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### ALLIANCE OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES

HOLDING

#### THE PRESBYTERIAN SYSTEM

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like that of a man in a crowd of people none of whom are known to him; and in the city many a man must feel that the church affords his only opportunity of realising that he is not merely a member of a class or a trade, but a brother of the great family of humanity.

The Rev. MOSES D. HOGE, D.D., Richmond, Virginia, then delivered the following address on

### THE EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCE OF PRESBYTERIANISM ON NATIONAL LIFE.

While the individual is the unit in relation to the whole human race, the family is unquestionably the unit so far as any organised government is concerned. A nation is but a congeries of families, and what the family is, the nation will be.

Among the ancient classic republics there was much that was admirable in law, much that was entrancing in song, much that was profound in philosophy; but the fatal defect was the amazing unconsciousness of the value of childhood. The fairest land of the muse, the mother of arts and eloquence, had no conception of the capacity of childhood for moral development. She could take the Parian marble and chisel it into such forms of life and beauty that when we look on it it seems to breathe and love and weep. She could make the marble melt and seem to dissolve in tears, but her own heart melted with no such tenderness as the humblest mother in a Scotch kirk feels for the child of her love, which she knows belongs more to God than to herself.

Under the great dome of the sky I do not believe there are to be found any mothers surpassing our Presbyterian mothers in the faithful training of their children to walk in the right ways of the Lord, nor do I believe that there are any home influences transcending those of Presbyterian households in preparing their children to become good citizens both of the country and of the kingdom of Christ.

Out of such family training have come the eminent men whose names and services have been referred to by the speaker who preceded me, and before their day there were those who stood like lights and landmarks on the shores of time; men who "by faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, waxed valiant in fight, put to flight the armies of the aliens," and whose achievements likened them to the illustrious characters enumerated in the eleventh

chapter of the Hebrews—that muster-roll of the immortals—every verse of which is a hero's monument. We sometimes go to the domain of fiction to find ideals that are realised in actual life. Such ideals I find in what has been pictured of Presbyterian home-life by the author of "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," which has been read by thousands in my own land with laughter and with tears, moved as the readers were by the inimitable pathos of his portraitures.

The educational influence of religion on national life is demonstrable by arguments drawn from the very constitution which God has given both to mind and heart. Religion is one of the primordial forces of the world. Whatever else our humanity may lack, intertwined with its very existence is the religious element. It is a demonstrable fact, and therefore a scientific fact, as much so as gravitation or the revelations of the solar spectrum. Greater travellers than Plutarch may have found cities without walls, without letters, without commerce, without theatres, but never without temples, gods, and religious worship. Even a man as superficial as Cicero says he was moved to tears by an appeal of Socrates in which he urged the youth of Athens to believe that all of their relations, civil and political, were ruled by Divine power, wisdom, and goodness, and that the Divine law should be the human law.

It was many years ago, during a visit I paid to this city, that I heard the address of Lord Palmerston—that most English of all Englishmen—when he was made Lord Rector of your University, in which he laid emphasis on the fact that Great Britain had produced some of the greatest masters of moral and mental philosophy, and thus had trained their representatives and rulers to become safe and Conservative statesmen, because it was a statesmanship based on religious principle. In France, as he argued, where the chief studies were not ethical, but lay in the domain of the exact sciences, when a crisis came in national affairs, no statesman rose capable of averting the whirlwind of revolution by such just, wise, and conciliatory measures as would allay popular frenzy and maintain the public order. It was in this city also that, when Lord Beaconsfield—the most English of all the Israelites—was made Lord Rector of your University, he said, "The spiritual nature of man is stronger than codes or constitutions. No Government can endure which has not that foundation, and no legislation which does not flow from that fountain. He who has a due sense of his relations to God is best qualified to fulfil his duties to man."

Consider the training which ruling elders receive in the discharge

of their official duties for becoming efficient magistrates, members of Legislatures, Congress, and Parliament. Were all our rulers men of such mould, representatives would lead their constituencies in the paths of national prosperity, and the three great bulwarks of the nation would be intelligence, integrity, and the fear of God.

It would be illiberal and unjust in the extreme to assert that there are not other forms of faith and Church government very different from our own which have been potent factors in the development of a noble and national life. I distinctly disavow any purpose to claim for Presbyterianism a monopoly which belongs equally to all patriots and Christians of every denomination who have laboured to maintain civil liberty, and to secure the sacred rights of conscience. There are men of other lineage whose names shine on the pages of history, and whose names are dear to our own hearts, because of their splendid services in the cause of freedom in the Church and in the State. It is not to disparage others when I comment on the characteristics which make our own Church worthy of the warmest devotion of her sons.

A noble river receives many tributaries on its way to the sea, but some of these tributaries make larger contributions to the volume of its waters than others. The Mississippi river, which drains the largest valley in the world, rises amidst the melting snows of the far north, and empties into the Mexican Gulf, fringed with great borders of magnolia blooms, the air redolent with the musky odour of the jessamine and vibrating with the music of the mocking-bird. This renowned river receives many tributaries, but among them all there is one which, emptying into the Mississippi, floods it with a volume of water almost equal to its own, and contributes more to its greatness than all the other tributaries combined. May I not say that, to some extent at least, Presbyterianism has been such a tributary to the strength and stability, to the prosperity and renown, of every State in which it has been planted?

I cannot better illustrate and enforce my argument than to call your attention to some of the influences which were most potent in moulding the government of the United States at the time when its national independence was recognised by the mother-country and the federal constitution of the Union adopted.

The century that was made memorable in American annals by the settlement of Jamestown and Plymouth, and the voyage of the *Mayflower*, was also memorable as the great historic era of conflict between popular right and arbitrary government, between religious

liberty and ecclesiastical despotism, in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe. In France, in Holland, in Scotland, and in the north of Ireland the irrepressible conflict between right and might made the history of the century the bloodiest picture in the book, I will not say of time, but of crime. But it was an era which held out to the oppressed of all lands a new hope, which, like a radiant star, rose on the western horizon. Beyond the wide waste of waters there was a New World—new in the promise of the peaceful enjoyment of temporal and spiritual advantages no longer possible in the Old World. No wonder that the tide of emigration was set to flowing; no wonder that the men who crossed the sea to find home, Church, and freedom to worship God, brought with them the principles and the purposes which had much to do with giving to the government of the United States the peculiar form and the free institutions under which it has attained to such prosperity and power. To take the emigrants from your own land as my illustration: when our Scottish forefathers came to America, it was only the natural scenery of their native land that they left behind, only the fields that they had tilled and the houses they had inhabited. They could not bring with them the Martyrs' Monument from Greyfriars Churchyard, but they could bring the martyrs' memory. They could not bring the original draft of the National League and Covenant, but they could and did bring their hearty, loving loyalty to Christ's Crown and Covenant; and they could no more forget the principles made dear by the sufferings they had undergone to maintain them than they could forget their Highland hills and the lakes nestling among them, with a romance in every ripple of their waves, no more than they could forget the blue Pentlands or the purple Grampians or kingly Ben Lomond, or the bloom of the heather, or the cottage homes where their daughters had been trained to industry and virtue, and where their sons had been taught to speak the truth and do what was right in the sight of God.

A Scotchman by descent on my father's side and a Huguenot on my mother's, I will take time to say that the influence of the Huguenot element was far greater than its numerical strength, because among them there were so many men of courage, genius, and learning. It was a Huguenot who drew up the Articles of Capitulation at Yorktown; a Huguenot who signed the treaty at Paris; a Huguenot who, as President of Congress, affixed the official seal to the Declaration of American Independence. It is the descendant of an ancient and honourable Huguenot family who now fills the office

of Ambassador of the United States to your Government, a man of the finest culture, the most unsullied honour, and of the purest patriotism—the Honourable Thomas F. Bayard.

The weight and force of this foreign influence may be inferred when we remember that, when the population of the United States was about three millions, one-fourth of the whole was of the Scotch-Irish race, men of whom it was said that, no matter what the exigency might be, they never flinched or wavered, because there was a history behind them, a future before them, a conscience within and a God above them.

So, too, the sturdy sons of Holland bravely bore their part in the founding of the American Republic, as might have been expected from men who in their own land built up the dykes that shut out the hungry sea, and who behind those dykes built up the noble structure of their own free government.

And when we remember that the whole of this influence from the four countries enumerated was Presbyterian influence, we may draw our own conclusion as to the share that Presbyterianism has had in moulding the institutions of the country which we, the delegates of the General Assemblies of the United States, have the honour to represent.

In conclusion, allow me to say that I know of nothing more astounding than the statement often made by flippant writers and unscrupulous speakers, that Calvinism is losing its hold on the moral convictions of mankind, and soon to be universally repudiated and consigned to the domain of baneful and exploded errors. The assertion is not only astounding, but it is inexcusable, because contradicted by facts so easy to be obtained, and so convincing to every man of ordinary intelligence and common honesty. The allegation appears in different forms—in magazines, in popular novels, and in the comic journals, which are read by thousands. The comic journal is the most appropriate place for them, for none of the funny stories or caricatures contained in these is half so comic as the charge that Calvinism is well-nigh extinct.

The death of our old Calvinistic mother had been often announced and her funeral oration delivered. Well, the death of a mother is a great event in the lives of her children. A minister in my own country says: "When we came to lay our mother in the grave, one of us said to a friend at his side, 'We will remember the works which will follow her.' 'What works?' asked the friend to whom he spoke. He replied, 'She bore ten sons and trained them all for Christ. We

all survive, and are now standing around her grave to bless God that such a mother ever lived.' ” We too bless God for our dear old Presbyterian mother, who has borne ten thousand times ten thousand sons and trained them all for Christ; but we are not now standing around her grave! We rejoice that she is still a living mother, her eye not dim nor her spiritual force abated, and when our descendants are as near the end of the twentieth century as we are to the end of the nineteenth, another Council will meet to celebrate her virtues and her worth in strains of adoring gratitude, compared to which our utterances to-night are cold and poor.