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ART. I.—*Tholuck's View of the Right Way of Preaching.\**

ALTHOUGH it is true that of late the churches are here and there somewhat better filled than formerly, especially where zealous preachers proclaim the Word, yet in many places we find them more and more deserted. The services of Sunday afternoon, and of the week day have been given up for want of hearers. Of entire classes, such as public officers, military and professional men, there is often seen only a single individual, like some relic of antiquity in the old cathedrals.

In numerous cities and villages, church attendance is almost wholly confined to the middle and lower classes. And even among these, many think it sufficient if they do not forbid the attendance of their wives and children. Unless there is a change, it will soon be the case in some sections of the country, that in our places of worship we shall find, as indeed on Sunday afternoons we now frequently do, only women and children, as was the case during the second century in the temples of Rome.

\* This article is a translation, by an accomplished American lady, of *Counsels to the modern German Preacher*, being Dr. Tholuck's Preface to his second series of Sermons.

Here are the three great factors of the providential course.—God, man, and the angels—with their characteristics and relations. One is purely wise and good; another is a mixture of good and evil; and a portion of the third is purely evil. The divine is always the dominant; the satanic ever the resistant. The human is partly with the one and partly with the other, with a providential movement, slow but sure, back from the starting-point of evil, through the coming conqueror, toward the triumph of the true, the beautiful, and the good.

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ART. VI.—*The General Assembly.*

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, convened in the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, on Thursday, May 19th, at 11 A. M.

Being the first General Assembly of the re-united church its proceedings were regarded with extraordinary interest, not only on account of the magnitude, the new composition, and circumstances of the body, but on account of the many grave and delicate questions of readjustment and reconstruction to be decided by it.

According to the plan of re-union, as adopted, both Moderators of the bodies now united presided jointly, until the election of a new Moderator was effected—the Rev. Dr. Fowler preaching the sermon, and the Rev. Dr. Jacobus performing all other duties of the office. Dr. Fowler preached from Eph. iv. 4: “There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.”

Among the many pertinent suggestions of this discourse, in regard to the best means of promoting the unity, purity, growth, and efficiency of the united church, we note one, which we trust will not be forgotten. He said:—

“*The great doctrines of grace are committed to our stewardship.* It devolves on us to keep and dispense them. Our Baptist brethren, who profess them, are occupied with the mode and subjects of baptism, and our Congregational brethren

with their church policy. If Calvinism is cared for, it must be by us, and care for it we will. With all our hearts we embrace it. If not the whole of Christianity, nor the whole of the substance of Christianity, it is indispensable to Christianity. If not the entire soul of the Gospel system of truth, it is its spine, and upholds it. And never was Calvinism more needed than now. The theology of the day is effeminate and flimsy. We must give it backbone."

We hope this will prove the doctrinal key-note of the Presbyterian Church of the future.

Upon the nomination of Dr. Adams, enforced by a felicitous speech, Rev. J. Trumbull Backus, D. D., of the Presbytery of Albany, was appointed Moderator by acclamation, and, in his difficult and delicate position, presided to the entire satisfaction of all parties. With the like unanimity Rev. E. F. Hatfield, D. D., of New York, was elected stated clerk; and the Rev. Cyrus Dickson, D. D., of Baltimore, permanent clerk. Dr. V. D. Reed, Judge McCoy, and Mr. Ezra S. Kingsley were appointed temporary clerks. A resolution complimentary to the former clerks of each Assembly, not re-elected, was unanimously passed. It was impossible, without doubling the force, to make places for them in the united Assembly. While abundantly satisfied with the gentlemen elected, we should have been glad if some way could have been devised by which the church could have still availed itself of the services of its former able and accomplished clerks.

Reports of the various committees appointed in Pittsburgh on re-construction, the boards, and other matters requiring adjustment in the re-united church were heard, docketed, and disposed of in their order. These consumed nearly the whole time of this unusually protracted session of the body. We can only refer to them in their order when we treat of the final disposal of them by the Assembly. Indeed, we can at most barely touch on a few of the most salient or controverted points.

### *Christianity and Common Schools.*

The subjoined resolutions, accompanied by an able report from Dr. Prentiss, chairman of the committee on the subject, were enthusiastically adopted by the Assembly. They confirm the judgment we expressed in our last number, as to the

drift of the Protestant and Evangelical mind of the country on this great subject.

"1. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly regard the free public school as an essential part of our republican system, as conducive in the highest degree to the moral unity, common spirit, and kindly sympathies of American citizenship, and as closely connected with all the best interests of Christian society in the United States.

"2. *Resolved*, That in the judgment of the General Assembly the divorce of popular education from all religious elements, while involving a radical departure from the spirit and principles in which our public school had its origin, would be eminently unwise, unjust, and a moral calamity to the nation.

"3. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly are also entirely opposed to the appropriation of any portion of the public school funds for the support of sectarian institutions, and would regard the establishment of such a policy as fraught with the greatest mischief, not only to the cause of popular education, but hardly less to the interests of American freedom, unity, and progress.

"4. *Resolved*, That whereas the Bible is not only the *Magna Charta* of the spiritual rights and liberties of mankind, but is also pre-eminently our National Book, the best model of our mother tongue, and the fountain of our highest thought and of our ruling ideas, both in private and public life, the General Assembly would regard its expulsion from the schools of the people as a deplorable and suicidal act; nor can they perceive that any real advantage could thereby be gained to the cause of popular education.

"5. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly, conscious of being actuated in this matter by no other motive than the greatest good of the whole country, hereby profess their readiness to co-operate with all Christian people, of whatever name, and with all good citizens, in so modifying and perfecting our noble public school system, as to obviate as far as practicable the conscientious scruples and difficulties of any of its friends, and thus to render it a fountain of still greater light and benediction to us and our children after us to the latest generation."

We wish we also had room for Dr. Prentiss' eloquent report on the subject.

*Laying of the corner-stone of Re-union Hall in the College of New Jersey.*

The following document was presented to the Assembly:—

PHILADELPHIA, May 20, 1870.

"To the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of America:

"The trustees of the College of New Jersey are about to erect a suite of rooms to accommodate the rapidly increasing number of students, and intend to call the building 'Reunion Hall,' in honor of the re-union of the two branches of the Presbyterian Church, and it will be deemed a very great favor by the trustees and faculty if the General Assembly will make an arrangement to lay the corner-stone of the hall at a time it may appoint. It may be interesting to the members of the Assembly to know that we have at present a larger number of ministers'

sons and of young men studying for the ministry than we have ever had in our old college, and it is believed that the interests of religion will be subserved by thus countenancing us on this occasion.

“JAMES McCOSH,

President of the College,

“HENRY W. GREEN,

G. W. MUSGRAVE,

JOHN C. BACKUS,

CYRUS DICKSON.”

Judge WM. STRONG: Mr. Moderator: I move you, sir, that a delegation of twenty members of this Assembly, to be appointed by the Moderator, be sent to attend the laying of this corner-stone on the 28th inst., one week from to-morrow.

I need hardly say, sir, that a more interesting ceremony can hardly be devised. As Presbyterians we are deeply interested in the College of New Jersey.

It is our institution more than any other collegiate institution of the country. It well befits us, therefore, I think, sir, to attend the ceremonies of laying the corner-stone of a new building to be dominated Re-union Hall. My motion, therefore, is for a delegation of twenty members of this Assembly, to be appointed by the Moderator, to attend the laying of that corner-stone, and that the day be fixed for the 28th inst., to-morrow week.

Dr. BREED: I would make an amendment. In addition to the delegation of twenty, I move that any others be sent who may choose to accompany them.

The motion as amended was passed.

On Saturday, May 28th, from two hundred and fifty to three hundred of members and others connected with the Assembly, came up from Philadelphia to Princeton, to participate in this solemn and significant ceremony. The corner-stone was laid with due solemnity by Dr. Backus, the Moderator. Happy addresses were then made by him, Drs. Adams and Jacobus, by Judge Strong, and Hon. Wm. E. Dodge; and at the collation by Drs. Prentiss, Nelson, R. Patterson, Prof. Stoeber, Hon. S. F. B. Morse, Hon. J. McKnight, and others. The interest of the occasion was enhanced by the unusual religious attention which has prevailed of late among the students. We trust that the Re-union of which it is a monument will prove lasting and happy, on foundations of truth and piety, more lasting than the rock of which the edifice is built; and

that the college in her future expansion, as well as in her past history, will evermore be devoted *Christo et ecclesiæ*.

*Change in the Structure and Composition of the Boards.*

The Boards of the past Old School Church have been composed of a large number of ministers and elders, generally exceeding fifty, selected from all parts of the church, divided into four sections, each one of which was in turn elected by the Assembly every four years. The result is, that the business of each Board must be conducted by the few members residing convenient to its principal office, and, in all ordinary cases, by an executive committee of these. Saving a few exceptional instances, the relation of the distant members of these Boards to their actual conduct and operations has been merely nominal. The advantages of this plan have been supposed to be, that it tends to awaken interest in the cause under the care of the Board in all parts of the church, and that in case of emergency, involving serious conflict of opinions, the more distant members could be summoned, so as to represent the mind of the whole church. This is good in theory. In a more compact body, like the churches of Scotland or Ireland, or our own half a century ago, it might be so in fact. But as it is, it is notorious that members of our Boards at all remote from their place of business, have little more to do with them, or the causes under their charge, than if they were not members. The only way in which the whole church is felt in shaping the policy of the Boards is in the annual meetings of the General Assembly, to which they report, from which they receive all instructions it may be pleased to give, and by which their vacancies are annually filled. This essentially corresponds with the actual working of that oldest and most successful of our foreign missionary organizations, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, so far as an ecclesiastical organization can correspond in its movements with a close corporation acting as agent for the Congregational churches of our country, and such others as may choose to employ it for the purpose. The actual ordinary business of that Board is done, not under its immediate direction, but under the supervision

of its prudential committee, consisting of not more than ten members, and living in Boston or its adjacent suburbs. The Board itself, with great numbers of its supporters, whose spirit it aims at once to reflect and guide, meet once a year, and once only. It then fills vacancies, chooses its prudential committee and other executive officers, and gives such directions to them, as it may judge requisite. Here, in fact, is a committing of the whole business to the supervision of a small but competent body of men, who are annually made immediately responsible to the appointing Board, and, through them, to the great constituent body of contributors for whom this Board acts.

With us this responsibility is not to an unorganized body of contributors, but to the organized church, acting in her organic capacity, through her supreme judicatory, and thus enabled to make herself immediately and officially felt in guiding or correcting the policy of any of her Boards of evangelism. If the business of the several Boards, then, must be done under the supervision of men living at or convenient to their places of business, let them be composed of the most competent men living there, and let these be responsible, not mediately through a large and scattered Board that never meets, but immediately to the General Assembly. This is the surest way to unity, efficiency, intelligence, and fidelity of management; the most complete responsibility to the church; and the adoption of the best means for inspiring and organizing the benevolence of the whole body. This change in the composition of our Boards, therefore, seems to us judicious and salutary. The Assembly has ordered an investigation, with instructions to report to the next Assembly, as to the best means for proper local assistant agencies, so that efficient influence may be propagated from the centre to the circumference of the church.

#### *Foreign Missions.*

In this department, as the Old School had a chartered Board with the requisite property and agencies for conducting missions among the heathen, while the other branch had operated wholly through the American Board, it was only necessary that the re-united church should adopt as their own the organization already in being for this purpose. In accordance with

the principles already explained, they reduced the number of the Board to fifteen, to be divided into classes of five each, whose terms of office severally expire every third year, five of the number to constitute a quorum. For reasons which we need not state, we deviate from our usual course and give the list of the members of this Board appointed by the Assembly. We think it will commend itself to the church:—

*First Class, 1870-1873.*—James Lenox, Esq., Robert L. Stuart, Esq., Hon. Wm. E. Dodge, Rev. Wm. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. O. Murray, D. D.

*Second Class, 1870-1872.*—Rev. Geo. L. Prentiss, D. D., Rev. Chas. K. Imbrie, D. D., David Oliphant, Esq., Walter S. Griffith, Esq., Rev. Robert R. Booth, D. D.

*Third Class, 1870-1871.*—Robert Carter, Esq., Robert Jaffray, Esq., Rev. Wm. M. Paxton, D. D., Rev. John D. Wells, D. D., Ezra L. Kingsley, Esq.

Only two points connected specially with this subject awakened much discussion. Of these, the first related to the transfer of the foreign missionary connections of the late New School branch from the American Board. In regard to this it is obvious, 1. That this portion of the church will not at once universally cease their contributions to the American Board. Old habits, tender attachments, and sacred associations will prevent the immediate completion of this transfer. Portions and members of some Old School churches continued to contribute to the American Board till a very recent period. 2. Our brethren of the other branch have in good faith concluded to co-operate with us in putting missions upon an ecclesiastical and Presbyterian platform, in supporting and working through the Presbyterian Board, and in bringing their ministry and churches to promote the cause through this channel as rapidly and generally as is practicable. 3. It is only right that as they withdraw their contributions from the American Board to the Presbyterian Board, the latter should assume the support and control of some of the missions heretofore sustained by the contributions so withdrawn. 4. In this transition state it must inevitably happen that some temporary anomalies will occur, which must be charitably borne with until, in due course of things, the working of the Presbyterian system will bring all parties involved into harmony with it. After hearing the report of the committee appointed by the New School Assembly to confer with the American Board,



action was adopted in substantial conformity to the foregoing views, and the same committee was continued further to mature negotiations now in progress, and to report to the next Assembly.

*Evangelizing the Indians, Policy of the Government, Political Deliverances by the Assembly.*

One of the resolutions recommended to the Assembly for adoption, by its standing committee on the subject, was the following:—

“That the Assembly views with deep concern the unevangelized condition of the aboriginal population of our land, and deprecates the increasing tendency among many of our citizens to treat them as a race to be exterminated, rather than as the proper objects of Christian effort, to be thereby civilized and gathered into the fold of Christ; and the Assembly hereby authorizes the Board of Missions to put forth its utmost efforts to accomplish this humane and benignant purpose.”

This commanded the general if not unanimous acquiescence of the Assembly, and was finally carried. Dr. Howard Crosby offered the following amendment to it, which was rejected:—

“That we heartily indorse the peaceful and Christian policy of the President of the United States, the Secretary of the Interior, and the other officers of the government toward the Indian tribes within our borders, and trust that the humane and thoughtful of the land will join us in sustaining the hands of our President and government in this important action.”

Dr. Crosby, Hon. Wm. E. Dodge, and others supported this on the ground that the government, especially those most responsible for its present humane policy, are entitled to the support and co-operation of the Christian people of the country. Dr. Beatty, Dr. Musgrave, and others, while avowing themselves republicans who voted for General Grant, and agreeing with every word of the amendment, were nevertheless strenuously opposed to its adoption by the Assembly. They regarded it as a beginning and precedent for political deliverances by the united church, which might work great mischief in the future. Some proposed a compromise, by leaving out the words “President,” “Secretary of the Interior,” etc., and commending “the peaceful policy of the the government,” or like softened phrase. Dr. Crosby, how-

ever, said this would be "taking the blade out of the knife." The following speech of Dr. Musgrave made a clear and simple issue of the whole matter.

"I have listened to this amendment with great concern. You all know what bitter fruit resulted from what were called the political deliverances of the General Assembly in past times. I hope, sir, that we shall not renew this thing and make any deliverance whatever on political subjects. It is not our province. We establish a mischievous precedent; we excite the ill-will and the jealousy of a large portion of the community. And no matter how we deliver ourselves on any political subject, we shall be met by opposition.

"Now, sir, the resolution that was proposed by the committee, it seems to me, covers the whole ground. It is well, in my judgment, that this Assembly should take no action with reference to General Grant, and his Secretary, or any particular line of policy which any political party may pursue. Now I may speak with freedom on this subject, because I am what politicians call a Republican. But, sir, I don't want my church to indorse Republicanism. I voted for General Grant heartily, but I don't want this church to say any thing in favor of General Grant's policy. Let us have done with politics. We cannot handle it without damage to the cross of Christ. And what good will come of it? We can act in our capacity as citizens.

"We can have a convention whenever we like or a public meeting, and as citizens express our approbation or disapprobation of any political measure. But let the church of the Lord Jesus Christ stand aloof from all party politics. As I should deprecate any deliverance in the Assembly on the subject of politics, I shall vote heartily against this amendment, and for that resolution of the committee which tends to advance the interests of the church we have at heart."

Dr. Crosby's amendment was accordingly lost by a large majority. A subsequent motion to strike out the clause against "extermination of the Indians," as being also political was advocated on the ground of consistency. It, however, utterly failed. Dr. McCosh said:—

"I think the language in the report has been well weighed. It covers every point. I certainly wish to do away with the impression that those who may have voted for laying the amendments on the table, do by that mean to indicate that they approve in any manner of the exterminating policy.

"I think the clause that is put in this motion by your committee fills every object you have in view.

"It simply recognizes the need of evangelizing measures, and I confess I could not vote for that motion unless it contained all it does contain. It sets itself up against that feeling which is abroad in the scientific world, and which is propagated by a large portion of the public press, that the inferior races ought to be exterminated, and give way to the superior. That is not the law save as regards animals; not the law with regard to man, as established by our Divine Redeemer. His law is that weakness should conquer strength: that the suffering Redeemer should rise up to protect the weaker against the strong. It is the

special function of the church to carry out this law. This Assembly is doing this great work when it passes this motion, by thus throwing a protection over that race, and assisting in the great work of evangelizing them."

The article of the report was carried, as it originally stood. We believe the Assembly in this whole matter was divinely guided, and is in a far safer position than it would have been, had the contrary action been taken.

The relation of the church and of religion to politics is still greatly confused in multitudes of minds. And yet we apprehend that the difference is far less as to the *principle* involved than its applications. Is the church to shrink from the maintenance or affirmation of any principle or truth of morality or religion, because any political party opposes or advocates it, or because such truth has in any way become entangled with politics? What Christian will say so, or give place to such a doctrine for an hour? Is she to be muzzled in speaking for truth, honesty, humanity, faith, repentance, regeneration, the Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement, Eternal Judgment, or against Popery, Socinianism, Scepticism, for any such reason? Never, never. But then when the question arises as to the concrete methods adopted by any political party for carrying out or furthering these principles, we get into a region of expediency about which the best of men may differ, and do honestly differ. We get into a region in which these men may and ought, outside of the church, to adopt such measures as seem to them best adapted to carry into effect their convictions. We get into a region befogged, and befouled by all the passions which debase party politics. If we attempt to erect them into church deliverances, we introduce these passions into the church. As private Christians or citizens, let Christians uphold whatever administrations, officers, and measures they may judge right. But let them not undertake to make them deliverances of the Church of God, or to sustain them by such deliverances. If the advocates of the President may seek this sanction, so also may his opponents, until the church is engaged in an endless wrangle on matters essentially secular, and heart-burnings, alienations, strifes, divisions, and secessions are the baleful consequence.

The debates on this very subject in the Assembly itself, in-

dicate a serious difference of judgment among the members, as to what course is most truly humane in the dealings of the government with the Indians. Some evidently thought that the Quaker agencies operate against Presbyterian evangelism. Some thought that the only practicable methods of doing the Indians any good, of Christianizing and civilizing them, preventing their massacres of the whites, and their own consequent extermination, was to give them reservations, and compel them to stay upon them. This view was warmly pressed by Col. J. Ross Snowden, as the result of his observation and experience among them. The tone of the speeches of those living on the frontier, or in vicinity to the Indians, was not indeed that of opposition to the vote as passed; but of men who evidently and earnestly felt that humanity to the white, as well as red man, requires not only Christian kindness to the latter, but the vigorous exercise of the military arm of the government to prevent the massacre and butchery of our own defenceless pioneers.

We do not refer to these things for the purpose of giving any opinion upon them, but simply in order to show the wide room for diversity of opinion as to the concrete political application of moral and religious principles on which the whole church is a unit, and the danger of committing the organized church to the advocacy of the specific measures of political parties. There may be exceptions, on rare occasions, of paramount and overbearing necessity, when the national life is at stake; where there is no room for reasonable doubt or debate, and the church itself is essentially a unit, as in some exigencies of the late war. It may often be that the church will find it necessary to stand in opposition to wrongs espoused by politicians and parties, such as the exclusion of the Bible from schools. But it must be a very rare contingency that can justify it in espousing and sanctioning, as a church, the concrete measures of parties and politicians as such. This distinction between moral and religious principles, and their concrete embodiment and application, especially in politics, is recognized constantly in our daily living and practice. Who questions that parents ought to support and educate their children according to their means and position? And yet how far

from evident is it, what room for difference of judgment in any concrete case is there, as to what is a fit support and education? How far from certain is it how much spending money he should be allowed? All these things lie on the verge of ethical, and in the sphere of what are sometimes technically indeterminate duties. And if we may not privately dogmatize in such matters, much less may the high court of the church.

A motion to transfer the care of missions to the Jews, Chinese, and Indians, from the Foreign to the Domestic Board, was referred to the joint committee on Home and Foreign Missions, with instructions to report upon it to the next General Assembly.

#### *Domestic Missions.*

It having been decided by eminent legal counsel that the New School Committee of Home Missions, incorporated by the State of New York, and the Old School Board of Domestic Missions, incorporated by the legislature of Pennsylvania, could not be welded together without danger to their legal franchises, unless the requisite enabling legislation could be obtained in each of these States; and it having been further decided on the same authority that, prior and in order to such legislation, the location of the chief office for conducting business must be determined, the most important action of the Assembly on this subject consisted in appointing committees to procure such legislation before the meeting of the next Assembly, and in fixing said location. The vote on location was: For Philadelphia, 153; for New York, 306. New York was therefore chosen by a two-thirds majority.

Any heart-burnings and griefs awakened by this choice were quickly soothed by the election of Rev. Henry Kendall, D. D., and Rev. Cyrus Dickson, D. D., as co-ordinate Secretaries, and Samuel Powell, Esq., of Philadelphia, so long Treasurer of the Old School Board of Missions, as Treasurer. This was done unanimously by acclamation, on motion of Dr. Adams, commended by one of his happy speeches. No step better fitted to pacify and unify the church, and smooth its future workings, could have been taken. A resolution, highly

commendatory of the services of Dr. Musgrave, as Secretary of the Board, an office which he resigned on account of advancing years, was unanimously adopted.

We rejoice in the unmistakable signs of the universal prevalence in the Assembly of the opinion that the allowance to domestic missionaries, as well as the salaries of the ministry generally, ought to be largely increased. We trust that re-union, with proper unity and efficiency of organization, will evoke a beneficence in this department, of which all the present is but the mere dawn. The Assembly indeed voted that all salaries of missionaries now short of \$800 ought to be raised to that sum.

### *Reconstruction.*

This term has been used to denote ecclesiastical changes, whether of the constitution, or of the bounds and composition of Synods and Presbyteries, rendered needful or expedient in connection with re-union. From the nature of the case, it was impossible that the joint committee on the subject should do more than present a programme for the Assembly to perfect. The subject is one of extreme difficulty and delicacy, and requires a knowledge of localities from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf, which is impossible to individuals, and can only be had in the Assembly containing commissioners from all these localities. All felt that the committee had done their arduous work elaborately and faithfully, and furnished an outline chart, by the aid of which that body could press the work forward to completion. This they proceeded to do, first with regard to Synodical boundaries, in which they followed the scheme presented by the committee with some modifications. The only question of principle that arose here was, whether the Assembly should constitute the newly-constructed Presbyteries, and out of these constitute the Synods in the natural order; or whether, having constituted the latter according to the book, it should leave to the Synods the formation of the Presbyteries, as the book also directs. The former course was recommended in the report of the Reconstruction Committee, and advocated on the floor of the Assembly by Messrs. Beatty, Musgrave, Hat-

field, and Judge Strong, as having been contemplated by the Assemblies at Pittsburgh, as being within the constitutional prerogative of the Assembly, and as necessary to expedite reconstruction. It was earnestly opposed by Dr. Spear, Judge Haines, and others, as unconstitutional, and inexpedient because impossible to be done by the Assembly with competent knowledge of what the boundaries of the Presbyteries ought to be. These reasons prevailed with the majority. As to the constitutional question, we do not doubt, we do not believe a majority of the Assembly doubted, that, although the constitution expressly gives this authority to Synods, yet, in the absence of any express self-imposed prohibition, it also leaves it potentially in the Assembly as the original repository of the fulness of the whole church's power, to be exercised, if need be, in extraordinary emergencies. But we quite concur with the large majority who, aside of constitutional scruples, regarded this course as inexpedient in the present case, not only because the Assembly was so ill-qualified to do the work, but because such large numbers questioned its constitutionality.

#### *Basis and Ratio of Representation.*

Perhaps there is no subject in regard to which there is a more universal conviction that some change ought to be made, and so little agreement and certainty as to how it should be made, as that which respects the ratio of representation. All agree, with scarce an exception, that the body under the present ratio of representation is too large for convenient dispatch of business, and for the endurance of ordinary, practicable hospitality. The reconstruction committee at first recommended Synodical representation, which has the great merit of surely accomplishing the object through existing organizations of the church. But they found it unacceptable to the church, which is strongly wedded to Presbyterial representation, from immemorial habit and other grave considerations. We confess that we prefer this, not from any scruples respecting the constitutionality of Synodical representation, but because we think the Presbyteries are more suitable bodies to elect commissioners, if a method of apportionment can be

found satisfactory to them, which will reduce the Assemblies to proper dimensions. Viewing the whole case, the Reconstruction Committee at last recommended that the commissioners be elected by Presbyteries in the ratio of one for every twenty, or fraction of twenty, ministers, and in case of any odd number of delegates from any Presbytery, the odd member to be in alternate years, first a minister, then a ruling elder, all even pairs to consist of one minister and one elder.

The discussion of the ratio soon brought into debate the basis of representation. The Scotch, Irish, and we believe the English delegates, when inquired of, reported that in the bodies represented by them, no ministers were voting members of Presbyteries, or eligible to the General Assembly, except pastors and theological professors, unless as ruling elders, to which office ministers without charge are often elected in the congregations to which they belong. Then some proposed to make the number of churches, others of church-members, in a Presbytery, the basis of its ratio of representation in the General Assembly.

It soon became evident that no satisfactory solution of the matter could be reached without thorough discussion of these subjects, some of them new to many of the body, and that there was no time for the due consideration of them during the present session of the Assembly. No change in the ratio was therefore made, and the whole subject was referred to the next General Assembly. This was better than a hasty and crude decision now. It is, moreover, hoped that the union and reconstruction of old Presbyteries will reduce their number and afford some relief. We have no doubt, however, of the absolute necessity of some change in our large and rapidly growing church in the ratio of representation, in order to prevent the body from getting huge and unwieldy.

Some alterations of the constitution were proposed by the committee, and ordered by the house to be referred to the Presbyteries for ratification.

The principal of these were, that no Presbytery should consist of less than five members; and for the relief of the General Assembly in the dispatch of business, and to discourage pertinacious litigation in the church courts, that all bills,



references, and complaints terminate at the Synods, except in questions of constitutional law or the trial of a minister for heresy in doctrine. This latter it is proposed to accomplish by an alteration in the constitution in the following form:—

“In the Form of Government, Chapter XII., Section 4, add to the first sentence, at its close, the following words, “AND WHICH RELATE EXCLUSIVELY to the construction of the Constitution, or to the trial of a Minister for heresy in doctrine.”

These amendments are so wholesome, yea, indispensable, that they can hardly fail to secure the requisite Presbyterian ratification.

### *Theological Seminaries.*

One subject on which important portions of the church have been much exercised, has been the relation of the theological seminaries to the General Assembly, and the placing of them all, so far as their charters and legal obligations would permit, upon a common basis in this respect. In order to this, the brief suggestions thrown out in our April number appear to have been carried into effect by the Assembly, as they had previously met with the approbation of all parts of the church. The Board of Directors of Princeton Seminary unanimously proposed to the Assembly to submit the control of the seminary and the filling of vacancies in its chairs to themselves, subject only to the veto of the Assembly. The Board of Trustees of Union Seminary of New York proposed to the Assembly to submit their own election of professors to the veto of the Assembly. The way was thus prepared, under the discreet leadership of Dr. Adams, for the following ultimate disposal of the subject, with the utmost unanimity and cordiality—a result in which we are sure all parties will rejoice:—

“1. Accepting the offer so generously made by the Directors of the Union Theological Seminary in New York, a seminary independent hitherto of all direct ecclesiastical control, to invest the General Assembly with the right of a *veto* in the election of professors in that institution, this Assembly would invite all those Theological Seminaries, not now under the control of the General Assembly, to adopt at their earliest convenience, the same rule and method, to the end, that throughout the whole Presbyterian Church there may be uniform and complete confidence in those intrusted with the training of our candidates for the ministry.

“2. That the several Boards of Directors of those seminaries which are now

under the control of the General Assembly, shall be authorized to elect, suspend, and displace the professors of the seminaries under their care, subject in all cases to the *veto* of the General Assembly, to whom they shall annually make a full report of their proceedings, and to whom their minutes shall be submitted whenever the Assembly shall require them to be produced. These Boards shall further be authorized to fix the salaries of the professors, and to fill their own vacancies, subject in all cases to the *veto* of the General Assembly.

“3. That a committee of five be appointed by the Assembly to propose such alterations in the plans of the seminaries now under the control of the Assembly, as shall be deemed necessary to carry into effect the principles above stated, and and that said committee report to this or to the next succeeding Assembly.

“4. In case the Board of Directors of any theological seminary now under the control of the General Assembly, should prefer to retain their present relation to this body, the plan of such seminary shall remain unaltered.”

The Assembly also approved of the action of the Directors of Princeton Seminary, increasing their salaries from \$2,666 to \$3,000.

Since writing the foregoing, we have seen the election of the persons named below, to fill vacancies in the Board of Directors in Princeton Seminary, being nearly all persons who have long and worthily filled the office, held forth as a “strange exception” to the course pursued in regard to the election of trustees of the General Assembly and directors of the Seminary of the Northwest; because the Assembly did not drop from their places these old and honored guardians of the seminary, and put New School men in their place. We knew nothing about the vacancies or the election to fill them until we saw the account of it in the published proceedings of the Assembly. The names are the following:—

*Ministers*: William D. Snodgrass, D. D., Joseph McElroy, D. D., G. W. Musgrave, D. D., Robert Hammill, D. D., Joseph T. Smith, D. D., Robert Davidson, D. D., Gardiner Spring, D. D. *Elders*: Robert Carter, John K. Finlay, George Sharswood, LL. D., Thomas C. M. Paton, to fill the place of Moses Allen.

For ourselves we should have considered it a “strange exception” to the plan for the unification of our theological seminaries, had they been dropped without their own voluntary resignation. Would it be in keeping with the spirit of that plan for the other side to demand that a like number of the venerated guardians of Union or Auburn seminary should resign to make room for others, perhaps more strongly attach-

ed and devoted to other seminaries? We are not disposed to censure the Assembly in this matter.

In regard to Chicago Seminary the case is different. That institution still chooses to retain its former relation to the Assembly unaltered. Its intestine feuds, revived unhappily into fresh violence, demand the interposition of the Assembly, and the infusion of new elements into its board of direction. Rev. Dr. Prentiss, of New York, was chosen to its vacant professorship of theology. We trust this will serve to put an end to its strifes. Dr. West was transferred to the chair of Theology, and Rev. S. H. McMullin elected Professor of Biblical and Ecclesiastical History; Rev. G. D. Archibald, D.D., of Pastoral Theology and Church Government in Danville Seminary.

It was agreed that the agencies and capital for publication, heretofore owned by both bodies, should be combined in one, under the charter and corporate title of the Presbyterian Board of Publication; that it should be located in Philadelphia; that adequate buildings and other accommodations for its publishing operations should be put upon the property owned and used by the New School for this purpose, and that the edifice of the Old School, 821 Chestnut Street, be sold, as wholly insufficient and unsuited to the business. The location of the Board of Education for the united body was also fixed in Philadelphia. The New School Board of Church Extension, having a charter from the State of New York, under which it holds a large amount of funds, and that of the Old School, having no such charter or funds, it was agreed to combine them both under the charter of the New School, and to locate them in New York. The Committee on Freedmen was continued for the present at Pittsburgh.

We should be glad to say something on the projected five million memorial fund, the function of the financial committee, the proposition to have one financial board and treasury, to superintend all the fiscal affairs of the church, gathering all the receipts, and distributing to each evangelic department a portion in due season. These and other topics which we omit entirely would each justify an article. But we have no room. We shall recur to them, and to any other

topics requiring discussion, in order to the right adjustment of our ecclesiastical system, in our new condition, as we may see cause. We shall treat of the deputation to the Southern Assembly in a separate article.

On the whole, the first General Assembly of the re-united Presbyterian Church, the greatest and most memorable in our history, was enabled, by the blessing of heaven, to be true to its high position, and walk worthy of its high vocation. It is the universal testimony that it embodied an amount of wisdom, piety, culture, and weight of character never before shown in any ecclesiastical convocation on this continent. No less pre-eminent were the delegations to it from other bodies, especially from the Presbyterian bodies of Great Britain. It had an immense amount of difficult and momentous work before it; and in the main did it wisely and well. For their ability to accomplish this they were much indebted to the admirable preparatory labors of the various joint committees appointed at Pittsbnrgh. The proceedings of the Assembly were conducted with marked unanimity, and it was rare that the slightest discordant ripple marred the uniform harmony of the body, or the Christian dignity and courtesy of its proceedings. The first beginnings of the nnited church have surely been auspicious. May this prove the true augury of its future. So far we can see the gracious and guiding hand of God. May it never leave nor forsake us.

All accounts represent the closing hours and parting scenes of the session as a fit culmination of so glorious a meeting. The spirit, plentifully vouchsafed, filled the whole body with a holy love, peace, and delight, so that every face shone with a heavenly lustre, while every eye was moist, as all wept for joy. It was a very mount of transfiguration. All felt that it was good to be there, beholding the Saviour in his glory, and his church in her beauty. But it is not given to us here thus to tabernacle for more than brief season in the heights so resplendent with the Master's transporting presence. This can only be in the church triumphant in heaven, in which, when he appears, we also shall appear with him in glory.