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ART. I.—*The Trial of the Rev. William Tennent.*

OF the names conspicuous in the early history of the American Presbyterian Church, there are few more remarkable than that of Tennent. Among the members of the distinguished family which bear the name there is no one whose history is so familiar or so attractive as that of William Tennent, junior. The remarkable events in his early life, so extraordinary indeed as to appear supernatural, have given a deeper interest to his biography, and made his life appear more like the creation of romance than like the sober statements of history. Incredible as the narrative may now appear it is nevertheless true, that in the last fifty years his biography was as generally read and as firmly believed by the multitudes of intelligent Christian people as that of any other remarkable man who has adorned the annals of the American Church. It seemed, at least in the judgment of his biographer, to be founded on facts so clearly established or so well authenticated, however extraordinary they may appear, as not to admit of doubt or denial. So well authenticated indeed did they appear to be that, while the narrative was deemed by many to bear intrinsic evidence of mistake or error, and by others to be absolutely incredible, no serious attempt has ever been made

ART. VI.—*The Protest and Answer.*

IMMEDIATELY after the adoption of the resolution in the late General Assembly, approving of the terms of union between the Old and New-school branches of our Church, the Rev. Dr. Humphrey gave notice for himself and others of protest against that decision. As that protest and the answer to it are of permanent interest, we propose to insert them entire, with a brief comment.

“The undersigned respectfully request that the following protest be entered upon the Minutes of the Assembly:

“We do not now protest against the reunion of the two branches of our church, nor against the measures inaugurated for the accomplishment of that object, but simply against the terms of union approved by the Assembly and its action in relation to them.

“The first article of the plan proposes that ‘the reunion shall be effected on the doctrinal and ecclesiastical basis of our common standards,’ . . . ‘it being understood that various methods of viewing, stating, explaining and illustrating the doctrines of the Confession, which do not impair the integrity of the Reformed or Calvinistic system, are to be freely allowed in the united church as they have been hitherto allowed in the separate churches.’

“Under this term of the compact, we shall be bound to allow all those forms of doctrine which the New-school Church has hitherto allowed. This interpretation the article in question will, in our judgment, fairly admit; it is so interpreted by the other party to the contract, and it is so understood by the public.

“We protest against its adoption, first, because it utterly unsettles our standard of doctrine. That standard ceases to be the system of doctrine contained in our Confession, but that system, as interpreted by the New-school Church in their past history. Secondly, because that article binds us to approve of doctrines which our General Assembly has formally condemned.

“We distinctly disavow any intention of imputing error in

doctrine to the mass of our New-school brethren. With equal distinctness and earnestness we disavow any impeachment of their sincerity or integrity. We only say that they regard as consistent with our standards forms of doctrine which our branch of the church has officially, earnestly, and constantly condemned. What those are, may be learned by a reference to the Minutes of the Assembly of 1837, by which they were condemned.

“Some of the more important of the errors thus specified or implied, are:

“1. The denial of original righteousness. It is assumed that moral character presupposes moral conduct, and therefore that there can be no moral character prior to moral action; consequently, it cannot be true that man was created after the image of God in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

“2. As it regards our relation to our first parents, it is denied that there was any covenant made with Adam; that all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression. On the contrary, it is maintained that every man stands or falls for himself.

“3. As to original sin, while it may be admitted that men are depraved by nature, and come into the world with a bias to sin, it is denied that there is anything of the nature of sin, or any desert of condemnation, until there is the personal and voluntary violation of known law. On this subject our standards teach, in accordance with the Scriptures and with the faith of every historical church in Christendom, that the inherent, hereditary corruption of nature derived from Adam, is truly and properly sin. This great doctrine is the foundation of the whole plan of redemption, and is professed and symbolized in every act of infant baptism.

“4. In reference to the inability of sinners, it is taught that the distinction between moral, natural, and gracious ability, is worthless. Inability of any kind is inconsistent with moral obligation.

“5. It is taught that regeneration is the sinner's own act. It consists either in the change of his governing purpose, or in

the choice of God, instead of the world, as the source of happiness. It is not the act of God, because God cannot effectually control the acts of free agents. He cannot prevent sin, or the present amount of sin, in a moral system. He can enlighten, persuade, and remonstrate; he can use all means of moral suasion, but he cannot efficaciously or certainly determine the will. He, in fact, does all he can do, consistently with their liberty, to convert all who hear the gospel. This is in direct contradiction to the Scriptures and our standards, which teach that regeneration is effected by the mighty power of God, analogous to the power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead; and, therefore, that the action of the Spirit in regeneration is sovereign, certainly efficacious and irresistible.

“6. Election to life is not founded on the mere good pleasure of God. He elects those whom he foresees he can persuade to repent and believe.

“7. While it is admitted that the work of Christ may be called a satisfaction to the law and justice of God, if by justice we understand a benevolent regard to the interests of his moral government, it is denied that it was a satisfaction to distributive or vindicatory justice. It is denied that his sufferings were penal or vicarious in the established sense of that word, securing the salvation of none, but simply rendering the salvation of some possible. They were not judicially inflicted, so that those to whom the merit of his obedience and death is imputed, are free from the demands of justice, and become righteous in the sight of the law.

“8. Justification, according to our standards, is an act of God's free grace wherein he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone. This is denied. In what is called justification nothing more occurs than when the Executive pardons a criminal, and that criminal is restored to his civil rights. He is not declared just. There is no imputation to him of righteousness. There is no pretence that he has satisfied the demands of the law. This error, therefore, involves the denial of the essential idea of justification as presented in our standards.

“We are far from believing, or insinuating, that these doctrines are generally approved by the New-school Church. We have no doubt they are repudiated by many in that church as sincerely as they are by us. But they are allowed by them as consistent with the system of doctrines contained in our Confession. This fact is notorious. It is confessed and avowed. These doctrines have been for years matter of public discussion. They have been taught in some of the theological seminaries of our land. Students from those seminaries, professing these errors, are freely admitted into the New-school Presbyteries. Men of the highest eminence in the other branch of the church, teach them publicly from the pulpit and the press. They are contained, more or less of them, and some of the most serious, in books and tracts issued by the Publication Committee of the New-school body. They are openly avowed in some of the periodicals sustained by the ministers of that church, and apologized for by others. These are not matters of speculation belonging to the schools; but concern doctrines taught in the Catechism, and presumed to be known even by the children of the church.

“There are other points in the proposed terms of reunion to which we have strong objection, which, out of regard to the pressure on the time of the Assembly, we abstain from mentioning. There are two provisions of the plan, however, which we cannot overlook. In the eighth article, it is provided that the publications of the New-school Committee of Publication, ‘shall continue to be issued as at present,’ until otherwise ordered.

“Although the whole church cannot be justly held responsible for all the works issued by its Board, it becomes thus responsible when it deliberately sanctions their publication. Believing, as we do; that there are books published by the New-school Committee, containing doctrines inconsistent with our Confession, we are constrained to protest against the sanction given to their publication.

“Again, in article fourth, it is provided that ‘no rule or precedent, which does not stand approved by both bodies, shall be considered of any authority, until reestablished in the united body, except in so far as such rule or precedent may

affect the rights of property founded thereon.' This unsettles to an indefinite degree our past acts and deliverances. It is well known as one of the characteristic differences between the two bodies, that the one holds a much higher doctrine as to the prerogatives of church judicatories than the other. The Congregational element which, from the beginning, has so largely pervaded the New-school branch, has naturally led our brethren in that branch to resist, in many cases, the exercise of powers which Old-school men believe to belong, by Divine right, to the courts of the church, and especially to the General Assembly. This being the case, we know not to what extent we are renouncing our Presbyterian principles in the adoption of that article.

"We respectfully protest, not only against the terms of union as they have been adopted by this house, but also against the action of the Assembly in regard to them.

"In our view the parties to this negotiation for reunion are the two General Assemblies. They were to endeavour to agree on the terms of union, and when agreed, to send them down to their respective Presbyteries. It cannot be supposed that our General Assembly intended so to tie its own hands, or so to strip itself of its most important prerogatives, as to commit to any ten or fifteen men the work of deciding on what terms a union confessedly so momentous in its consequences, should be consummated; reserving to the Assembly the poor prerogative of adopting those terms as a whole, or of rejecting them as a whole. The duty of the Joint Committee, in our judgment, was simply to confer among themselves as to the terms of union, and when agreed, to refer them to the two Assemblies, for those bodies to consider; to modify, to adopt some and not others, or to approve or reject the whole. In this way, a basis mutually acceptable might have been intelligently adopted. Now we are in the dark. These terms admit of a twofold construction. This Assembly may, and probably does, put one interpretation upon them, and the New-school Assembly an opposite one. Thus, if this plan be carried through, we shall be hurried into a union with cross purposes, which must inevitably result in the renewal of our former troubles.

“Instead of the Assembly taking this view of the case, no modification of the proposed terms were allowed. Amendment after amendment, to the number of six or eight, was summarily laid on the table without debate. These amendments were not offered in a factious spirit, or with the design of preventing reunion, but with the honest purpose of putting the terms into a form in which, with a good conscience, they could be adopted by the Presbyteries which we represent.

“We regard this as a wrong done to the minority, and a much more serious wrong done to the churches.

“Under this head we especially protest against the laying the first amendment, offered by the Rev. Dr. Humphrey, upon the table without consideration. That amendment simply provided for fidelity to our former testimony against false doctrines. The action of the Assembly, however intended, we regard as a virtual renunciation of our former status, and as committing the church, contrary to the Constitution, which is and must continue to be binding on our conscience, to recognize as orthodox the errors which it has hitherto condemned.

“Grateful to God for the Christian spirit, which, notwithstanding our conscientious differences, has characterized our deliberations, we submit, with all deference, this our protest to the judgment of the Assembly and of the churches.”

This protest was signed by about sixty members of the Assembly, several names having been added after the adjournment.

Answer to Protest.

In reply to the protest against its action on the terms of union, the Assembly observes:

“The authors of the protest first speak of a series of doctrinal errors and heresies, which may be concisely stated as follows: (1.) There is no moral character in man prior to moral action, and therefore man was not created holy. (2.) There was no covenant made with Adam, his posterity did not fall with him, and every man stands or falls for himself. (3.) Original sin is not truly and properly sin bringing condemnation, but only an innocent tendency leading to actual transgression. (4.) Inability of any and every kind is inconsistent with moral obligation. (5.) Regeneration is the sinner’s own act, and consists

in the change of his governing purpose. (6.) God cannot control the acts of free agents, and therefore cannot prevent sin in a moral system. (7.) Election is founded upon God's foreknowledge that the sinner will repent and believe. (8.) The sufferings of Christ are not penal, and do not satisfy retributive justice. (9.) Justification is pardon merely, and does not include restoration to favour and acceptance as righteous.

"These doctrinal errors the authors of the protest are careful to say are repudiated by the great mass of the New School church. They say that 'they are far from believing or insinuating that these doctrines are generally approved by the New-school church'—that 'they do not impute these errors to the majority, or to any definite proportion of our New-school brethren.'

"The charge that is made in this protest, and the only charge made in this reference is, that while the other branch of the Presbyterian Church repudiate these doctrines for themselves, they at the same time hold that they are *consistent with the Calvinism of the Confession of Faith*. The authors of the protest allege that it is the judgment of the New-school body that a person can logically and consistently accept the Westminster symbol, and then nine or ten Pelagian and Arminian tenets, at one and the same time. This is the substance of their charge.

"The Assembly pronounces this allegation to be without foundation, because :

"1. Such a position, if taken by the New-school church, or by any church whatsoever, would simply be self-stultifying and absurd. That a great religious denomination, which from the beginning of its organization in 1837, down to the present time, has held up the Westminster Confession as its symbol, has compelled every one of its ministers and elders to subscribe to that symbol, and has received its membership into church communion upon professing faith in the doctrines of that symbol; that an ecclesiastical body which has thus stood before the other churches of this and other lands as a *Calvinistic* body, and has been reckoned and recognized as such, should at the same time be jealous in behalf of the distinguishing doctrines of Pelagianism and Arminianism, and insist that these latter are *consis-*

tent with the former, and are to be tolerated in a Calvinistic body, is too much for human belief. The entire history of the church does not present such a phenomenon as that of a denomination adopting, before the world, a definite type of doctrine, and at the same time claiming that exactly the contrary type of doctrine is compatible with it, and must be tolerated within its communion. If the New-school church are really doing what the signers of this protest allege they are, then their position before the churches and the world would be as absurd as would have been the position of the Nicene church if, at the very time that it adopted and defended the Trinitarianism of Athanasius, it had insisted that the tenets of Arius or those of the Humanitarians were consistent with those of the great father of orthodoxy, and must be allowed in the catholic church. The human mind, even in its natural condition, never did work in this manner, and never will; and still less will the human mind, when renewed and sanctified by Divine grace, be guilty of such a palpable inconsistency.

“2. These very errors, charged by the signers of the protest as allowed by the New-school Presbyterians, have already been distinctly repudiated by them. The Auburn Convention, held in 1837, under the influence and doctrinal guidance of that excellent and sound divine, the late Dr. Richards, specified sixteen doctrinal errors, which contain the very same latitudinarian and heretical tests mentioned in the protest, rejected them *in toto*, and set over against them sixteen ‘true doctrines,’ which embrace all the fundamentals of the Calvinistic creed. This Assembly regards the ‘Auburn Declaration’ as an authoritative statement of the New-school type of Calvinism, and as indicating how far they desire to go, and how much liberty they wish in regard to what the terms of union call ‘the various modes of explaining, illustrating, and stating’ the Calvinistic faith. We believe that a large number of our New-school brethren would prefer the modes of ‘explaining and illustrating’ the tenets of Calvinism which are employed by the authors of this protest themselves, and that the other portion of the body claim only that degree of variation from these modes, which would be represented by the theology of Richards and the Auburn Declaration.

“3. The Assembly is fully satisfied that any instances of laxity of doctrine among the New-school which have been exhibited are exceptional cases, and that the great body of the other church sincerely and firmly stand upon the basis of our common standards. The many disclaimers of the unsound views charged, and declarations that the standards are received as received by us, which have been made by distinguished and representative men, and in the periodicals of the New-school church, leave no room to doubt that the interests of sound doctrine will be safe in the united church.

“4. That the allegation of this protest is unfounded, is proven by the fact that the New-school church have adopted, by a unanimous vote, the basis of doctrine presented by the Joint Committee. Whatever may be the preferences and opinions of individuals respecting particular clauses in the first article in this basis, this General Assembly holds and affirms that it not only commits, but *binds* any ecclesiastical body that should receive it to pure and genuine Calvinism. It will be so understood by all the world. For it expressly lays down the Westminster symbol as the doctrinal platform, and expressly requires that no doctrine shall be taught that is not Calvinistic in the old, ancestral ‘historical’ meaning of the term, or that ‘impairs the integrity’ of the Calvinistic system. We affirm that there is not a man upon the globe possessed of a sane mind, and acquainted with the subject of doctrine, who would assert that the list of errors and heresies mentioned by the signers of this protest is ‘Calvinistic’ in the accepted and historical signification of the term, or that their reception would not impair the integrity of the Calvinistic system.

“And it must be distinctly observed, that if any doctrines had been hitherto allowed by the New-school body, which ‘impair the integrity of the Calvinistic system,’ they are not to be allowed in the united church under the terms of union. Such doctrines are condemned; and any who may teach them will be subject to discipline. It is the testimony of some of the protesters themselves, that the great body of the New-school are sound in doctrine; our own body being the large majority in the union, when fortified by the accession of the great body of sound men in the other, will establish and confirm the tes-

timony of the Church to the truth; will preserve it, by God's help, from error, and maintain intact, while it extends, the purifying and saving power of our venerated Confession.

"5. The errors and heresies alleged in the protest are combatted and refuted in the theological seminaries of the New-school.

"Such seminaries in any denomination are important exponents of its doctrinal position and character. The Assembly know that in the three seminaries of our New-school brethren, Westminster Calvinism is fully and firmly taught. The professors in these are obliged to subscribe the Westminster Confession, and heretical teaching throws the professor out of his chair by the very constitution of these seminaries. The Assembly notice this point particularly, because the authors of the protest assert that the doctrinal errors specified by them 'have been taught in some of the theological seminaries of the land.' This is not the proper manner in which to affix so grave and damaging a stigma upon our New-school Presbyterian brethren. The authors of this protest ought to have made this allegation, not in the way of insinuation, but by distinct assertion and proof. Many things are 'taught in the theological seminaries of the land,' which are not taught in the *Presbyterian* seminaries of the land, either New-school or Old.

"6. The protest alleges it to be a 'notorious fact,' that the New-school Church insists that the heresies mentioned are compatible with Calvinism. If the alleged fact has been so 'notorious,' as the protest affirms, it would certainly have been known to this Assembly, and would have made it simply impossible to have secured for the basis of the Joint Committee, or for any other conceivable basis, any favourable consideration. The idea of reunion would not have been entertained for a moment.

"Furthermore, this Assembly emphatically holds up to the church and to the world that it receives into its ministry and membership those who adopt 'the system of doctrine taught in our Confession,' and that it never has held, and does not now hold, that its ministers or members shall 'view, state, or explain' that system in any other than the words of the Holy Scripture and our standards; and to show that this is the sen-

timent not only of the Assembly, but of the protesters themselves also, the Assembly here cites the testimony of one of the signers of the protest, whose words have been referred to in the discussion just closed. Says Dr. Hodge:

“‘If a man comes to us, and he adopts ‘the system of doctrine’ taught in our Confession, we have a right to ask him, Do you believe there ‘are three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory? If he says, Yes, we are satisfied. We do not call upon him to explain *how* three persons are one God; or to determine what relations in the awful mysteries of the Godhead are indicated by the terms Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. If we ask, Do you believe that ‘God created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures?’ and he answers, Yes, we are satisfied. If he says that he believes that ‘the covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for all his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression,’ we are satisfied. If he says that he believes that the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin, together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it,’ *we are satisfied*. If he says, Christ executes the office of a priest in his once offering himself a sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us,’ we are satisfied. If he says he believes justification to be ‘an act of God’s free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone,’ we are satisfied: Is not this what is meant when a man says he adopts our ‘system of doctrine?’ Is not this—nothing more and nothing less—that which we are authorized and bound to require? God grant that we may unite on terms so simple, so reasonable, and, I must hope, so satisfactory to every sincere, humble, Christian brother.’—*Remarks of Rev. Charles Hodge, D. D., in the Philadelphia Convention.*

“The Assembly cannot enlarge the basis beyond the platform of God’s truth as stated in our standards, and it would not narrow the basis by taking one tittle from the form of sound words therein contained. We declare our willingness to unite with all those who profess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and their adoption of ‘the Confession of Faith and Form of Government’ of our beloved church.

“The protestants object to the eighth item of the basis, because it makes the united church responsible for the publications of the New-school Committee. This is a misapprehension. The publications of the New-school Committee and our Board are to be issued as now, with the imprint of each, until the new Board shall prepare a new catalogue, for which alone the united church will be responsible.

“Again, the protestants object to the fourth article as unsettling past acts of our church. This is a matter of necessity where the action of the two bodies differ. It is believed, however, that except in the case of the imperative clause of the examination rule of 1837, no important difference can be found. If it is otherwise, the united church is the proper body to establish its own usages. We do not believe that our brethren of the New-school church have now any sympathy with Congregational views of government, or any objection to usages that are strictly Presbyterian.

“The various amendments proposed by the protesters were laid on the table, not because they were contrary to the sentiment of the Assembly, but because, under the circumstances, it was not possible to engraft them upon the terms of the union, and, in the judgment of the Assembly, were not essential to the integrity of the Calvinistic basis on which the union is to be effected.

“WM. T. SHEDD,
J. G. MONFORT,
S. IRENÆUS PRIME,
H. H. LEAVITT,
ROBERT MCKNIGHT,

“*Committee on Answer to Protest.*”

As many of the opponents of the terms of union, as presented by the Joint Committee, avowed their desire for reunion, provided the amendments proposed by Drs. Eagleson and Humphrey were adopted, it has been asked, why they persevered in their protest after Dr. Hall's resolution, identical with the amendment proposed by Dr. Humphrey, had been passed by an unanimous vote. The answer to this question is, 1st. That the protest had not only been prepared and signed, but Dr. Humphrey had obtained the floor for the purpose of reading it, when he gave way for a moment to Dr. Hall that he might present his resolution, which was adopted without debate. Under these circumstances no one had the right to withdraw the protest, had it been desirable to do so. 2d. But, in the second place, the whole ground of protest remained. The thing objected to, was the approbation of the proposed basis. The vote expressing that approbation remained unaltered, and therefore, the ground of protest remained. 3d. There is an essential difference as to their effect between Dr. Humphrey's amendment and Dr. Hall's resolution. Had the former been adopted it would have altered the basis; and, if sanctioned by the other Assembly, been sent down to the Presbyteries and constituted an integral part of the terms of reunion. On the other hand, Dr. Hall's resolution is no part of the basis; it was not sanctioned by the other Assembly, and the Presbyteries are not called upon to approve or disapprove of it. Every candid man, therefore, will admit that those who would have been satisfied with the adoption of the two amendments, those of Dr. Eagleson and of Dr. Humphrey, were perfectly consistent, under the circumstances, in persisting in their protest.

A second remark which we have to make on these documents and the action of the Assembly is, that the friends of the basis renounced their own principles. They took the ground that the terms proposed by the Committee were of the nature of a contract, which the Assembly had no right to alter, but which, as is the fact with the Presbyteries, it could only approve or reject as a whole. On this ground they justified laying on the table every amendment proposed. As this is a summary, arbitrary, and disrespectful mode of action, except

in cases of obvious necessity, its adoption by the majority can be vindicated only on the ground that they believed the basis to be unalterable. But having carried it through, they immediately proposed an essential alteration and sent a deputation all the way to Harrisburg to secure the sanction of the New-school Assembly. This is precisely what the minority desired to accomplish, and what the majority refused to allow. If proper at one time and when proposed by the majority, it was certainly proper at another time and when proposed by the minority.

A third and still more important remark is, that the majority conceded the propriety and importance of the amendment urged by the minority, and sanctioned the objections made to the doctrinal basis. Those objections were first, that the basis is vague and indefinite; and secondly, that it is ambiguous. Both of these grave objections the Assembly acknowledged to be well-founded. The former, by the unanimous adoption of the resolution to strike from the first article the so-called 'Gurley amendment,' and make the Confession and Catechism 'pure and simple' the standard of doctrine; and the latter, by a like unanimous adoption of Dr. Hall's resolution, declaring the sense in which the doctrinal basis was understood by the Old-school body. The adoption of these resolutions gives the sanction of the whole Assembly to the ground taken by the minority, and works an effectual condemnation of the basis as it stands.

Fourthly. It is obvious that the Assembly has placed itself in the anomalous position of sending down for the approbation of the Presbyteries terms of reunion, which it, with perfect unanimity, itself condemned. It did indeed approve *pro forma* of the proposed terms of union, but this was done with the avowed purpose of altering them; and that alteration was accordingly attempted, and failed only for want of time. There might be some reason in this course on the part of the Assembly, as its vote of approbation was not intended or expected to be final. But it is not so with the Presbyteries. If they approve of the basis, it passes beyond their power. The churches by that vote are united on the terms proposed by the Joint Committee. Those terms can, in the case supposed, be modified only with the concurrence of three-fourths of the Presbyteries of the united church.

This is perfectly clear and perfectly certain. And yet it is studiously ignored. The Presbyteries are urged to adopt the basis, and signify, if they please, the alteration they desire, and trust to the next Assembly to see that alteration carried into effect. But this is a delusion, or something worse. The two Assemblies, which are to meet in New York next year, cannot alter a line or a word of the basis, if the requisite number of Presbyteries vote to approve. Their whole business will be to count the votes and announce the result. When Congress proposes an amendment to the Constitution, it is referred to the States. If three-fourths of their number adopt it, it is thereby a part of the Constitution. Congress has no longer anything to do with it.

Consider the condition we shall be in, should this basis be adopted. The Old-school Assembly has unanimously declared that it understands it in one way; the New-school Assembly, with like unanimity, announces to the world, (in the adoption of Dr. Hickok's exposition and report,) that it understands it in a different way. If we come together, one of two things must happen. Either both parties adhere to their interpretation of the basis, and then there will be inaugurated a scene of confusion and conflict such as the church in this country has not yet seen. Or, one party must secretly intend to adopt the interpretation of the opposite party. This can hardly be imagined. For the Old-school to adopt the interpretation of the basis given by Dr. Hickok, and sanctioned by the New-school Assembly, is, we believe, impossible. It would involve the renunciation of all their principles, pledges, and conscientious convictions. We have too much respect for the numerous good and intelligent men, who advocated the adoption of the proposed basis, in and out of the late Assembly, to think for a moment that they purpose any such disloyalty to the truth of God committed to their care.

Fifthly. The action of the Assembly has disclosed a basis in which both parties in our branch of the church can cordially unite, and that is, the Confession of Faith and Catechisms without note or comment. This is all we have ever demanded, or have a right to demand; so far as the standard of doctrine is concerned, and our Assembly has unmistakably indicated, in

the unanimous adoption of Dr. Hall's resolution, what they mean by this. To this basis no reasonable objection can be made.

No one doubts the importance of organic union, when there is real unity in faith and discipline, among bodies occupying the same territory. The Old-school has constantly professed a willingness to unite with any or all the Presbyterian churches in this country, who are sufficiently one in principle and practice to live together in peace. And Old-school men have never been extreme in their demands as to the conditions for such union. The misrepresentation that they require doctrinal agreement in anything beyond the simple statements of our common standards; that they are strenuous for assent to their own theories and interpretations, has so often been answered that the repetition of that misrepresentation is no longer excusable. Dr. Hall's resolution is no addition to the basis. It is no interpretation of the Confession of Faith. It is simply an authoritative announcement of what the Old-school Church means by adopting the "system of doctrine" contained in that Confession. It means that the doctrines constituting that system should be adopted in the form in which they are stated in the standards of the church. If a man says, he believes that "the covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself but for all his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him, in his first transgression;" he is not to be allowed to teach from the pulpit or the press, that there was no such covenant formed with Adam; that we did not sin in him, nor did we fall with him in his first transgression. If he professes to believe that "the corruption of our whole nature, commonly called original sin," is, "both in itself and in all the motions thereof, truly and properly sin," he is not to be allowed to teach that there is no sin but the voluntary transgression of known law, and that a man's original sin is his own first voluntary violation of God's law. It is well known that adopting standards of doctrine is apt to become an empty form. Rationalists in Germany adopted the Augsburg Confession; Socinians in Geneva adopted Calvin's Catechism; men of all shades of doctrine, from Romanism to Pelagianism, subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles. This is against

the conscience of Old-school Presbyterians, and they are determined never to sanction such modes of subscription.

If men were only calm and candid, they would see that there are only two methods of reunion, honest or honourable, between the Old and New-school churches. The one is, that we, by an alteration of our Constitution regularly effected by a vote of three-fourths of the Presbyteries, should agree to allow all the forms of doctrine hitherto tolerated in the New-school body. This Dr. Beatty, Dr. Shedd, and every member of the late General Assembly said, cannot, and ought not to be done. The other is, that the New-school should adopt our principles, and require the doctrines of the Confession to be adopted in the form in which they are therein stated. This is the ground which their representatives assumed in the Philadelphia Convention, but which the New-school Assembly in adopting Dr. Hickok's report, unanimously renounced.* What their Presbyteries will do, remains to be seen. As we said in our January number, the responsibility rests on the New-school. The Old-school are in fact agreed on the doctrinal basis—not that proposed by the Joint Committee, but that basis as modified and interpreted by the Assembly. It is sheer madness to attempt to rush the Committee's basis through the Presbyteries, by all the devices of political campaigning; and worse than madness to attempt to accomplish that object by representing those who oppose that basis as opposed to reunion on all terms; and by endeavouring to persuade the Presbyteries that they must vote for the Committee's basis, or give up reunion. The course for the Presbyteries is perfectly simple and honest. Vote against the basis, and state clearly the ground on which they are willing to stand. Then the responsibility will rest, where it properly belongs, on the New-school body. We are willing to unite on the basis of our common standards, without explana-

*The Rev. George Hill, in the *Presbyterian Banner*, June 24th, states that Dr. Hickok said that "As they (the New-school) regarded the basis as binding them to tolerate the Old-school doctrine of immediate imputation, so they regarded it as binding us to tolerate—well (said he) to give it a definite form—Taylorism." This, to be sure, adds nothing to what he said in his report to the New-school Assembly. It is merely confirmatory. It need hardly be said that no honest Old-school man can vote for the basis on that understanding.

tions. If they are willing to take that ground, well and good. If not, the fault is their's and not our's.

With regard to the answer to the protest, we would respectfully submit, in the first place, that it does not meet, or even notice, the principal objections therein urged. It does not attempt to show that the first article, containing the doctrinal basis, is not vague and indefinite, or that it is not ambiguous. This indeed could not be done, because there had been read before the Assembly the interpretation of that article adopted by the New-school Assembly, which our Assembly unanimously repudiated. It was, therefore, known and admitted by every member of the body that the doctrinal basis was understood in one way by our Assembly, and in a different way by the Assembly of the other body. This overwhelming objection to its adoption, the Answer does not condescend to notice.

In the second place, it undertakes to show that the errors specified in the protest were not, and could not be, tolerated in the New-school Church. We presume this assertion struck every member of the Assembly with astonishment. The fact was and is notorious. It had been admitted over and over on the floor of the Assembly. It was admitted by Dr. Darling, representative of the New-school body, in his address; it is acknowledged by the authors of the answer itself, though they say only in "exceptional cases." It was moreover affirmed by leading New-school men in the public papers, and claimed as a right by New-school Presbyteries. These doctrines are taught with the greatest clearness in books published by the New-school Committee, and over the names of some of their most prominent men. The assertion, therefore, that they have not been, and are not now tolerated in that Church, created the utmost surprise. The argument in support of this assertion is still more extraordinary. The position that the errors specified "are consistent with the Calvinism of the Confession of Faith," is declared to be "self-stultifying and absurd." It is said that for a church to adopt the Westminster Confession and yet insist that "the distinguishing doctrines of Pelagianism and Arminianism" "are to be tolerated in a Calvinistic body, is too much for human belief. The entire history of the church does not present such a phenomenon as that of a denomination

adopting before the world a definite type of doctrine, and at the same time claiming that exactly the contrary type of doctrine is compatible with it, and must be tolerated in its communion"! How is it that the authors of this answer forgot that the Rationalistic Lutherans of Germany signed the Augsburg Confession; that the clergy of Geneva continued to profess faith in their Calvinistic symbols long after they were avowedly Socinians; that the Heidelberg Catechism continued the Confession of the Reformed Churches in Germany and of Holland, while a large body of the ministers were Pantheists and Deists; that the Church of England and the Episcopal Church in this country, with their Calvinistic creed, tolerate all forms of doctrine higher than Socinianism; that the Church of Scotland, with the Westminster Confession, was for generations in the hands of the "moderates," who openly derided the doctrines of that Confession. How then can it be said to be impossible and absurd that a church professing Calvinism should tolerate doctrines incompatible with that system? The authors of this answer pronounce the theology of Dr. Taylor of New Haven to be Pelagian, yet they know that he signed a strictly Calvinistic creed, and professed to be a Calvinist to the day of his death. We do not see the wisdom or utility of controverting admitted and unquestionable facts. It is a fact, beyond all dispute, that the errors specified in the protest are taught without let or hinderance in the New-school body; and if, as they understand them, the proposed terms of union bind us to tolerate all the forms of doctrine which they tolerate, they bind us to tolerate those errors. The only way in which we can reconcile this part of the answer with the self-respect of its authors, is that they make a distinction in their own minds between sanctioning and tolerating, and that it is the former and not the latter which they intend to deny. But it is to be remembered that the protest does not charge the New-school with sanctioning but simply with tolerating the errors in question. This distinction is entirely overlooked in the second paragraph of the answer.

It is there said, "The Auburn Convention, held in 1837, under the influence and doctrinal guidance of that excellent and sound divine, the late Dr. Richards, specified sixteen doc-

trinal errors, which contain the very same latitudinarian and heretical tenets mentioned in the protest, rejected them *in toto*, and set over against them sixteen 'true doctrines' which embrace all the fundamentals of the Calvinistic creed." In reference to this statement, we would remark, 1st. That the Auburn Declaration, as we understand, is identical with the doctrinal statement included in the protest presented by the New-school minority in the Assembly of 1837 against the testimony against certain errors set forth by that body. That statement was written, as has always been publicly asserted without contradiction, not by Dr. Richards, but by Dr. Duffield, recently deceased. 2. We demur to the statement as to the satisfactory character of that "Declaration." 3. It matters not how orthodox that Declaration may be. There is no more difficulty in reconciling the adoption of that declaration and the toleration of the specified errors, than the adoption of the Westminster Confession with such toleration. The question is not, What the New-school believe or profess? but, What do they tolerate? The Episcopal Church professes the Thirty-nine Articles, but it tolerates almost every form of doctrine. The men in the New-school whom we personally know, who are the most orthodox in their own convictions, are the most strenuous in demanding toleration for those who differ from them. This appeal, therefore, to the Auburn Declaration amounts to nothing. It affords no proof that the errors specified in the protest are not freely allowed in the New-school church.

Again, the answer says, "That the allegation of this protest is unfounded, is proven by the fact that the New-school church have adopted by a unanimous vote, the basis of doctrine presented by the Joint Committee." What does this prove, when the New-school Assembly officially declares that it understands that basis as providing for the free tolerance of every form of doctrine which the New-school has hitherto allowed.

Again, the answer says, "This Assembly emphatically holds up to the church and to the world that it receives into its ministry and membership those who adopt 'the system of doctrine taught in our Confession,' and it never has held, and does not now hold, that its ministers or members shall 'view, state, or explain' that system in any other than the words of the Holy

Scripture and our standards; and to show that this is the sentiment not only of the Assembly, but of the protesters themselves also, the Assembly here cites the testimony of one of the signers of the protest, whose words have been referred to in the discussions just closed. Says Dr. Hodge." Then follows an extended extract from the report of the "Remarks of Dr. Hodge in the Philadelphia Convention." It is a great gratification to us that the Assembly, in adopting the answer to the protest, endorses the ground taken by Dr. Hodge in the Philadelphia Convention. We believe it to be the true ground. Let the basis of doctrine be the Confession and Catechisms without note or comment; and require that the doctrines should be adopted in the form therein stated. For ourselves we should be willing to license, or ordain any candidate for the ministry, (so far as his orthodoxy is concerned,) who would intelligently and cordially answer in the affirmative the several questions in the Shorter Catechism. As much as this we believe the Church is bound in conscience and good faith to demand. More than this it were unreasonable to require.

In another paragraph of the answer, it is said, "The authors of the protest assert that the doctrinal errors specified by them 'have been taught in some of the theological seminaries of *our land.*' This is not the proper manner in which to affix so grave and damaging a stigma upon our New-school Presbyterian brethren. The authors of this protest ought to have made this allegation, not in the way of insinuation, but by distinct assertion and proof." This statement was heard with painful surprise. The protest gives no excuse for this misrepresentation. It had been mentioned in the discussion on the floor of the Assembly, that New-school men had stated in the public papers that their Presbyteries freely received students from Andover and New Haven holding the doctrines taught in those institutions. In obvious reference to that statement, the protest says, speaking of the specified errors, "They have been taught in some of the theological seminaries of our land. Students from those seminaries, professing those errors, are freely admitted into the New-school Presbyteries." Here is no reference, or allusion, expressed or implied, to the Seminaries of the New-school church. Covert insinuations is the last thing that can be justly charged against the authors of the protest.

There is only one other remark we have to make on this answer, and that is one of grateful acknowledgment. It unequivocally denounces the doctrines specified in the protest as "Pelagian and Arminian," and declares them to be entirely inconsistent with the system of doctrine taught in our standards; and that they ought not to be, and cannot be allowed in any Calvinistic body faithful to its creed. As the answer was written by such men as Drs. Shedd, Monfort, and Prime, and adopted by the Assembly as its own, it is an authoritative exhibition of the sense of the Old-school body, in all its branches, as to what is to be the principle of subscription in the united church, should the contemplated union be consummated.

SHORT NOTICES.

The Imperial Bible Dictionary, Historical, Biographical, Geographical and Doctrinal; including the Natural History, Antiquities, Manners, Customs, and Religious Rites and Ceremonies mentioned in the Scriptures, and an Account of the several Books of the Old and New Testament. Edited by the Rev. Patrick Fairbairn, D. D., Author of "Typology of Scripture," "Commentary on Ezekiel," &c. Illustrated by numerous Engravings. London: Blackie & Sons, Paternoster Row; and Glasgow and Edinburgh, 1867. Vol. I. pp. 1007. Vol. II. pp. 1152.

This is a truly magnificent work, in its design and execution. It is an imperial octavo as to size; printed in clear type, in double columns, illustrated by nearly thirty fine steel engravings, and several hundred well executed wood cuts. The scope of the work is indicated in the extended title-page printed above. The learned and distinguished editor has been assisted in this laborious enterprise by the most distinguished biblical scholars of Great Britain, whose initials are attached to the articles they severally contributed. The work is, therefore, a storehouse of biblical knowledge; a library condensed into a couple of volumes. In this age of the multiplication of books devoted to the illustration of the Scriptures, it is of great moment that they should, as in the present instance, be under the control of gifted men, in whose soundness in the faith and reverence for the Divine word the church has a well-grounded confidence. We hope that the attention of our