasons why the former should not be obeyed. He thought this assumption of power and responsibility was incompatible with the control which belonged to the Assembly. He cared less for the matter to be done; the change proposed was not a thing of vital importance, but the principle involved is one of vital importance. If the Assembly is only to be obeyed when its recommendations and directions are agreeable to the Board, the control of the Assembly is at an end, and a wholesome responsibility can never be preserved.

There is another thing. The manner in which the Board manage their distributing operations is not satisfactory. While other similar institutions have a very efficient system of dispersing their books and tracts, by establishing depositories, and employing the trade, this Board concentrates upon the bookstore in Philadelphia almost all their force, so that the efforts to push the publications of the Board into the remoter cities and parts of the country are not such as the exigencies of our cause demand. We ought to spread our publications more widely and rapidly throughout the country, and use all the agencies and means which other booksellers do, to render these publications accessible, and put them before the people. Now, he would do his own summing up. He had spoken of things that had fallen under his own observation, and had not relied upon mere reports. It was with regret that he felt called upon



to say what he had; but when duty was imperative, he could not shrink from it.

1. That this Board is the *costliest* of our Boards in proportion to the work done and the money received and disbursed. If he understood the statistics published, the per centage was very large. At the same time it least fulfils its mission as an aggressive institution of the church. Whilst other societies are flinging their publications broadcast over the land, we were proceeding at so slow and cautious a rate as to make very little advance year by year. This may be the effect of our maladministration, or it may be attributed to other hindering circumstances; but it became the Assembly to ascertain, if possible, where the deficiency lay. 2. They ought to extend their system of colportage, so as to make it more efficient than it is. So far from doing this, the Report shows that, with increased resources, they have really been contracting this important department. 3. They ought to make a full exhibit of their accounts annually to the General Assembly. As presented, it is difficult or impossible to understand them. They should present a balance sheet, so that the Assembly could be fully satisfied in regard to receipts and expenditures. This, he thought, had not been done, and he thought the Assembly should insist upon it. 4. The Board of Domestic Missions had been blamed for having a working balance in their treasury, to meet the current exigencies of that Board; and yet this Board, with no such prospective demands upon their treasury, had a balance on hand of \$22,000; and he would ask why such a balance should be accumulated by this Board? We must instruct them to trust the Assembly with an accurate and full account of their receipts and expenditures. This only can quiet apprehension, and make the reports of the Board satisfactory. He read some resolutions which, at a proper time, he proposed to introduce, and said he would not further trespass on the patience of the House at present. Brethren had come to him, asking him to embody in his remarks the statements which he had made. He had spoken with the utmost frankness, and with a sincere desire to bring about the more efficient operation of this important arm of the church. It appears that the Board of Publication had been formally apprized that their proceedings did

not meet with universal approbation; and that some inquiries would probably be made during the sessions of this Assembly. A Committee was appointed by the Board to prepare a statement to meet these inquiries, but he had not heard what the Committee had done. He called upon Mr. Charles Macalester, a ruling elder upon the floor of the Assembly, to make some statements of facts in regard to the accounts and transactions of this Board, and he trusted he would give such information as he possessed.

Mr. Macalester said he had been called upon by Dr. Edwards unexpectedly, and at this stage of the discussion he did not design to say much. At a proper time he might go into some detail, but at present he would forbear. In regard to the appointment of a Treasurer, he could explain:—There had been a shock given to the public mind by the defalcation in the American Sunday-school Union; and the Board, in view of the large amount of funds passing through their treasury, deemed it wise to ask security of the Treasurer, and we thought it not right to ask him to give security to such an amount, and at the same time offer him no compensation. The Treasurership demanded a measure of personal attention which we could not ask gratuitously. The concern had been honestly managed, he believed; whether prudently and economically was another question. He hoped Mr. Schenck would be able to make a satisfactory explanation; and if so, he (Mr. Macalester) would have nothing more to say; but was unwilling to be held to silence, unless duty permitted it.

At a later period in the debate Rev. Dr. Edwards said, It has been the tactics of those who have occupied the floor to consume time <sup>so</sup> as to leave no opportunity for him to speak, exhausting the patience of the House, so that they will spring the previous question. (The Moderator called Dr. Edwards to order for personal reflections.) He protested against the imputation that he has made an attack on the Board of Publication. This is not true. He had merely asked for information, which, as a member of this Assembly, he had a right to. He is behind no man in his love for the Boards, nor in his determination, unflinchingly, to inquire into their faithfulness. As to giving the Board notice of the inquiries he has made here, they are

entitled to no such notice. Are we to be precluded from asking information from them when and where we choose? It has been said that he could have made these inquiries in the Board's office, where he would have been politely received. Yes, they are polite, studiously, *ostentatiously* polite. They answer questions, though sometimes they may intimate that their responsibility is to the Assembly. We have had a very entertaining speech here this morning by a former Secretary of this Board, (Dr. Smith) against the reduplicated hymns. What connection had all this with him? He had said nothing about these hymns. Something had been said to make the impression that this is a personal controversy. He would say that between the Corresponding Secretary and the members of that Board and himself there had been the most friendly relations. As to his requesting the Treasurer's place for a ruling elder of his church, he had made that application before he knew what he now knows about that office and its salary. For the discarding the *Sabbath-School Visitor* from his Sabbath-school he must not be held responsible, though he would confess he thought it an inferior paper. As to the matter of the doxologies, he had never received from the editor any such note as has been alluded to. He had received one from the Publishing Agent in the editor's behalf, asking for assistance in making up the deficient doxologies, to which he had replied that his state of health would not permit his attending to that subject, and that the editor was probably more familiar with the matter than himself. He had not entered upon these inquiries in any bad spirit. But after seeing what a flutter he has occasioned, he could not help thinking what a disturbance would be created were he to go to work in good earnest. If his approaches to it are so terrible, what will it be when he takes hold of it? He wished the Assembly to assert the responsibility of these Boards.

After these remarks from Dr. Edwards the vote was taken, and the first resolution of the report, which is highly commendatory of the Board and of the manner of conducting its operations, was adopted *unanimously*. This vote seems to preclude the necessity of reference to the refutation of the above charges, as presented by Dr. B. M. Smith, a former

Secretary of the Board; by Mr. Schenck, its present Secretary; by Dr. Mitchell, J. B. Mitchell, Esq., and others. 1. As to the charge that the Board claimed to be proprietors of the Hymn Book, and to edit and alter it at pleasure, it was shown that all the alterations made was in the arrangement of the doxologies, and supplying some to suit the different metres; and that this matter had been specifically referred to the Board by the General Assembly. 2. As to the complaint that the Board had failed to obey the direction of the last Assembly to substitute some other hymn for the 336th of the present book, it was said that the Board did not refuse to obey that injunction, but simply represented to the present Assembly the difficulties in the way of the proposed alteration, and asked for further directions. It is enough that the Assembly, by a separate vote, approved of the action of the Board in this matter. 3. In reference to the charges of extravagance, it was shown that the salary of one thousand dollars, given to the Treasurer, was not merely in compensation of his services, but the condition of the security for the safe custody of the funds entrusted to his care—a very cheap arrangement, considering the magnitude of the trust. It was further shown that it was unjust to graduate the expense of a colporteur by that of a pedler of books, inasmuch as the former is a missionary, whose object is to instruct, exhort, and pray with the families whom he visits. Mr. Mitchell proved that out of one hundred and seventeen thousand dollars contributed for colportage, sixteen thousand dollars had been spent in the outlay of that sum—less than twelve and a half per cent., instead of sixty, as Dr. Edwards said. He further showed that the books of the Board were printed and sold at a cheaper rate than those of other establishments; that the “brown stone store” in Philadelphia was built by special contributions for that object, and was now worth more than it cost, and could be sold at a profit. The plan of uniting the offices of Corresponding Secretary and Superintendent of Colportage, to save expense, was shown to be impracticable. The latter officer had not only to keep the accounts of all the colporteurs, but to receive their reports, assign their fields, watching the balances of books left to be transferred to their successors, &c.—duties which could not be

discharged by the Corresponding Secretary. 4. The complaint that the books of the Board were not distributed in depositories, was answered by showing that such depositories had been tried and abandoned, as both useless and wasteful; and that the experience of other publishing societies corresponded with that of the Board as to the impolicy of that system.

Whatever may be thought of the propriety of thus arraigning the Boards and officers of the church before the public, on uninvestigated charges, the action of the last Assembly will doubtless convince most men of its inexpediency.

*Board of Education.*

Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer, Secretary of the Board of Education, addressed the Assembly in reference to the Annual Report of that Board, as follows:

Mr. Moderator, the Board respectfully present to the General Assembly their *fortieth* Annual Report. During this period of twice a score of years, how many scores of ministers, and of candidates for the ministry, have entered the eternal world!

The Board are happy to report, by God's blessing, a prosperous condition of their affairs. The total number of candidates on the roll is three hundred and ninety-one, which is *six* more than last year. The total number of *new* candidates recommended by the Presbyteries, is one hundred and forty-one, which is *thirty-eight* more than last year, and is the largest number since the division of the church. This latter increase is the true exponent of the success of the church's work in this department; because, as the sources of supply increase, the aggregate of operations must necessarily expand. This expansion will not always be in exact proportion to the supply, inasmuch as disturbing causes may exist at one time more than at another; but, as a general rule, the index of present and of future prosperity consists in the annual increase of new candidates.

1. This large increase of new candidates, amounting this year to more than a quarter above that of last year, is owing to the *grace of God* in the outpouring of His Spirit upon our youth. The church is indebted to infinite mercy for each, and for all, her sons. The ministry exists by the power of the

Spirit. The ministry increases by the power of the Spirit. For all these new candidates, let the church praise God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2. This increase of candidates is, instrumentally, owing in a good degree, under God, to *parental dedication and training*. There is power in the family covenant and family work, which God sanctifies, has sanctified, and will sanctify, from one generation to another. Sir, I yesterday saw in this Assembly a venerable and lovely Christian matron, a mother in Israel, who has four sons in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Every one of the sons whom God gave to her she consecrated to God, and trained up for God, in the work of the ministry; and behold, the honour that God has set upon her in her maturing old age! Mr. Moderator, when I saw her, I felt like bowing reverently at her feet, and, as one of the sons of the church, exclaiming in her presence, "*Mother!*" Who shall ever know the covenant power of parents, and perhaps especially of mothers, in bringing their sons to Jesus, and in introducing them, as preachers of the cross, into the waste places of the earth?

3. God has so largely increased the annual supply of new candidates, in answer to the *prayers* of the churches. Many supplications have ascended to the Lord of the harvest. The churches have remembered this cause in their religious devotions, and have asked God in public and in private, with more than usual importunity; and He has heard their cry. O that this Assembly, and all our congregations, may be stimulated to plead for richer and richer donations of the ascension gifts of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

In regard to the *State of the Treasury*, I am thankful that the Board can make a good report to the Assembly. The total amount received in the Candidates' Fund is \$52,077.92, which is \$4974.85 more than were received last year, whilst last year was \$3730.76 in advance of the year before, making an increase in *two* years of nearly *nine thousand* dollars. And this increase has been attained during the two severest years of financial distress known to the country; and it is also worthy of remark that, during the last year, no special appeal whatever was made to the churches.

Mr. Moderator, have you never observed on a river, that,

when four or five vessels are sailing along, one of them sometimes catches the wind, whilst the others are almost becalmed? The difference is not owing to the pilot's skill, but to what some would call chance, but which we call providence. In like manner, the superior financial condition of this Board, above that of the other Boards, this year, is owing to Providence. And as we are always at liberty to interpret providence with reverence, and with an acknowledgment of our own ignorance, and a reliance upon Divine light, so I will venture to suggest some interpretations of this providence to this Assembly.

1. In the first place, it is an *encouragement* to the churches to continue their co-operation in the work of ministerial education. See how good it is for them to send in their donations, however small; for everything contributes to the prosperity of a good cause; and its very prosperity reflects back happiness upon those who have promoted it. If God has made so much out of the church's gifts this year, and enriched the churches with all the good done, is it not an encouragement to persevere another year, and to the end of time, in helping young men in the great work of their education?

2. In the second place, God seems to be wiping away the reproach of "unpopularity," which the Board of Education has had to contend with. He has condescended to set us in a high place. Whilst some of the other Boards, who sometimes insist upon their superior popularity, have mysteriously declined in their receipts this year, the Board of Education has made a large advance. I respectfully suggest whether this does not look as though the churches were taking a higher interest in assisting young men into the ministry. Are not the objects of the Board of Education gaining favour among the churches? I do not wish to press the interpretation too far; but I respectfully submit whether it has not the appearance of substantial truth.

3. In the third place, our financial prosperity is an encouragement to *the hearts of candidates*, in showing them the care of the churches in their behalf. If the funds come in slowly, and doubtfully, how many painful anxieties would be stirred up among those who have already an abundance of pecuniary solicitude! But the church, during the year, has anticipated

every want; and by a cheerful and liberal and *quiet* response, (for our candidates do not like the noise of too many special appeals) has verified to them all her promises of temporal aid.

4. In the fourth place, the financial prosperity of the Board, as seen not only in the increase of funds but of candidates, shows that the addition of the department of Schools, Academies, and Colleges, to the work of the Board of Education does not interfere with its old work of assisting candidates. This was an objection in some minds; but Providence does not seem to sustain it. Whilst the Board continue to make the candidates' department their chief work, their interest in institutions of learning is secondary only so far as that it must not be at the expense of their old work. It sometimes happens that an increase of labour only stimulates a workman to do better what he has already undertaken. In fact, my own personal plans for the candidates' department, during the coming year, mark out a greater amount of correspondence and of visitation, than in any year since my connection with the office. The Board of Education do not pretend to say that they have conducted either department with the efficiency that might have been put forth. But the Secretaries have done the best they could, or as nearly so as human depravity will allow; and it is their conviction that all their efforts for schools, academies, and colleges, so far from interfering with the increase of candidates and the means of sustaining them, have precisely the opposite effect. The two departments are harmonious, co-relative, and mutually contributory to each other's prosperity. At least, the operations for candidates have continued to flourish more and more. In regard to the other department, and the best way of raising funds for it, I shall say a few words when I come to that subject.

*Proposed Report to the Presbyteries.*—It will be seen that the Board suggest the wisdom, on the part of the Presbyteries, of requiring from the teachers and Professors of institutions of learning, a report to the Presbyteries, at least annually, on the attainments and general standing of all the candidates under their care. Such a report is designed to include *all* candidates, whether aided by the Board or not. The benefits of this proposed arrangement are threefold. 1. A



report to the Presbyteries will bring the candidates into more intimate relation with the Presbyteries, and thus give them the opportunity of a more parental and faithful supervision. 2. In the second place, it will call into stronger exercise the responsibilities of the instructors of candidates for the ministry, and render their knowledge of their character and qualifications more available to the church. 3. And, in the third place, it will promote a healthful sense of responsibility on the part of the young men to their Presbyteries. It will also contribute to remove among candidates for the ministry the distinction between those who are aided by the Board and those who are not aided; a distinction which is sometimes unduly magnified. The Board do not propose to the Assembly to *enjoin* upon the Presbyteries the adoption of this new regulation about reports, but simply to recommend the subject to the consideration of the Presbyteries, and leave each to act as may be judged best.

*Hints on choosing a Profession.*—At a time when so many young men are brought to the knowledge of Christ, and the world is so active with influences to claim their services, the Board have ventured to present some considerations to the youth of the church, in regard to the principles which should guide the determination of their course in life. I will barely mention the principles brought to view.

1. A leading principle in the choice of a profession, is to follow the one best suited to a young man's gifts and endowments.
2. Another principle is that that profession is to be chosen which God seems the most to approve.
3. Consider the claims of that profession which offers the widest field of usefulness.
4. Another principle worthy of consideration in the choice of a profession, is to notice the direction in which Providence points.
5. A preference may be wisely given, other things being equal, to a profession that admits and nurtures personal improvement, and does not give a prominence to sordid temptations.
6. A young man should keep in sight the rewards of eternity.

*Department of Institutions.*—The Board of Education have been enabled to do much good, in sustaining feeble institutions of learning. The number of *parochial schools* is not large—probably about one hundred; but they are a great blessing to the

children attending them; and their influence upon other schools is important; and they assist in keeping before the community the great principles of Presbyterian education. A revival occurred in one of these schools, in which eight of the older youth were hopefully converted.

The number of *Presbyterial Academies* is fifty-eight, and these higher institutions, scattered all over the land, are accomplishing important results for Christian education. Their number ought to be largely augmented, and every opportunity embraced for establishing them which Providence may offer. A number of conversions have taken place during the year in our Academies. The greatest religious awakening of the year occurred in the Academy at Waveland, Indiana, under the care of the Presbytery of Crawfordsville. In this revival twenty-three of the students united with the church.

*Colleges* are great instrumentalities in advancing the kingdom of Christ. The church should not establish them too fast, but fast enough; not ahead of Providence, nor too far behind Providence; but according to the providence. In some sections of our church there are too many colleges—in others too few; in others, the number is just right. The report of the Board contains various suggestions about the collegiate policy of our church, entitled "Plain Words on Colleges." The discussion is on the following points: The number of colleges; their location; the right time for establishing them; buildings; endowment; debt; trustees and professors; standard of scholarship; discipline; religious instruction; and the relation of each college to the character of the whole church. Hints on these topics may be of some use, perhaps, to thoughtful educators. Revivals of religion occurred during the year in three of our colleges, viz. Davidson College, North Carolina; Westminster College, Missouri; and Centre College, Kentucky. The number of students converted is from thirty to fifty. To God be the praise for these and other glorious results.

*Funds for this Department.*—A few words more, about sustaining our operations among these institutions of learning. Many of them need help for a period, and they ought to have it. The Board of Education could advantageously spend fifteen or twenty thousand dollars a year in estab-

lishing, maintaining, and invigorating institutions of learning. But how shall we get funds? The Assembly has, as yet, taken no definite measures to secure collections. Hitherto, these important operations have been chiefly sustained by the benevolence of two of the ruling elders of the church. One of them set the department in motion by a donation of three thousand dollars, and has kept it in motion with an annual munificence transcending all just claims upon his liberality. The other elder maintained all the needy parochial schools for four or five years by similar gifts; but has latterly felt constrained to withdraw, or at least suspend, his donations. This position of things is unworthy our church. If this department ought to be sustained at all, it ought to be sustained on some general, systematic, efficient plan, in which the great body of our churches can co-operate. The plan which the Board respectfully submit to the General Assembly, is that of taking up collections on the last Thursday of February, and of uniting on that day *alms with our prayers*. This plan is scriptural, simple, economical, practicable and efficient. As to its efficiency, the Board have great hopes, and are willing, with God's blessing, to assume the responsibility of its working. We think that we have a right to ask the Assembly to give the Board a plan for raising funds. The present plan was first suggested to the Board in their consultations with that wise, devoted and able minister of our church, Dr. Phillips, of New York, who, with his brethren in that city, have always exhibited the deepest interest in both departments of the operations of the Board of Education. The Secretaries had often thought of a collection on the Sabbath, before or after the day of prayer; but the idea of selecting the day of prayer itself belongs, as I have said, to Dr. Phillips. It is worthy of trial, and it is believed will prove sufficient. If any pastor prefers the Sabbath before or after the day of prayer, let him by all means use his own discretion.

The Board wish to make progress in their efforts to sustain institutions. They cannot do so without some plan. They would rather resign this branch of their work to the General Assembly than remain stationary, and unable to meet the urgent demands upon their help. They would rather

ask you to choose some other agency to do this work, or if not agency, agents, than to have it falter under their care. This is not the age to lag behind. It is not the period of the world to take steps backward. "Forward," as in the days of Israel, is the true Presbyterian motto. Our standard should know no retreat. Carry it onward, carry it on! Place it in the thickest of the fight! Rally around it, men and brethren, in the name of Christ's crown and covenant; and the old banner of blue will win its victories, as in ages that are past, so now, and in ages that are to come.

*Theological Seminaries.*

Dr. Palmer read a report from the Committee on Theological Seminaries. It spoke of Allegheny and Danville in most favourable terms, and also of Princeton. Several slight changes were recommended and adopted.

A re-adjustment of the titles and departments of instruction, conforming them as near as possible to the distribution and arrangement which formerly existed, to wit: that Dr. Hodge shall hold his present chair without change; that Dr. McGill be styled Professor of Church History and Practical Theology—the latter to include all the functions of the ministerial office, viz. Church Government, Preaching, and the Pastoral Care; that Dr. Green be Professor of Oriental and Biblical Literature; and that Dr. Alexander be Professor of Hellenistic (or Biblical) Greek, and New Testament Literature.

Relative to Allegheny, the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved*, That the General Assembly change the time of closing the session to the Wednesday preceding the fourth Tuesday in April.

Dr. William L. Breckinridge was nominated to fill the vacant Chair in the Seminary at Danville, the election to be held on Saturday. The Assembly engaged in prayer for direction, according to the standing rule.

On the day appointed, Dr. W. L. Breckinridge was unanimously elected to the office for which he had been nominated. The distinguished position which that gentleman has long occupied, his many amiable and attractive qualities, and his eminent religious character, will, we doubt not, render this appointment

universally satisfactory to the church. His acceptance of the office is somewhat doubtful, as we gather from the following remarks which he made when his name was first proposed. Rising from the Moderator's Chair, he said:

“I ask the indulgence of my brethren, under the new and extremely delicate and embarrassing circumstances of this moment. If I allow the Assembly to go into this vote without saying anything, and it result in your choice of me to the vacant chair, I might be held to have consented to such result; and thus be pledged to undertake the service. On the other hand, it seems hardly becoming to express an unwillingness to take a position to which it may not be your pleasure to call me. Our brethren in immediate charge of this Seminary have thought proper to make known to me their wishes about this matter, and to assure me that these would not be unacceptable to this body, and to the church at large; but while I have not felt myself at liberty to put it absolutely from me, I have not been willing to say one word, or to take a single step, that might imply a consent to what has now been proposed. You must do what you think well, on the subject, and I must be left free in regard to it. If it shall be your pleasure to choose another, I shall be so far from regarding it as an unkindness, as to feel myself greatly relieved.”

We rejoice that the Assembly so cordially assented to the change proposed in the titles and duties of the Professors in the Seminary at Princeton. The union of the departments of Church History and Polity has the sanction of usage and long experience in its favour; and the appointment of one Professor for the language and literature of the Old Testament, and another for the language and literature of the New Testament, is so obvious and natural, that it early commended itself to general approbation. These departments are distinct, comprehensive, and in the highest degree important. Much also, in such matters, may be wisely conceded to the taste and preferences of the Professors themselves. They can most effectually serve the church in the departments to which they have been led to pay special attention. We believe that the change above mentioned will subserve the best interests of the Seminary.

The NORTH-WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY commanded greater interest and occupied more of the time of the Assembly than any other subject brought forward for its decision. In 1830, the Synod of Indiana established a Theological School in connection with the College at South Hanover. In 1838, a convention, composed of delegates from the Synods of Indiana, Cincinnati, and Kentucky, determined to found a Seminary on a wider basis at New Albany, which went into operation under a Board of Directors appointed by the Synods of Indiana and Cincinnati, November, 1840. Subsequently, the Synods of Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Northern Indiana, and Illinois, coöperated in the enterprise. In 1853, the majority of the Synods concerned in the operations of this Seminary, united in a proposition to transfer it to the care of the General Assembly. The same year proposals were presented for the foundation of a Seminary by the Assembly, for the West, and St. Louis, New Albany, and Danville, were severally named as its location. The majority of votes were cast for Danville. This left New Albany under the care of the Synods which might choose to continue to it their patronage. In 1854, the Assembly passed a resolution, declaring that in establishing a Seminary at Danville, the Assembly had "no intention to interfere with the Theological Seminary at New Albany, nor with those Synods which shall continue to be united in the support and control of that Institution, nor with any of the churches under the care of such Synods." The Seminary, therefore, continued in operation under its former Professors. Subsequently, seven of the North-western Synods united, and appointed a Board of Directors for a North-western Seminary. The Institution at New Albany was by them transferred to Chicago, and Drs. MacMasters and Thomas, Professors in the old Seminary, were elected to corresponding chairs in the new Institution. Diversity of opinion soon manifested itself among the friends of this enterprise, and it was finally determined to transfer it to the General Assembly, leaving to that body to determine its location and organization. When this subject came up, the Rev. Dr. Palmer made the following report:

The Committee on Theological Seminaries, to which were referred certain papers touching the proposed transfer to the

General Assembly, of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the North-west, beg leave to report, that upon examination these papers are found to be:

1. An overture from the Board of Directors of said Seminary, proposing a transfer of the same from the several Synods united in its control, to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in the United States.

2. Papers detailing the action of eight Synods, viz. the Synods of Cincinnati, Indiana, Northern Indiana, Illinois, Chicago, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Southern Iowa, authorizing the above-mentioned transfer, and instructing the Board of Directors to present the overture touching the matter to this General Assembly.

3. Two printed documents, being the Constitution of the North-western Theological Seminary, and the act of incorporation by the General Assembly of Illinois.

4. Certain papers, stating the opinions and wishes of twenty-nine Presbyteries in connection with these eight Synods.

5. A statement of the assets of the New Albany Theological Seminary, now in possession of the Board of Directors of that institution.

6. Papers containing proposals for the endowment of the Seminary, upon the condition of its acceptance by this Assembly, and located at Chicago or at Indianapolis respectively.

7. A statement of the present indebtedness of the Seminary of the North-west.

These papers have been carefully considered by the Committee, and their contents may be briefly stated: Of the eight confederated Synods, five—viz., Cincinnati, Chicago, Indiana, Northern Indiana, and Illinois—urge the transfer *simpliciter*, without any opinion or desire expressed upon any matter connected with it.

Two Synods, viz., Wisconsin and Southern Iowa, connect with this transfer, a request that professors shall not be chosen till there is a sufficient endowment secured to warrant it.

And one Synod, viz., that of Iowa, in a paper from its abridgment not perfectly clear to the committee, seems to desire that the Assembly shall exercise only a negative control over the appointments in the Seminary.

It is clear, however, that all these Synods except perhaps the last, desire the Assembly, during the present session, to accept the direction of the Seminary, and to hold and exercise all powers at present vested in themselves.

As to the financial condition of the institution now offered to this Assembly, it claims the assets of the New Albany Theological Seminary, amounting in all to \$39,430, which the trustees of that institution seem authorized to transfer. Of this amount, however, the sum of \$25,000 is not at the disposal of the trustees, but is acknowledged to be in the control of the General Assembly, and which it is hoped the Assembly will put to the service of this institution, it having been originally contributed for theological education in the West. In the judgment of the committee, the wishes of the donor may be easily ascertained, and should be decisive upon this point.

Against the remaining \$14,430 must be placed a debt incurred by the Seminary of the North-west, of \$5,241, which the board has ordered to be paid out of the assets of the New Albany institution in the hands of its trustees.

Should the Assembly agree to accept the donation and control of this Seminary, in accordance with the overture of these eight Synods, two distinct proposals are made, looking to its endowment. On the one hand, if Chicago shall be selected as the seat of the new institution, Mr. C. H. McCormick gives his written obligation to pay to the directors who shall be appointed, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars payable in four annual instalments, and drawing six per cent., from the opening of the Seminary, that is to say, \$25,000 for each Professor whom this Assembly shall appoint in the same. In addition to this promise of Mr. McCormick, and upon the condition that within the period of two years, buildings costing not less than \$50,000, shall be erected upon a designated site, certain persons make a grant of forty-five acres of land, definitely located, the market value of which is not stated.

On the other hand, if Indianapolis shall be selected for its location, certain persons connected with the Synods of Indiana, Northern Indiana, and a part of the Synod of Illinois, pledge the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars toward the endowment, drawing six per cent. interest, from the opening of the institu-



tion. Also \$25,000 more is subscribed by citizens of Indianapolis for the erection of suitable buildings on a site given by Rev. W. A. Holliday, which is itself valued at \$10,000.

In addition to these two amounts, there appears to be a reliable subscription of \$6,000 in another place, making a total of money subscribed, and grants of land, of about \$66,000.

Upon a deliberate survey of all the facts thus comprehensively stated, and in view of the promise given of an early endowment of the institution, and especially in view of the unanimity and earnestness with which so large a portion of the church as that represented by eight distinct Synods, express their conviction of the need of a Theological Seminary of high order in the North-west; your committee unanimously concur in recommending the two following resolutions to the General Assembly:

*Resolved*, That in accordance with the overture emanating from the above named eight Synods, this Assembly does now accept the direction and control of the Seminary known by the corporate name and style of "The Presbyterian Seminary of the North-west."

*Resolved*, That the present Assembly, during the present session, will decide by a majority of the votes of its members, what place within the limits of these eight Synods shall be selected as the site of said Seminary.

The matters of detail, as to the organization and equipment of the Seminary, the committee are of opinion, can not well be considered, until these preliminary points shall be decided, and they make, therefore, no report upon the same.

A protracted debate ensued in relation to the location of the new Seminary. Chicago and Indianapolis were the places nominated. In favour of the former it was urged that it was remote from existing Seminaries of our church, and geographically central to the vast region whose wants the new institution was intended to supply; whereas Indianapolis was so far south as to render certain the call for another Seminary further northwest in a few years, if that place were fixed upon as the location. This seems to have been admitted by the friends of Indianapolis, as they advocated the propriety of numerous theological seminaries. They assumed that no such institution ought to have

more than one hundred students. On the other hand, it was urged that this multiplication of seminaries was likely to become a crying evil in the church and country, scarcely less burdensome and impolitic than the multiplication of universities, colleges, and banks, which now crowd the land. This geographical consideration, together with the liberal pecuniary offers in behalf of Chicago, seems to have had most weight with the Assembly. The vote was two hundred and forty-two for Chicago and sixty-four for Indianapolis. The Rev. Dr. Palmer then presented, from the Committee on Theological Seminaries, the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly do hereby accept the donation of \$100,000, made by Mr. McCormick to them for the endowment of four Professorships in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the North-west, about to be established by this Assembly, and upon the terms and conditions therein mentioned.

2. *Resolved*, That the thanks of this General Assembly be tendered to Mr. C. H. McCormick for his munificent donation, and that a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to Mr. C. H. McCormick by the Stated Clerk.

3. *Resolved*, That the offer of forty-five acres of land from other gentlemen of Chicago, under certain specified conditions, together with similar offers, be referred to the Board of Directors, to be accepted or not, at their discretion.

The following constitution is submitted by the Committee for the government of the Seminary, based as much as possible upon the old constitution, with only such changes as are necessitated by the transfer of the control of said Seminary from the Synods to the Assembly. (The constitution is somewhat long, and will probably be published in another way. It is understood to be very similar to those of Princeton, Danville and Allegheny. We omit, at least for the present, its publication.)

With a view to secure such amendments to the charter as may be required by this change in the direction and control of this Seminary, and to provide for the legal transfer of the property, the committee submit to the Assembly the following resolution:

4. *Resolved*, That the Board of Directors of the said Semi-

nary, for whose appointment provision is made in the Constitution herewith submitted, be, and they hereby are directed to take such measures as may be found proper and expedient to procure the legal transfer and safe investment of all the property of said Seminary; and for that purpose to procure from the Legislature of Illinois such legislation as may be necessary to effect this object.

Should the foregoing recommendations of the committee be approved by the General Assembly, the way will be open for the election of Professors of the new Seminary, in relation to which, the following resolutions are proposed:

5. *Resolved*, That it be made the first special order for Monday next to elect Professors to fill the four following chairs, viz.

The Chair of Exegetic and Didactic Theology.

The Chair of Polemic and Pastoral Theology.

The Chair of Church History and Government.

The Chair of Biblical and Oriental Literature.

*Resolved*, That nominations for the above Chairs be now received.

6. *Resolved*, That immediately after the election of Professors on Monday next, the Assembly proceed to elect Directors for this institution.

Some objection was made to the proposed arrangement of the Professorships, and that subject was referred to a special Committee, consisting of Drs. Smith, Humphrey, Thornwell, McGill, and Professor Wilson. The departments were subsequently arranged in the following manner. 1. Didactic and Polemic Theology. 2. Biblical and Ecclesiastical History. 3. Historical and Pastoral Theology and Church Government. 4. Biblical Literature and Exegesis.

When the Assembly were about to proceed to the election of Professors, Dr. E. D. MacMaster moved that the order of the day be postponed, in order to take up a motion to defer the election till next year. Dr. MacMaster delivered a long and earnest speech in support of his motion, of which we find the following brief abstract in the *Presbyterian Banner and Advocate*.

He had been ten years a Professor in the Seminary under

Synodical control, and felt it a duty to present the subject fairly to the understanding of the Assembly. His position was delicate. He had hitherto declined participating in the discussions, but now felt it a duty to speak. Providence called him to it, though painful. Justice to a public interest of the church, required the house to have patience, and give attention. He had committed to writing what he had to say, and would read it. He would make three preliminary remarks.

1. He did not appear as a party to a scramble for place. No one could point to any act of his, by himself or by his friends on his authority, seeking an appointment. He had three times vacated his place, with a view to changes, supposed to be beneficial. He never had been, and never would be, an aspirant for an office in the gift of the Assembly. He appeared here but as a member.

2. He had not been, and would not be a party to any personal controversy—unless as he had been pursued, for these last ten years. He had ever refused to reply to any of the attacks made upon him. His refusal to be drawn into anything personal heretofore, was a guaranty for the present.

3. He would speak, with reference to himself, only so far as it would be needful in discussing the subject. He would discuss this for the peace and edification of the church, and with all plainness and fidelity.

There was a great division in the churches on the subject. Since 1856, the whole movement toward the Seminary, had been distinguished by accusations, specially against the Professors. The accusations had reference to alleged opinions and designs on the subject of slavery. He did not intend to discuss the merits of the subject of slavery, only so far as an answer to wrongful charges made this necessary. No matter of accusation has been alleged against him, except what resolves itself into this. It has been alleged that it was the design of himself and Dr. Thomas to found an abolition Seminary, and divide the church—that they had attempted to accomplish this design, by concealment, fraud, trick, &c. To these, in the terms in which they are made, he would make no reply. He would treat them, as he had hitherto done, with silence. He would not attempt to prove that the charges were wrong; untrue as they are.

Some may have been deceived by the representations made. He would try to disabuse the Assembly. He would speak historically, quoting records.

1. The Seminary at first was established by the Synods in Ohio and Indiana. They sought the coöperation of those of Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri. A union was formed; and the Seminary desired a *cordial* union.

The proposal in 1856 to extend the interest in the Seminary to other Synods, was not made to Missouri. This was because Missouri had withdrawn from the connection, years previously. Such was the general understanding, and there was abundant evidence of the fact of withdrawal. (Dr. MacMaster quoted from the Digest, prepared by S. J. Baird, and from sundry papers and documents, to sustain his position.) He gave these reasons to show the ground on which he and the Directors concluded that the Synod of Missouri did not desire an invitation to unite in the Seminary, and hence was not invited, when other Synods were invited.

The connection of the Synods of Kentucky and Tennessee with New Albany was dissolved in 1853, when the Seminary at Danville was instituted. And Missouri withdrew in the same year, and for four years appointed no Directors.

The Seminary had formerly sought a union with the Synods in the slave States on true principles, consistent with the safety and benefit of both parties. He believed that the free States will not be driven from their true conservative ground. The attempt to excite the odium of Abolitionism against the friends of the New Albany Seminary, is unjust, and to be deprecated. He had endeavoured to preserve the union of the Synods north and south of the Ohio, and yet he is stigmatized as an Abolitionist! It was not he, but others, who sought and effected division.

In August 1856, a circular was addressed to ministers and elders in the *seven* North-western Synods. In October, a constitution was proposed and adopted. It was adopted by all the seven Synods, with only one negative voice, in one of them. There was nothing about slavery in the circular, nor in the constitution, nor in the Synods, on the adoption of the Constitution. He was accused of plotting, because a constitution

had been offered to the Synods, and not to a Convention. But they, the Synods, had the right to act, and they exercised that right.

In 1857 he addressed a letter to the Directors of the new Seminary, stating his views on the subject of slavery, in which he declared his adhesion fully to the doctrines of the Assembly on the subject. (The speaker here read this letter. It is very long. We published it once.)

To the answer given to the question sent up to the Assembly in 1845, relative to fellowship with slaveholders, in any circumstances, he had always accorded. It was substantially right. Still, he thought the paper then adopted by the Assembly was liable to be misunderstood, both by slaveholders and abolitionists, and also by many good persons in our own church and in other churches. He considered that paper ill-advised, crude, and inconsistent.

Two private letters of one of the Professors (Dr. MacMaster himself,) had been discovered and brought forth as proof against him, of plots and intrigues. Of these he would say that they were his own. The other Professor, and the Directors, had no responsibility in relation to them. These letters, however, sufficiently explain themselves to the candid. He would print them in an Appendix to his present remarks. They maintain that slavery is a great evil; and this is sustained by the Assembly's action of 1818; and they speak in condemnation of the new doctrine, that slavery is a great good. They speak of certain persons who are endeavouring to introduce among us this new doctrine, and of the duty of resisting the encroachments of the slave power.

Taking slavery as defined—that is, as a system which makes human beings “chattels,” “tools”—it should not come into the church, and should not be there tolerated. The pro-slavery power had come into this region to interfere with the peaceful efforts to establish a Seminary. It was not to be endured. The war had been waged to maintain the pro-slavery power. He had been proscribed, because he could not bow down to it.

An important question is to be decided. The eyes of the church and of the world are upon this Assembly. If the Assembly should decide wrong, he would still not forsake the

Church, but would yet contend for her purity and glory. Truth will prevail, but error will die and perish. He had discharged a present duty, one which he could not evade. He would print fifty thousand copies of his speech, and send them all over the church.

Dr. MacMaster has carried into effect his purpose to print his speech, and we have had the opportunity of reading it in pamphlet form. The perusal has impressed us deeply with the conviction of the author's ability and courage. It is an open and manly avowal of opinions which he knew to be unpopular, and which he must have been aware would place him out of sympathy with the body which he addressed. While we cannot help feeling respect for the man, and sympathy with him in the frustration of his cherished plans, we regard the speech as unsound in doctrine, and eminently inappropriate for the occasion. Dr. MacMaster was not called upon to defend himself. He had not forfeited the confidence of any part of the church, North or South. He had been accused of abolitionism, as Dr. Rice had been accused of being the advocate of slavery and the tool of a pro-slavery party. Neither needed any vindication. They had for years been arrayed on opposite sides on many questions of policy. Both had been assailed, with equal injustice it may be, with having ulterior and unavowed objects, and with prosecuting those objects by unfair means. Into the merits of these controversies the Assembly was not called upon to enter; and, as far as we can learn, was not disposed to take sides with either party. If we may confide in the statements of those who had the best opportunities of knowing, the Assembly was prepared to do full justice to Dr. MacMaster. Some of his best friends have publicly asserted that sixty members of the Assembly from the South had avowed their purpose to vote for him as Professor in the new Seminary, which would doubtless have secured his election. His claims were peculiarly strong. His long and faithful service as Professor at New Albany; his election to a chair in the Northwestern Seminary by the representatives of the seven Synods before its transfer to the Assembly; his having voluntarily resigned that chair in order that the Assembly might be unembarrassed in the selection of its officers, should they decide to assume the charge of

the institution; and his own eminent qualifications for the office, were considerations which no body of generous, right-minded men, would think of resisting. His speech, however, put his election out of the question, for two reasons. First, it could not fail to be considered as an avowal of opinions, feelings, and purposes in reference to slavery, which the Assembly could not sanction; and, secondly, it made it evident that he could not, and would not coöperate with Dr. Rice, whose claims, in the opinion of a large class of his brethren, were equal to his own. When the votes therefore were counted, it was found that two hundred and fourteen had been cast for Dr. Rice, and only forty-five for Dr. MacMaster. In saying that we regard Dr. MacMaster's doctrine on slavery to be unsound, we have reference to the form in which he has presented it in his speech. It is probable that he differs from the mass of his brethren on this subject, more in words and feeling than he does in principle. He insists on making a distinction between slavery and slaveholding, which is in the nature of the case untenable. If slavery be what he defines it to be, all slaveholding, under all conceivable circumstances, must be a crime. There can, according to his definition, no more be justifiable slaveholding, than there can be justifiable murder. He represents slavery to be a system which makes a man a chattel; a thing which denies to him the rights of a husband and father; which debars him from instruction and means of improvement. Slavery, however, is nothing but involuntary servitude—that is, the obligation to render service not conditioned on the will of the servant. There may be most unjust laws enacted by the State to enforce that obligation, and most unrighteous means adopted to perpetuate and render safe and profitable the condition of bondage, but these laws and means are not slavery. They do not enter into its definition; they are not essential to its existence. To approve of slavery in that sense of the word, is to approve of denying humanity to man; it is to approve of his degradation, and of the adoption of means designed and adapted to perpetuate that degradation; it is to approve of concubinage in place of marriage; it is to approve of denying to parents rights guarantied to them by the law of God. To do all this is as palpably to renounce Christianity as it would be to approve



of Mormonism or Mohammedanism. It is equally obvious, that no Christian can voluntarily assist in making or enforcing laws which give to involuntary servitude this character. It is this aspect or idea of slavery that the earlier declarations of our church evidently contemplated. The famous minute of 1818 is true of slavery in this sense, but it is not true according to the subsequent deliverances and uniform practice of the church, of slavery in the sense of involuntary servitude. Now as this latter is the sense in which the word is used in all the recent acts of our Assembly, and as it is the sense which is put upon it by probably nine-tenths of our brethren, the denunciations of Dr. MacMaster's speech directed against slavery will inevitably be understood of involuntary servitude. They in their apparent meaning bear against that great body of ministers and members of our church who are owners of slaves. They hold up those brethren as the advocates of a system which is at war with the plainest dictates of natural justice, and the clearest revelations of the divine will. His speech is mainly directed against slavery, against a slave party in the state, and a slave power in the church. Dr. Rice (by implication at least) is held up as a pro-slavery man. The inference, therefore, is unavoidable, that the slavery denounced is the slavery which Presbyterian ministers and members defend as not incompatible with the word of God. Although, therefore, no man in our church, so far as we know, has ever defended slavery as *defined* by Dr. MacMaster, yet as he denounces a class of men in the church as pro-slavery men, they cannot avoid considering his denunciations as reaching beyond his definition, and touching them and their avowed opinions. It is in this way that his speech placed him in a position antagonistic to the mass of the Assembly. The fact, also, that he represented himself as the object of persecution by the slave-power, and claimed that the true question which the Assembly were called upon to decide, was, whether that power should control the church or not, evinced a state of mind which boded no good. His own most intimate and constant friends regarded this as altogether a mistake, and refer to the readiness of sixty southern members of the Assembly, including some of the most influential men on the floor, to vote for him as a Professor in the new Seminary, as a

proof of the correctness of their opinion. Into the merits of the controversy, which has attended the origin of the institution at Chicago, we do not pretend to enter. As journalists, we candidly express our views of the action of the Assembly as exhibited in the reports of its debates. High as we estimate the gifts and claims of Dr. MacMaster, we cannot be surprised at the result of the ballot, after reading his speech.

The election of Dr. Rice to the Chair of Theology was the great point of interest. The Rev. Dr. Willis Lord, of Brooklyn, was chosen Professor of Biblical and Ecclesiastical History; the Rev. Dr. Halsey of Louisville, was elected to the Chair of Historical and Pastoral Theology and Church Government; and the Rev. W. M. Scott, D.D. of Cincinnati, to that of Biblical Literature and Exegesis. For the first time in the history of our church a Theological Seminary begins its career with a full corps of Professors, a competent endowment, and an excellent geographical position.

*Revised Book of Discipline.*

The revision of the Book of Discipline has not met with the favour which its authors confidently anticipated. The reasons of the coldness with which the new book has been received, seem to be the strong aversion to change, in the minds of many of the brethren; the fact that a few unpalatable changes had been introduced which created a prejudice against the whole thing; and the pre-occupation of the minds of the members of the Assembly by things of more immediate and pressing interest. We flatter ourselves that the time is not distant when a verdict will be rendered with great unanimity in favour of the majority of the alterations proposed by the Committee of Revision. Dr. Thornwell, Chairman of that Committee, delivered, when the subject was under consideration, an able speech in support of its report.

Rev. Dr. Thornwell, Chairman of the Committee appointed for the purpose, presented as their report a Revision of the Book of Discipline. Dr. Thornwell said he would not go over the report in detail. That report has been printed, and is in the hands of the members. He intended at present only to state a few general principles. Some of the changes proposed

are important; he would say radical. The committee have endeavoured to improve the old Book by striking out redundancies, by carrying out principles already implied or acted upon, and by, as far as possible, harmonizing the whole upon the three great principles which he would now state.

1. All our courts are regarded simply as courts, and not as parties at the bar. They are judges called upon in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they are not counsel, or pleaders, or parties. According to the old Book the lower court is a party, and, as such, is invariably ruled out when it comes to the higher court. This he regarded as implying what is false in fact. The mere fact that a lower court has tried a case is no evidence of prejudice. It moreover contradicts the great principles of our government. Ours is a representative government. Such are our courts, and in these courts you ascend from a representative body covering a smaller space, to a representative body covering a larger space, until in this Assembly you meet the parliament of the whole church. The lower court often has important information, which is due to the larger one to which the case is carried. According to the old Book, you are not appealing from a smaller portion of the church to a larger part of it, but from one part of it to another part. The true principle is from a part to a larger part, or to the whole. In regarding your lower courts as parties, you actually do all you can to make them parties. Knowing they are regarded as such, they will naturally so consider themselves, and naturally act accordingly. But by right they should be placed in no such category. They come here as your equals; you exchange counsels with them, and thus mutually reach a just decision.

It has been objected, that by this means you give too much influence to the court below. You certainly do give an influence, but still not an unrighteous one. By the present mode you really bar a portion of the church from arriving at a just conclusion. For instance, in the Pittsburgh Assembly of 1836, in an important trial for heresy, the Synod of Philadelphia was excluded, and a decision secured which was not the true sense of the church, because the large Synod of Philadelphia was out of the house. And at the same Assembly a case

of the sort came up, which was decided just the other way, because the Synod of Cincinnati, a smaller body, was out, and the large Synod of Philadelphia was in the house. But it is also said, that sometimes one Presbytery in a Synod is so large as to make them a majority of the Synod. The very fact that they are so numerous is a presumption that they are right.

This proposed change simply goes upon the principle that each court, whether Session, Presbytery, or Synod, is always a court, and that superior courts, to be complete, must include their entire membership.

As to the influence of prejudice, said to be thus introduced, you really have more prejudice by excluding the lower court than by admitting it; for it is still on the ground. Indeed, we all know that every Assembly is composed of two classes of members, those *in* the house and those *out* of it—lobby members—the latter often more influential than the former. You must, after all, trust your judges, and take it for granted that they will be faithful and do their duty.

He came now to a point clear as the noonday sun, though one in which the committee has been severely criticised—he means the relation of baptized children to the church. He admits that it is a radical principle—the principle is, that the indispensable condition on which a man becomes subject to discipline, is the profession of his faith. It is objected that the committee are wanting in logic, in contending for the membership of baptized children, and yet not discipline them. These brethren take the ground that church-membership necessarily involves subjection to discipline. You might, with equal propriety, say it is inconsistent to admit that they are members, and yet *not* admit them to all the privileges and offices of the church—to the Lord's table, the eldership, &c. You debar them simply because *they do not believe professedly in Christ*. Carry out the remorseless logic of these brethren, and you seat at the Lord's table all baptized worldlings and hypocrites. Sir, you have two classes of church members—professing and non-professing; and herein is the reason for a difference of treatment. Want of faith incapacitates the non-professing from the sacrament of the Supper. The same thing incapacitates for subjection to judicial process. It is important that we under-

stand the true idea of discipline. Discipline is not penal; the purpose of it is not to indicate the magnitude of the offence, or as a vindication of justice; it is rather to produce repentance. These provisions are all penitential; it is to bring back and restore an erring brother. It is a healing remedy. And these censures are, of course, as utterly absurd in regard to a man who has never heard the voice of the Lord in his soul, as for him to sit at the Lord's Supper. In order to receive any benefit from discipline, it is absolutely necessary that he recognize the claims of the Lord upon him. You see, therefore, that this view necessitates the distinction between professing and non-professing members. He would say, therefore, that in the whole word of God you cannot find a single case where discipline does not depend on brotherhood in the faith. There is another aspect of the subject of great moment. What is the *ground* of the membership of baptized members? Shall we take the ground that they are members by profession? Why, sir, this would be the doctrine of sponsors. Our doctrine is, that they are members through their parents. We take them in organically by families. Do you not see, then, that the first step in discipline is through the parents? You act on this principle when you require parents to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The parents, then, are the tie between the children and the church. The church governs them through their parents. Here is the discipline. What, then, is the precise position into which baptism brings a child? It makes him a child of the covenant. Baptism makes the broad separation as to the covenant of grace between the church and the world. It brings the child into such a relation that it can plead that covenant, and plead it with a power and a pathos that unbaptized children cannot. It gives the peculiar right of inheritance in these promises, and puts the baptized child in a near and blessed relation to God. It at the same time places the child under new and heavier responsibilities than rest on the world. And the parents' duty is to train up the children, pressing this obligation and privilege upon them.

But suppose they grow up and do not come to the Lord's table, what are you to do with them? Excommunicate them? as some suggest. No. Do as the Master would. If they turn

their back upon their birthright, still do not cast them out; but follow them with remonstrance, exhortation, prayers, &c. Bear with them. They bring no reproach. They are not professors. They are simply children who do not know their birthright, and we are continually persuading them to come up to their privileges.

But suppose you take the other course, and discipline them. What then? Why you are using your spiritual remedies on men who have no adaptation to receive them; or you fill your communion tables with worldlings and hypocrites. It is this which has filled the church of Scotland with moderatism, and other churches with formalists. The system proposed in the Revision is really that on which our church has always acted.

Our church may be compared to the temple. We see there, first, the *sanctum sanctorum*, all really spiritual persons; then second, the *sanctum*, separating all professedly spiritual persons from all without; then third, is the outer court, equally separate from the second. He recognizes in the church—  
1. True followers of the Redeemer. 2. Professors without true piety. 3. That vast congregation whom God has brought into the church by baptism, who are there to be trained, that they may be led at last into the *sanctum sanctorum*.

But why do not brethren carry out their principles? They go for confining discipline to baptized persons. What then will they do with that part of your Book which gives all children of believing parents a right to church membership? Will they not be required to discipline the children of believers, whether baptized or not? Certainly, if consistent.

The other point which has been objected to is allowing deceived church members to withdraw from the church, or, as it has been called, opening the back-door. For himself, so that we could get thieves and robbers out of our houses, provided they carry nothing with them, we were glad to have any door opened, whether it be a back or a front-door. It has been said that it assumes the right of members of the church to withdraw at pleasure, and that it thus renders the church a voluntary society. But what is a voluntary society? A mere thing of human invention and contrivance. Surely brethren will not say that we have made these truths on which the church is

built. But in another sense the church is a voluntary organization. We claim that all who come into the church from the world must come voluntarily. To those whose hearts are not with us, we say, Withdraw. But how shall we get them out? These brethren say, If a man gets into your house, who ought not to be there, you cannot let him out in any other way than by kicking him out. But, after all, though the revision proposes to open a mode of retirement for a church member, under certain circumstances, we still say the seal of baptism is on him, and never can be removed. We only pronounce him unfit for the communion of the *sanctum*, according to his own confession. We open the door, and put them back in their own outer court, where, by their own statements, their proper place is. We do not arraign young men and young women before the session, and prosecute them for not being converted.

The Revised Book of the Committee has been pronounced a failure. It may possibly not meet the concurrence of this Assembly, but he believes before God, it embodies the true principles of a spiritual church. What we are aiming at, and what we want, is a pure body. Our baptized children, our non-professing members, occupy a curious position. In heart they belong to the world, in covenant relation they belong to God; because of the latter, the church operates first upon these. Hence God comes with his blessing to you first, then to your children, and lastly to as many as are afar off, whom the Lord shall call.

Rev. Dr. Humphrey said he wished to refer to the history of our present Book of Discipline, in order to convince the Assembly that we should do the work of revision, if at all, only cautiously and carefully. It appears that when it was determined, in the old Synod of Philadelphia and New York, to form a General Assembly, a committee was appointed to prepare a Book of Discipline. That was composed of such men as John Rodgers, Robert Smith, Allison, Woodhull, Latta, Duffield—all known names. Two years afterwards, we find that this Committee reported "A Plan of Government and Discipline." The Synod of New York and Philadelphia, composed of only one hundred members, against three hundred in this house, were not then ready to adopt it. On the contrary, after thirteen

sessions, extending through eight days, their discussions only resulted in printing it and sending it down to the Presbyteries. The next year these Presbyteries reported; and then again, not until after six sessions, extending through four days, was it referred to the Presbyteries for adoption. So careful were our fathers in adopting this Book. Now, shall we change in a few hours what they have so carefully done, and make changes too, which our brethren themselves avow to be "radical"? Dr. Humphrey would here express his regret that he is compelled to differ from a Committee of names so honoured as the present one, but duty constrains him.

Well, this Book of Discipline, prepared with so much care, went into effect, and was used till 1816, when another revision was called for. Then Drs. Romeyn, Alexander, and Miller, (names he delights to speak,) were appointed to examine it, and report next year. The next year the Committee asked that Dr. Nott should be added to their number; and in 1818 they reported that they had "made some progress in the business." And at last, in 1819, after three years, the proposed revision was reported, and one thousand copies were sent to the Presbyteries for "examination and suggestions." He wished special notice to be taken of the extreme caution of these movements; and their changes, too, were not "radical," as at present. In 1820, this Committee reported that the number and contrariety of opinions had greatly perplexed them, but that they had endeavoured to harmonize them so as to make a proper and acceptable Book of Discipline. The Assembly, after six sessions, extending through four days, adopted it. Thus, after all this caution and care had this Book been adopted, which now, after forty years, we propose to alter in a few hours.

In the Committee's revision, we are asked to say that baptized children are not to be subject to discipline. Let us be cautious how we agree to this. In the year 1789, it was decided that baptized children are subjects of discipline. In 1821, see how the language is changed, so that instead of saying, "Inasmuch as all baptized children are members of the church," they say, simply, "All baptized *persons* are members of the church, and are subject to its forms and discipline." Now he believes that words are things. Some of the greatest heresies have turned



upon little words; and the words now proposed would, in his view, be replete with danger.

Let us take warning, too, from the obvious tendencies in this matter. In the year 1811, according to the statistics, there were one hundred and ninety-eight infant baptisms to one thousand communicants; but according to these same statistical tables, the proportion has been running down, till you now have but fifty-one to one thousand, and this has been a constant and gradual diminution. Now, he would ask, Is this a time to give up your principles, and take down the bars? No, sir, no! He was aware that it has been objected that these statistics are inaccurate; but you will perceive that the current has all the time been running in the same direction, which is surely significant. If we go on in this way, the next proposition will be, by 1889, to resolve that inasmuch as baptized children are not members of the church at all. A French philosopher has explained the method by which dogmas die out—the kernel is gradually extracted, and then any passer-by with his foot can crush the shell. Take care how you touch these rights which are so important. An article appeared, some two years since, in the *Princeton Review*, presenting startling statistics as to the decline of Infant Baptism, which it might be well just now to ponder. He differed from the brother (Dr. Thornwell) as to the ground of administering baptism. It is not descent from parents, but the covenant; and just in proportion as you lose your hold on the covenant, you will drift away until you become an Anti-pedo-Baptist church.

In conclusion, he would beg pardon, if he has been betrayed into intemperate warmth. He came from a cold clime in the old home of the Puritans; but he has been living so long in Kentucky, that he has perhaps acquired the habit of sometimes expressing himself with what may seem to some an undue warmth.

Rev. Dr. Thornwell said he concurred in the motion of Dr. Humphrey, and hoped that as part of the Theological Seminaries had been represented in the Committee, the others should also have a representation. He wished also to explain, that by radical changes, he by no means meant to apply that term to the essential principles of our system, but only to certain

usages which he deemed contradictory and illogical. He also placed the ground of infant membership through their connection with the parents most certainly on the covenant. He must say, too, that Dr. Humphrey's argument shows conclusively that a revision is imperatively demanded. For some years past we have had these stringent notions about infant baptism, and hence the decline. Let these notions continue to prevail, and in ten years we should have, perhaps, no baptisms at all.

Rev. Dr. Lowrie moved that the Revision be referred to the next Assembly. Let it be discussed, in the meantime, in our periodicals and newspapers. As to withdrawing from the church, the Assembly decided adverse to such withdrawal. And in the Assembly at Baltimore, under a judicial case, the same decision was come to, on the ground that the covenant of the church member is made, not with the church, but with his God; that you have no right to release him, but that you must.

As to the lower courts being parties, brethren forget that our present system is indispensable to the very idea of our government. In a session you do not allow the members of it to be challenged, because of prejudice. No, that is not your remedy. You allow the members of the court to sit, and if he feels injustice is done, you allow him to carry it up; and, to secure him the more fully, you do not allow those who have been liable to prejudice to interfere with an unbiassed and important decision; thus you have the pure court our brother so much desires.

Sir, let us steer clear of these radical changes. This Book has served us for forty years; it may probably do for forty more; and then let the Assembly appoint a new committee—perhaps consisting chiefly of pastors, with some legal gentlemen.

Rev. Mr. Platt said he thought this was the time and the place to discuss this report in detail. This should be done before sending it to the Presbyteries or to the next Assembly. We need light on these important subjects. We do not want merely anonymous publications. We wish to know who the men are that address the public, whose views are presented to us.

We fully agree with Dr. Thornwell in all he said about our ecclesiastical courts and other points in the new book which had been the subjects of criticism, except the relation of baptized persons to the church. As to this point, there were three views presented in the Committee of Revision. First, that which favoured the form in which the subject is exhibited in the old Book. It is there said: "All baptized persons are members of the church, are under its care, and subject to its government and discipline; and when they have arrived at the years of discretion, they are bound to perform all the duties of church members." This undoubtedly expresses the general conviction of the Christian world. It has been embodied in the principles, and carried out in the practice of all historical churches from the beginning, until the rise of the Independents. It undoubtedly expresses the faith and practice of our own church, from its organization until the present time. Some of the Committee were very strenuous that it should be allowed to retain its place in the Revised Book, without alteration. A second view, while admitting that baptized persons were in some sense members of the church, seemed to regard them as only under its fostering care, but not subject to its government or discipline. Third, as a compromise, it was proposed to say, as in the Revised Book, that while all baptized persons are members of the church, and under its care and *government*, yet the proper subjects of *judicial process* are those who have professed their faith in Christ.\* In this form it was passed, but not unanimously—Dr. McGill not being willing to give up the clear statement of the old Book. In the new form, a distinction is made between *government* and *judicial process*; that is, between discipline in its wide and its narrow sense. And as the paragraph, in its revised form, asserts that baptized persons are subject to the government of the church, it was

\* It is not to be expected that all the members of a large committee who may agree to its report are of the same mind as to all the principles which the report may contain. It is the report of the committee, because the act of the majority, and the minority agree to it as a whole, while they reserve their right to their own judgment as to its details. There is no breach of confidence, therefore, in any member of such committee, avowing his preference for some other form of expression than that which the majority of his brethren decided to adopt.

thought that the great principle involved remained intact. We are free to confess that the old form is, in our view, greatly to be preferred; and we are not surprised at the opposition which the change has elicited, although we voted for it, as a compromise. Dr. Thornwell's argument assumes that the indispensable condition under which a man becomes the subject of discipline, is his own personal and voluntary profession of faith in Christ. This is perfectly intelligible and inevitable, if a personal and voluntary confession of faith is the indispensable condition of church membership. If it is not, the principle is out of its place. It does not belong to the theory of infant church membership. One syllogism is, Members of the church are the proper subjects of discipline: All baptized persons are members of the church: Therefore, all baptized persons are the proper subjects of discipline. This is the old and common doctrine. The Independent frames his argument thus: Members of the church are the proper subjects of discipline: Only those who voluntarily profess their faith in Christ are members of the church: Therefore, only those who thus profess their faith are the proper subjects of discipline. Dr. Thornwell adopts neither of these syllogisms. He objects to the major proposition in the former of the two. He denies that all members of the church are the proper subjects of discipline. He distinguishes between professing and non-professing members, and makes voluntary profession indispensable to that relation to the church, which is the foundation of discipline. But this is contrary to all analogy. A Hebrew child was a member of the Theocracy by birth, and subject to all its laws, independently of all profession. So every Englishman or American is a member of the state, and subject to its laws, without any personal and voluntary profession of allegiance. We see not how this principle can be denied, in its application to the church, without giving up our whole doctrine, and abandoning the ground to the Independents and Anabaptists. If, as we all hold, the children of believing parents are, by the ordinance of God, to be regarded and treated as members of the church, this of necessity involves their right to its privileges and their subjection to its laws. Dr. Thornwell objects that, according to this principle, all baptized persons must be admitted to the

Lord's table, and that we should have our churches filled with hypocrites. This, however, is a *non-sequitur*. A person being a citizen of England, or America, subject to the laws of the state, does not give him the right of suffrage. That right is limited by the laws of the state. In England, and in some of the states of this Union, it depends on the possession of a given amount of property; in other states, on the attainment of the age of twenty-one; as to females, they never acquire the privilege. In every case the right is limited by what the state deems the possession of the requisite qualifications. So in the church, admission to the Lord's table, or to church offices, is limited by the possession of the qualifications which the word of God prescribes. It by no means therefore follows, that because baptized persons are subject to discipline, they are entitled to admission to the Lord's Supper.

The Doctor further objects, that as the object of discipline is not the vindication of justice, but to produce repentance, it is utterly absurd in regard to "a man who has never heard the voice of the Lord in his soul." This is surely a strange idea. Cannot the means of repentance be used in reference to the unconverted? Dr. Thornwell himself says, that baptized persons who do not act in accordance with their obligations, should be "followed with exhortation, remonstrance, and prayers." But are not exhortation and remonstrance means of repentance? Do they not as much suppose a recognition of the claims of God as the subjection to discipline? They are indeed forms of discipline; and we cannot help thinking that it is a contradiction in terms, to say that a man is a member of the church and not subject to its discipline. Whether he shall be subject to that particular form of discipline implied in "judicial process," might be a question. But as his amenability to such process is denied on grounds which, as it seems to us, involve the denial of his true relation to the church, we are decidedly in favour of the paragraph as it stands in our present Book.

Dr. Humphrey's argument is imperfectly reported. It seems to be directed to prove that our present Book is good enough; that having been prepared by eminent men, and long used in our judicatories, it does not require revision. The same ground was taken in a very elaborate paper published in the *Southern*

*Presbyterian Review*. It is evident that the church does not agree with Dr. Humphrey and the writer in the *Southern Review* on this subject. For if the Book does not, in the judgment of the church, need revision, why appoint a committee to do the work, at no small expense of time and labour. We think that Dr. Humphrey, when he found himself on the floor of the last Assembly, differing from Dr. MacMaster on the simple conduct of a judicial case, must have felt that if the Book was plain enough for him, it is not plain enough for other people. It appears that when the appeal of Alexander Fraser against the Synod of Buffalo came up, after reading the records, &c., "the not unusual embarrassment," says the *Presbyterian*, "arose in regard to the order of proceeding." The Moderator decided that the Synod was not a party; that there were no parties before the court except Mr. Fraser. Dr. Humphrey's doctrine, as we understand, is that every appeal is of the nature of a charge against the court appealed from, of having made a wrong decision, and makes it a party in the court above. This is the doctrine of the present Book. The Moderator, guided apparently by his good sense, decided otherwise, and the Synod was permitted to be heard. Then came a discussion how it was to be heard; whether by the members of Synod who happened to be members of the Assembly, or by the committee appointed for that purpose. When that was decided, then there was another discussion, whether the other members of the Synod present had a right to be heard. This caused great debate. The Moderator decided that they had the right. From this decision an appeal was taken. This did not end the matter—Mr. Towle, a ruling elder from a church within the bounds of the Synod, but not a member of the Synod at the time of the decision appealed from, wanted to know whether he was to be regarded as a member of Synod or not. Judge Kennedy moved that he be *not* regarded as a member of the Synod appealed from. Dr. Humphrey said, "If Mr. Towle is not a member of the Synod, then he is a judge in the case here. See, then, what a predicament you place yourselves in." Dr. MacMaster said, "But he is not a member of the court below." Dr. Humphrey—"That is new doctrine in the General Assembly." Dr. MacMaster—"But it is good doctrine." Dr.

Thornwell insisted that Mr. Towle was to be regarded as a member of the court below, and moved to lay Judge Kennedy's motion on the table. This was not all. When Judicial Case No. 2 came up, there was a renewal of the same trouble. Now, if this is not a lamentable, not to say disgraceful exhibition, we know not what can be so regarded. The fault is not in the Assembly, it is in the Book, which certainly is not understood, or is inconsistent with itself.

*Colonization and Theory of the Church.*

R. R. Read, M. D., (ruling elder,) offered a paper, commending the African Colonization enterprise.

It was moved to lay the paper on the table; but the Assembly refused to do so by a vote of 83 ayes to 160 noes. The question then being on the adoption of Dr. Read's paper, Rev. Dr. Thornwell said, That the ground upon which he voted to lay these resolutions on the table, was the conservation of a great principle upon which he had acted, and which he deemed of immense importance to the church of Christ. The church of God, said he, is exclusively a *spiritual* organization, and possesses none but *spiritual power*. It was her mission to promote the glory of God and the salvation of men from the curse of the law. She had nothing to do with the voluntary associations of men for various civil and social purposes that were outside of her pale. Ever since he had been a member of the church, he had believed this, and contended for this, and had steadily resisted associating this church with outside organizations. The Lord Jesus Christ had never given his church a commission to be identified with them. It was the church's great aim to deliver men from sin, and death, and hell. She had no mission to care for the things, and to become entangled with the kingdoms and the policy of this world. The question of colonization is a question of worldly policy. It is a question upon the merits of which he wished not to speak. But no man will say that Jesus Christ has given to his ministry a commission to attend to the colonization of races, or to attend to the arrest of the slave trade, nor to the mere physical comforts of man. It is not the business of *the church* to build asylums for the insane and the blind. The church deals with men *as men*,

as fallen sinners, standing in *need of salvation*; not as citizens of the commonwealth, or philanthropists, or members of society. Her mission is to bring men to the cross, to reconcile them to God through the blood of the Lamb, to imbue them with the spirit of the divine Master, and thence send them forth to perform their social duties, to manage society, and perform the functions that pertain to their social and civil relations. The church has no right, no authority, to league herself with any of the institutions of the state, or such as have for their object mere secular enterprises. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's;" but let the church of God lend her energies directly to the accomplishment of her own high and glorious mission. She deals with the great interests of immortality! The blessings she sheds upon the earth and upon the temporal interests of men are incidental; and, although incalculable, are subsidiary to the higher aims of the church. He was willing that church members should coöperate with this Colonization Society, and other societies for philanthropic objects, if they see proper to do so. He was willing that they should try to do good through any agencies that their consciences may approve; but he wished the church, as such, to keep herself to her specific work. As a church of Christ, he desired her to know neither rich nor poor, high nor low, bond nor free—to know neither East nor West, North nor South. "Let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me," was the mandate of our Lord to his church; and the very moment you undertake to implicate this church with any of the powers of the earth, you endanger her efficiency. At this very General Assembly, we have declined identifying ourselves even with the American Presbyterian Historical Society. We had voted it out; we had voted out the temperance societies, and he would have the Assembly vote out all the societies of this world, and keep to her proper sphere, and let the societies keep to theirs, and do good in their own way, without asking the church's coöperation. It is this principle that he deemed absolutely indispensable to the church's purity and success in her peculiar mission.

To this view the church has been steadily coming up; and in consequence, what a spectacle does she this hour present to



the country and to the world! She stands preëminent the great conservative power of this land; the great bond of union and witness for the truth—directly interfering with no temporal interests, but blessing and protecting all, whilst she aims only at the glory of her God in the salvation of the souls of the people. And why does our beloved Zion stand thus “the beauty of the land”? It is because the only voice she utters is the word of God; because no voice is heard in her councils but his; and because her only guide is the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night. He gloried in the position of this church.

He was once attended by a young gentleman, a native of Great Britain, through the Tower of London; and we passed through the long apartments and corridors, in which were deposited the trophies which England’s prowess had won in her many wars. As my companion pointed me, with becoming patriotic pride, to these trophies that attested his country’s triumphs, said Dr. Thornwell, I raised myself to the fullest height my stature would permit, and replied, “Your country has carried on two wars with mine, but I see no trophies here won from American valour.” Let our church lend herself, in the name of her Lord, and in his strength, and in her own proper sphere, to her own mission, and her enemies will never rejoice over trophies won from her. Sir, the salt that is to save this country is the church of Christ—a church that does not mix up with any political party, or any issues aside from her direct mission.

It was, on motion, resolved to refer the paper of Dr. Read to the Committee on Bills and Overtures, to report thereon.

On motion of Rev. Mr. Mann, Overture No. 28, on the subject of Colonization, was taken up. On the motion to adopt it,

Rev. Dr. A. S. MacMaster said he felt disposed to meet the question on its merits, and could not let this overture pass in its present shape without comment. If the Colonization Society be a good thing, or if it be a bad thing, let us say the one or the other. He considered the plea, that had been so eloquently made, that the church should never commend anything good because it was not strictly spiritual or ecclesiastical, as both preposterous and restrictive of the church’s legitimate duties.

He referred to the fact that for four-score years the Presbyterian church had always borne testimony in favour of good enterprises, even when not strictly spiritual. He alluded to the part borne by our church in the Revolutionary struggle of our country, and to her frequent testimonies in favour of the liberties and independence of our country. He cited cases to prove that it had been the uniform practice of this church to commend philanthropic enterprises; and contended that one so strictly missionary as this, was peculiarly entitled to her sympathy and encouragement.

Rev. Dr. McGill offered as an amendment, "That it is sufficient to refer to the past action of the General Assembly, in her frequent recommendations of the Colonization Society."

Rev. Dr. Thornwell said all he wished to do was to set his opinions in a true light. He thought it would hardly be denied that—1st. The church is a kingdom not of this world. 2d. That her authority is only ministerial and declarative. 3d. That the power which is given to the church is to be exercised for spiritual ends only. If the church will keep within her own bounds, she will be an agency that will purify and bless the world; but if she goes beyond her proper sphere, she will not only fail to accomplish her mission, but will do mischief. Like the ocean, she purifies even by her agitation, whilst acting within her bounds and banks; but like the ocean, too, if she break beyond them, nothing can be more destructive or desolating. Let the church work on at the very foundations of moral and spiritual influences, which are the foundations of society; let her do her appropriate and appointed work, and she will sanctify the world. But let her go out of her sphere, and affect interference with the temporalities of men, and she will fail. Whenever she forgets that her mission is to bring men to the cross, and to salvation, she comes down from her high vantage ground. Whenever the church speaks at all, she must speak in the name of the Lord; and she must speak what the Lord bids her. Show me, said he, that the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the church to engage in the business of transferring men from one place to another and I will yield, and unite in the effort. But until you convince me that this is the business that the Head of the church has committed to her, I must

earnestly resist any proposal to identify her with such business. Dr. Thornwell concluded by moving to lay the report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures on the table, to take up a paper which he read. The motion of Dr. Thornwell prevailed by a count of sixty-four to fifty-four.

Dr. B. M. Smith moved to lay Dr. Thornwell's paper on the table, which was done.

We all know and admit that a vote of the Assembly does not always express even the settled conviction of that body itself. Such votes are often given hastily, without due consideration, or from motives not affecting the principle involved in the case decided. At the end of the session, to avoid discussion, or to save time, things are often passed, or passed over, which, under other circumstances, would have met a different fate. It is also to be considered that all who vote for a particular measure, do not commonly do so for the same reasons. A vote to lay a resolution on the table is not decisive evidence that those who joined it, sanctioned the arguments of the speakers by whom the measure was advocated. The sixty-four members who voted to lay the overture on Colonization on the table, are not to be presumed, for example, all to agree with Dr. Thornwell. And if they did, sixty-four is a small portion of an Assembly counting some three hundred members. These remarks are made with the obvious purpose to prevent the hasty assumption that the General Assembly gave its sanction to the new and startling doctrine on the church, which Dr. Thornwell so eloquently advocated.

The world is governed by ideas. The triteness of this remark is only a proof of its importance. It is wonderful also how ideas percolate; how they silently diffuse themselves, as heat, or electricity, until they animate the mass of society, and manifest themselves in the most unexpected quarters. They often lie dormant, as it were, in the public mind, until some practical measure, some foregone conclusion or purpose as to a definite mode of action, calls them into notice. If they suit the occasion, if they answer a cherished purpose, and give to the intellect a satisfactory reason for what the will has determined upon, they are adopted with avidity. The history of

every community will suggest abundant illustrations to every reader of the truth of this remark.

Great evils were long experienced in England from Erastianism. The intimate union of the church and state, and the consequent subjection of the former to the latter, led to all manner of corruptions and oppressions. To escape these evils, one class of the Puritans went to the opposite extreme. They represented the visible church as a purely spiritual body, consisting of the regenerated, united by special covenant for the worship of God, and mutual watch and care. This is Owen's idea. He says, believers are the matter of the church, and the covenant is the form. No one, therefore, is a member of the church but one, who giving satisfactory evidence of regeneration, voluntarily and personally professes his faith, and enters into a church covenant with a number of fellow-believers. All else are of the world, in no way amenable to the church or subject to its control. The sole object of church organization is the worship of God and the exercise of discipline; and consequently its sole prerogative is to provide for divine worship and to receive and exclude members. This leads to the distinction between the church and the parish. The former is the covenanted body of believers; the latter, the whole body of the community united in the maintenance of the ordinances of religion. There are two principles involved in this theory, the one, that each body of believers united by covenant for worship and discipline is a complete church, and independent of all others; and the other, that the church is a purely spiritual body having for its sole object the worship of God and the fellowship and purity of believers. The effects of this theory we see in the progress of development in New England. The church, there, is what Napoleon's army would be were it disbanded into independent companies, each acting by, and for itself; this is the effect of Independency; or what these countries would be, if every village were a separate sovereignty. The effect of the other principle, relating to the nature and design of the church, is utter inefficiency. Who ever heard of *the* church saying or doing anything in New England. It is muzzled, manacled and fettered. It exists there in spite of the theory, in the spiritual union and fellowship of the people of God, but

they have no means of organic action, and according to the prevalent notion, no right to act as an organic whole, nor to act even in its disjoint members, except for the purposes indicated above. If they have even to ordain a man to the ministry, found a seminary, send out missionaries, or do anything however intimately connected with Christ's kingdom, they must go out of the church organization to do it. The most desperate evils may prevail in the form of heresies or immoralities, the church as such can do nothing, and does nothing. We give full credit to the devotion of individual Christians in New England, and to the energy of their combined action in their voluntary associations of different kinds. But these are very poor substitutes for the natural and divinely appointed organs of church action. Experience is teaching a sad lesson on this subject.

Of the two principles involved in this form of Puritanism, the Independent element has had no access to our church. There is no susceptibility in our system of impression from that source. The two systems are antagonistic and repellent. They are incapable of combination. With regard to the other element, however, relating to the nature and prerogatives of the church, the case is far different. That element has long been silently diffusing itself through our whole body. It affects our modes of thought, our expressions, and our ecclesiastical action. With us, in common parlance, the church is the body of those who profess to be regenerated; to join the church is to come to the Lord's table. Our Book declares that all baptized persons are members of the church, and yet we constantly talk of such persons joining the church when they come to the Lord's Supper. Personal and voluntary profession of saving faith is regarded as the condition of church membership. The church has no right of discipline except over such professors. And now the doctrine is advanced by one of the very foremost men of our whole communion, that the church is in such sense a spiritual body that she has no right even to recommend a benevolent society. She must confine herself to a purely spiritual vocation. She cannot denounce evil or patronize good out of her pale. It is not her business to attend "to the colo-

nization of races, or to the arrest of the slave trade," or to any thing else but the immediate spiritual affairs of men.

There is always a half truth in every error. It is true that the church is not of this world; that it is not as such concerned in the affairs of the world; that it has nothing to do with politics, commerce, or agriculture, or any secular enterprise as such. All this follows from our theory of the church, as logically and freely as from the Puritan doctrine. There is no necessity to manacle the church to keep her hands off of politics.

In strong contrast with this whole Puritan doctrine is that idea of the church which is the life of our system, which has revealed itself in act in every period of our history. It is, that while the true church, or body of Christ, the *Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ πνεῦμα*, consists of the true people of God, yet by divine ordinance the children of believers are to be regarded and treated as included within its pale, and consecrated to God in baptism, and therefore, in the sight of men, all baptized persons, in the language of our Book, are members of the church, and under its watch and care.

This, of course, as remarked above, does not imply that they are all to be admitted to the Lord's table, any more than that they are all to be admitted to the ministry or eldership. God has prescribed the qualifications which the church is to require of those whom she receives to full communion or to office. Still, baptized persons are members of the visible church, until they renounce their birthright or are excommunicated, and consequently subject to its government or discipline. This body constitutes one whole, so that one part is subject to a larger, and the larger to the whole. To the church, in this sense, is committed not merely the work of public worship and exercising discipline, not simply or exclusively to exhort men to repentance and faith, but to assert, maintain, and propagate the truth. And by the truth, is to be understood the word of God, and all it contains, as the rule of faith and practice. This is the great prerogative and duty of the church. Her divine commission is, "Go, teach all nations." From this it follows: 1. That she has the right to preach the gospel. This is the first, most important, and pressing of her duties; and in the

discharge of this duty, she ordains ministers and sends forth missionaries. Hence your Boards of Foreign and Domestic Missions, and of Church Extension. 2. She has the right to administer discipline, which is one of the divinely appointed means of preserving the truth. 3. The right to educate. If she is to teach all nations, she must train up teachers; she must prepare the minds of men to receive the truth, and she must communicate that truth by all the means at her command. Hence your schools, colleges, and theological seminaries; hence also your educational institutions among the heathen, and your establishments for printing and distributing Bibles, tracts, and religious books. On this foundation rest your Boards of Education and Publication. 4. It follows from the great commission of the church, that it is her prerogative and duty to testify for the truth and law of God, wherever she can make her voice heard; not only to her own people, but to kings and rulers, to Jews and Gentiles. It is her duty not only to announce the truth, but to apply it to particular cases and persons; that is, she is bound to instruct, rebuke, and exhort, with all long-suffering. She is called of God to set forth and enjoin upon the consciences of men the relative duties of parents and children, of magistrates and people, of masters and slaves. If parents neglect their duties, she is called upon by her Divine commission to instruct and exhort them. If magistrates transcend the limits of their authority, and trespass on the Divine law, she is bound to raise her voice in remonstrance and warning. She has nothing to do with the state, in the exercise of its discretion within its own sphere; and therefore has no right to meddle with questions of policy, foreign or domestic. She has nothing to do with tariffs, or banks, or internal improvements. We say, with Dr. Thornwell, "Let the dead bury the dead." Let Cæsar attend to his own affairs. But if Cæsar undertakes to meddle with the affairs of God; if the state pass any laws contrary to the law of God, then it is the duty of the church, to whom God has committed the great work of asserting and maintaining his truth and will, to protect and remonstrate. If the state not only violates the Sabbath, but makes it a condition to holding office, that others should violate it; or if it legalizes piracy, or concubinage, or polygamy; if it pro-

hibits the worship of God, or the free use of the means of salvation; if, in short, it does anything directly contrary to the law of God, the church is bound to make that law known, and set it home upon the conscience of all concerned.

In many of our states, there are in force laws relating to marriage and divorce, in open conflict with the word of God. We hold that it is the duty of the church of every denomination, in those states, to tell their legislators, that while they have the right to legislate about matters of property and civil rights at their discretion, under the constitution, they have no right to separate those whom God has joined together, or make that lawful which God has declared to be unlawful.

A few years since, Dr. Thornwell preached an elaborate sermon, setting forth what he believed to be the true teaching of the word of God on the subject of slavery. What he had a right to do, and was bound to do as a minister of the gospel, the church has the right and obligation to do. If, on the one hand, Northern brethren would abstain from teaching, on that and other subjects, what God does not teach; and if, on the other hand, Southern brethren would clearly assert, in their capacity of ministers and a church, what they fully believe God does teach, great good and God's blessing, we doubt not, would be the result. They are as much bound to teach the truth on this subject, as a church, as they are bound to do it as ministers; and they are surely as much bound to teach the law of God respecting the duties of masters and slaves, as they are to teach what God says of the duty of parents and children, of saints and sinners. There is a great temptation to adopt theories which free us from painful responsibilities; but we are satisfied that the brethren must, on reflection, be convinced that the duty to testify to the truth, to make it known, and to press it upon the hearts and consciences of men, is as much obligatory on the church, in her aggregate capacity, as on her individual pastors. Her Confession and Catechisms are an admirable summary of that testimony; but she is no more to be satisfied with them, than the ministry is to be satisfied with reading the Confession of Faith, Sabbath after Sabbath, to the people.

The principle which defines and limits the prerogative and duty of the church in all such cases, seems to us perfectly



plain. She has nothing to do as a church with secular affairs, with questions of politics or state policy. Her duty is to announce and enforce by moral means the law of God. If at any time, as may well happen, a given question assumes both a moral and political bearing, as for example, the slave-trade, then the duty of the church is limited to setting forth the law of God on the subject. It is not her office to argue the question in its bearing on the civil or secular interests of the community, but simply to declare in her official capacity what God has said on the subject. To adopt any theory which would stop the mouth of the church, and prevent her bearing her testimony to kings and rulers, magistrates and people, in behalf of the truth and law of God, is like administering chloroform to a man to prevent his doing mischief. We pray God that this poison may be dashed away, before it has reduced the church to a state of inanition, and delivered her bound hand and foot into the power of the world. It is obvious that the same principle is applicable to ministers. They profane the pulpit when they preach politics, or turn the sacred desk into a rostrum for lectures on secular affairs. But they are only faithful to their vows when they proclaim the truth of God and apply his law to all matters whether of private manners or laws of the state. The whole history of the Presbyterian church in Europe and America is instinct with this spirit. The Presbyterians of Scotland told the government that it had no right to establish Popery or Prelacy, and that they would not submit to it. Our fathers of the Revolution took sides with the country in the struggle for independence, and protested against the acts of the British Government tending to the introduction of Episcopacy. Before the Revolution the old Synod remonstrated with the authorities in Virginia, for their persecuting laws. In 1830 the General Assembly raised its voice against the persecution of Christians in Switzerland. It has, over and over, remonstrated with the Government of this country on the laws enjoining the carrying and distribution of the mails on Sunday. While admitting that the Bible does not forbid slaveholding, it has borne its testimony in the most explicit terms against the iniquity of many slave laws. It has many times enjoined on the conscience of the people the duty of instruct-

ing the coloured population of our land, and patronized the establishment of schools for that purpose. It has never been afraid to denounce what God forbids, or to proclaim in all ears what God commands. This is her prerogative and this is her duty. With the Colonization Society, as a commercial enterprise, or as a mere benevolent institution she has nothing to do; but as a means designed and adapted to promote the progress of the gospel in Africa, she has over and over commended it to the favour of the people. It is only on the assumption that Presbyterians, neither in this country nor in Europe, have ever understood their own system, that the principle advocated by Dr. Thornwell can be admitted. Presbyterians have always held that the church is bound to hold forth in the face of all men the truth and law of God, to testify against all infractions of that law by rulers or people, to lend her countenance and support to all means, within and without her jurisdiction, which she believes to be designed and wisely adapted to promote the glory and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. This our church has always done, and we pray God, she may continue to do even to the end.

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## SHORT NOTICES.

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*Lectures on Metaphysics.* By Sir William Hamilton, Bart. Edited by the Rev. H. L. Mansel, D. D., Oxford, and John Veitch, M. A., Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. MDCCCLIX. 2 vols. 8vo.

It has long been heralded over the civilized world that Sir William Hamilton was as marvellous a man in the academical chair teaching orally, as he was in the closet instructing by the instrumentality of written thought. This, from the peculiarly compact, concise and eminently logical style of his writings, we could not well understand. But the lectures before us have made manifest to us that Sir William was a great master in the art of teaching. As a scheme of discourse to teach young men to philosophize, the lectures seem to us to be devised with consummate skill. They are a series of mirrors exhibiting to the