

THE  
PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

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NO. 37.—JULY, 1896

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I. THEOLOGY THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION.<sup>1</sup>

THERE are some things relating to the supply of ministers of the gospel about which the leading Christian denominations are substantially agreed. It would be strange if any serious difference existed as to the first and great question of the source of the supply. It is written, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Ministers are gifts to the church from her triumphant and ascended Lord. As the first verse cited from the Epistle to the Ephesians is a quotation from the sixty-eighth Psalm, the import of the statement of the apostle is that God has never left the church to its own resources in the matter of providing ministers, but has reserved to himself, under every dispensation, the prerogative of furnishing them. This divine arrangement keeps the church dependent on God in a matter upon which her very existence, as well as her growth and prosperity, depends; but it is a wise and gracious one, in that it secures with infallible certainty to the church, in answer to her prayers, an adequate supply of the right kind of ministers, and at the same time enables them to speak as the ambassadors of Christ. The second feature of the divine plan relates to the agency given to the church in the word

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<sup>1</sup> Delivered as an inaugural address in Columbia Seminary, May, 1896.

## V. HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE chief European sources of Southern Presbyterians have been the English Presbyterians, the Dutch, the Germans, the Swiss, the Huguenots, the Scotch, and the Scotch-Irish. Some of these came directly from Europe, and some immediately from the more northern colonies. Indeed, the Southern Church is one in sources with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, of which it was a part till after the middle of the present century.

That great church, had, owing to the prevalence of latitudinarian views in the realms of theology and ecclesiastical polity, been divided, in 1838, into two independent bodies, viz., the Old School Church and the New School. The New School Church, on account of unbiblical teaching concerning slavery, suffered another division in 1857, the southern segment, which refused to regard slave-holding as a sin, establishing the Synod of the South. The Old School retained its integrity and conservative tone till 1861. But in that year the Assembly, sitting at Philadelphia, was overpowered by the secular, war, spirit in the land. It subordinated itself to a political party, the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ to political ends, thus violating the constitution of the church and usurping the prerogatives of the divine Master. It adopted the notorious Spring Resolutions, wherein it attempted, as Dr. Charles Hodge and his fifty-seven noble fellow protestants said, "to decide the political question, to what government the allegiance of Presbyterians was due," and "to make that decision a condition of membership in the church."

In consequence of this course, largely, forty-seven Presbyteries in the then Confederate States of America, each for itself, dissolved connection with that Assembly, during the summer of 1861. On the 4th of December, 1861, their representatives met in

Augusta, Ga., and formed the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, South.

This constituting Assembly did much to make itself memorable. It adopted the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as its own constitution. It sloughed off the unpresbyterian machinery of the old church by which it had conducted missionary and other church operations. It recognized the church itself as a Home and a Foreign Missionary Society, and so forth; in short, as the God-appointed instrumentality for the evangelization of the world. For the cumbrous and irresponsible boards of the mother church it substituted the church itself and appointed the necessary executive committees to carry out the will of the church. These committees, of Foreign Missions, Domestic Missions, Education, and Publication, were to be immediately responsible to the General Assembly.

In a letter "to all the churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth," written by the gifted Dr. J. H. Thornwell, this Assembly also stated the reasons of its separate existence; and its distinctive peculiarities. It asserted that the consequences of the proceedings on the part of the recent Philadelphia Assembly, its opening "the door for the worst passions of human nature in the deliberation of church courts," had justified separation, as well as the *de facto* existence of the Confederate States of America within whose bounds they were. The Assembly claimed as distinguishing features of its church, "Witnessing for the non-secular character of the church and the headship of Christ, or, in other words, for a strict adherence to the constitution," and "the complete organization of the church, obviating the necessity of boards and societies." Few assemblies of any kind have ever been enabled to issue a nobler paper than this same letter; and it lends exalted dignity to the beginning of the career of the church whose greeting it carried to all other Christian bodies on the earth.

The numerical growth of the church has been very rapid: Its 47 Presbyteries have become 74; its 700 ministers, 1,337; its 1,000 churches, 2,776; its 70,000 communicants, 203,999; its contributions to Home and Foreign Missions are more than four times as large; and it has kept pace in developing other branches

of church enterprise. It has made this advance in spite of the exodus of about 10,000 colored communicants, who went for the most part to the Northern Presbyterian Church.

This growth is explained by: 1, The church's having taking into organic union with itself many smaller bodies of sound Presbyterians. Thus it took in "the Independent Presbyterian Church (1863), the United Synod of the South (1864), the Presbytery of Patapsco (1867), the Alabama Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Church about the same time, the Synod of Kentucky (1869), the Associate Reformed Presbytery of Kentucky (1870), and the Synod of Missouri (1874). The union with these churches brought in about 282 ministers, 490 or more churches, and 35,600 communicants."<sup>1</sup> 2, The energetic use of the evangelistic arm of the church's service. Particularly since 1866, presbyterial evangelists have been, in increasing numbers, set apart to preaching to the weak and destitute. In 1880 the Synod of Kentucky entered upon the pioneer enterprise of Synodical evangelism. Not less than eight or ten Synods have subsequently inaugurated some form of synodical work. Thus Christ has been widely preached and the church has grown. 3, The pastors and the people have been generally faithful and so preached Christ.

The development of the church's agencies has also been very gratifying. Foreign Missions had a large place in the heart of the church at the start. That place has steadily grown. Carrying this work as its opportunity and ability allowed till 1866, the church in that year began to plant new stations. It has planted stations in China, Italy, the United States of Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, Greece, Japan, the Congo Free State, Cuba, and Corea. It has in its various missions, at this time, about 140 ordained and unordained missionaries; and can now look upon about 2,050 communicants in these fields, besides many hundreds of young people receiving Christian instruction, many native Christian preachers, teachers, and other evangelical workers, exerting an immeasurable influence on heathenism, predisposing it to hear Christianity.

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<sup>1</sup> Johnson's *South. Presb.*, pp. 358, 359.

Home Missions have also had a large place. The Executive Committee of Home Missions was originally called the Executive Committee of Domestic Missions. Owing to the preponderance of Sustentation work in behalf of weak churches, which was made necessary by the war, the name of the committee was changed, in 1866, to that of Committee of Sustentation. By 1879 the church had begun to desire again aggressive evangelistic work on the part of this Executive Committee. Accordingly, in keeping with the projection to the front of this desire, the name of the committee was again changed to that of Home Missions.

The general objects for which the committee has labored are : 1, To aid feeble churches in support of their pastors and to secure a competency to every laboring minister ; 2, To aid in the support of missionaries and evangelists ; 3, To assist weak churches in obtaining suitable edifices in which to worship ; 4, To assist laborers in getting from one field to another where they are without the means of doing this of themselves ; 5, To raise and disburse an invalid fund.

The sustentation of weak churches has been a highly blessed work. The committee's evangelistic work has not been very successful. As the years have passed, an increasing number of Presbyteries and Synods have preferred to push their own evangelistic work. Hence, while the church has been extraordinarily active, of late, in evangelistic work in the home field, the Assembly's committee has done but little of the work. This is to be regretted. The plan of independent Synodical and Presbyterian work appeals more to selfish emulation, synodical and presbyterial ambition. It is apt to result in expenditure where there is no sufficient promise, and non-expenditure in fields full of promise, in the newer and weaker Synods ; and it is Independent rather than Presbyterian in tendency, and weakening to the common life of the great body.<sup>1</sup>

Missionary operations among the negroes were placed under the patronage of this committee by its original constitution. It continued to take oversight of the work till 1891, when the Executive Committee of Colored Evangelization was organized. The

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Johnson's *Southern Presbyterians*, p. 337.

latter committee has, in its short life, displayed much zeal and good sense; and its work, chiefly the direction of the Tuscaloosa Institute for the education of colored ministers, has been greatly blessed. The committee has done a very helpful work in assisting weak congregations to secure suitable places of worship. At the bidding of the Assemblies of 1885 and 1888 it established the Church Erection and Loan Fund, which has found favor with the people and steadily grown. In raising the much-needed Invalid Fund the committee's efforts have been attended by only very partial success.

The Cause of Education for the Ministry has been much talked of by the church. The Assembly's plan for securing an educated ministry, adopted in 1861, styled variously, as "a beneficiary, or eleemosynary," or "stipendiary," plan has never been in universal esteem throughout the church. It has been modified and improved, especially by the Assemblies of 1866 and 1895, but still meets with detraction. It is a good scheme if faithfully carried out by the Presbyteries; but seems to be tolerated only because of the necessity of some such scheme. It is so poorly supported, or operated, that many deserving candidates suffer from want of needful funds.

The church has in successful operation the following theological seminaries: Union, in Virginia, founded in 1824; Columbia, in South Carolina, established in 1828; Tuscaloosa Institute, in Alabama, founded in 1877; The Divinity School of the Southwestern Presbyterian University, in Tennessee, organized in 1885; and the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, organized in 1893.

The following colleges are under the control of the church: The Southwestern Presbyterian University, at Clarksville, Tenn., Central University, in Kentucky, Westminster College, in Missouri, Austin College, in Texas, King College, at Bristol, Tenn., the Arkansas College, and South Carolina College, at Clinton, S. C., and many academies and other schools of high grade, doing a beneficent work. Washington and Lee University and Hampden-Sidney College are under Presbyterian influence. So are many private schools of superior excellence.

The Assembly's Cause of Publication has never received a liberal support. In spite of this, and the financial distress into which the cause was carried in its early history, a great success has been achieved by the Assembly's committee under Dr. Hazen. In publishing, in selecting religious books and stamping them with its *imprimatur*, in making gratuitous distributions of literature, and in supporting colporteurs, the committee has done much. While making gratuitous distributions greater than the contributions, it has accumulated a capital of more than \$100,000 in value. Since 1875 this committee has had a separate charter of incorporation. It is a peculiarity of the Southern Presbyterian Church that "the several Executive Committees of the General Assembly, with the exception of that of Publication, have no separate corporate existence. And with this exception the Board of Trustees of the Assembly hold all its property."

The journals of the church, not under this committee's care, but advocating the principles of the church and giving information concerning the church's work, are: *The Alabama Presbyterian*, *The Central Presbyterian*, *The Christian Observer*, *The St. Louis Presbyterian*, *The Southwestern Presbyterian*, *The Southern Presbyterian*, *The North Carolina Presbyterian*, *The Texas Presbyterian*, *The Union Seminary Magazine*, *The Presbyterian Quarterly* and *The Missionary*, and others.

Constitutional Changes. In doctrine the movement has been, if any, to a more thorough-going Calvinism. The changes in polity have been considerable, seeing this church has so brief a history. They have sprung from a more solid conviction of *jure divino* Presbyterianism, and have resulted in a clearer statement of the ruling elder's rights and duties, and a more adequate and scriptural exposition of the deacon's duties and relations.

The Relation of the Church to Other Bodies. In all its formal and well-considered views of the subject from 1861 to 1870 this church has testified to the non-secular character of the church and the headship of Jesus in Zion. It has held that church and state are of right independent. During the war it did, indeed, falter in its testimony for the non-secular character of the church; but her falterings were transient inconsistencies, as her formal testi-

monies of the times abundantly indicate and as her sorrow for these missteps, evinced by her implicit and explicit confessions in 1866, 1870, and 1876, show.

Of the cases of organic union with other bodies which this church has effected, it must be granted that every one was made without any compromise, on its part, of a principle of doctrine or polity, and has been conducive of good.

Fraternal correspondence, more or less close, has been maintained with several ecclesiastical bodies. This has been peculiarly close with the Dutch Reformed Church; and, since 1882, with the Northern Presbyterian Church. Owing to the non-secular character of the Dutch Reformed Church, its thoroughly Calvinistic creed, and its Presbyterian polity, this correspondence bore fruit, in 1875, in a "plan of active coöperation" in publication, home missions, foreign missions, and education.

There were great impediments in the way of coöperation, and for a long time even of fraternal correspondence, with the Northern Presbyterian Church. That church had secularized itself and dethroned King Jesus in his own Zion; the union of the Old and New School bodies had involved the united church in the broadest latitudinarianism of doctrine and polity; the Northern Church had violently and unconstitutionally expelled many members of the Southern Church but a short time before; and it had preferred infamous charges against the whole Southern Church. The Southern Church continued to make a Pauline witness against these wrongs till 1882, when, out of fear that it would be charged with an unchristian attitude toward the Northern Church, it passed a resolution, which *mutatis mutandis* should be adopted by the Northern Assembly, and so furnish a basis for fraternal correspondence. This resolution was adopted by the Northern Assembly and the churches found themselves in correspondence with one another. The real basis of the correspondence thus established was only made plain to the Southern body, however, upon the receipt of the celebrated Herrick Johnson "rider." The Northern Assembly in adopting for itself the *mutatis mutandis* resolution just referred to, had subsequently declared that in that resolution it had intended no reference to any "actions of pre-



ceding Assemblies concerning loyalty and rebellion," but referred "only to those concerning schism, heresy, and blasphemy."

In 1889 these churches entered upon a plan of coöperation, which is the close analogue of that with the Dutch Reformed Church.

Even this sketch is sufficient to show that there was good reason for this church's coming into existence and for her continued independent existence to this day. God has called on her to witness to the non-secular character of his church, the headship of Christ, the government of the church on constitutional biblical principles, Bible Calvinism, and Bible ethics.

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