

SPEECH

21072

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

MAY 30th, 1859,

ON

THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
OF THE NORTH-WEST.

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BY E. D. <sup>Trasmus</sup>MAC MASTER.

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## S P E E C H .

[In the General Assembly, May 30th, 1859, the order of the day being the election of Professors in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the North-West, Dr. Mac Master moved to postpone the order of the day, to take up a motion to refer the whole subject to the next General Assembly. On this motion he addressed the House in the following remarks.]

MR. MODERATOR:—The various relations in which, by various agencies, I have been made to stand to this Seminary, for ten years past, and the relation in which I stand to the overture by whose acceptance you have taken the direction of the Seminary, have seemed to make it incumbent on me to do what I could, in concurrence with other brethren, so to present the subject to the General Assembly, that of it there might be a clear and true understanding. On the other hand, the very peculiarity of the relations in which I stand to the subject, in some of its principal aspects, have seemed to me to be such as to make it extremely embarrassing for me, without doing great violence to my sense of the proprieties and decencies of life, to say what I have thought ought to be said. This latter view of the case has thus far prevented me from taking any part in the discussions which have been had, and have sealed my lips on the subject.

We have seen the progress of the affair, step by step, thus far; coming events cast their shadows before; and we have now reached a point, where, so far as I can see, I am shut up to the performance of a duty from which I cannot retire. I shall bring my remarks within as narrow limits as I can; but, as these must of necessity take a range somewhat wide and discursive, I have to ask of you, Sir, and of the house, that, not of your clemency, but of your justice, your justice, not to me, but to a great public interest of the Church, you will patiently hear what I have to say.

I offer two or three preliminary remarks.

*First*, As to the position in which I here appear. In respect to this I have to say, that I do not appear here as one who has been, at any time, or any where, or as one who is now, a party

to a scramble for a place in this Seminary. It is not, Sir, any thing in my own conduct, or character, which gives occasion to this remark; which but for very peculiar circumstances might well seem to be out of place. If there be any thing in the character, or occurrences, of the times upon which we have fallen, which makes the remark necessary and proper, this is not to be imputed to me. No man can put his finger upon any message of mine to my friends, or to any one of them, instructing them, “*You had better insist on the chair of Theology;*” or you had better insist on any thing for me, or seek any thing for me. No man can put his finger on any act or word of mine, during my whole life, the object of which was, directly or indirectly, by myself or by others, to seek any place, high or low, great or small, in the Church. It is well known to many who now hear me, that when I was first appointed to a professorship in this Seminary, then at New Albany, it was notwithstanding my previous assurance to those who had thought fit to speak to me on the subject that, if appointed, I would not even entertain the question of acceptance, and a prohibition in terms the most positive and absolute of any use of my name in connexion with the place. It is well known that, three times appointed, by votes entirely or nearly unanimous, in full meeting of the Directors, I have three times vacated my place, in consequence of proposed changes in the control of the Seminary; in the two latter cases I myself being concerned as a prime mover in the measures which had this as one of their designed effects. I, then, do not appear here as one who has been a party to any scramble for a place in this Seminary; as I never have been, and am not now, and never will be, an aspirant for any office, or any honours, which this Assembly, or any other, may have to bestow. I appear here simply as a member of the Assembly, from one of the Presbyteries immediately concerned in this business, and from my personal relations to the subject having a duty to perform in reference to it.

*Second,* Allow me to say that, as I have not been elsewhere a party to any *personal* controversy on this subject, so I shall not be drawn into any personal controversy here in relation to it. It has often been said in the newspapers and elsewhere, it has been said in this house, that the controversy which has recently existed on the subject has been a personal one. If so, I have not been a party to any such controversy; unless my having been personally pursued, long and perseveringly, with accusations has made me such. It is true that, through ten long years, my foot-steps have been followed with accusations, impugning my conduct, and motives, and character, in a manner which I am very sure is without precedent or parallel, in the case of any other man, in the whole

history of the Church in this land. I presume that it is not known to most of the members of this house, that through all these ten years I have constantly refused to make any reply whatever to these accusations, or to be drawn into any controversy concerning them. Being only a very imperfect Christian, I do not claim that this silence on my part has been exclusively owing to the grace of Christian forbearance. It is not necessary for me to say to what other principle, or feeling, in my mind it has been, perhaps in great part, to be ascribed. Without inquiring into the reason, you may, I think, take the fact of my refusal through these ten years to be made a party to any personal controversy on the subject as a sufficient guarantee that I shall not be drawn into any such controversy now. I speak in the interest of this great public cause of theological education in this great field of the North-West, which is now committed to your hands, and to the question which is before you.

*Third*, I do not appear here for the purpose of entering into any personal vindication of myself. It is true that the whole burden of the opposition which has been made to the measures for building up the Seminary has so much consisted in accusations against the late Professors, and against the Directors for appointing them, and I have been so made the chief object of those accusations, that it is impossible to speak of them without speaking of myself more than is agreeable to me. But what I have to say shall have reference to myself only so far as this has by others been thus made unavoidable.

The motion before you is to postpone the order of the day, for the purpose of taking up a motion to refer the whole subject to the next General Assembly.

My argument in support of the present motion is this: that, by means which I shall proceed to show, there has been produced among the ministers and churches of the North-West a state of division on this subject which precludes the hope that any action which it is likely the Assembly will now take will conduce to the successful establishment of the Seminary, and to the peace and edification of the church. I proceed to show the means by which this state of division has been produced.

From the time that the movement, in the autumn of 1856, for uniting all the Synods of the North-West in the direction of the Seminary became known beyond the boundaries of these Synods down to the present time, the whole movement and its authors have been perseveringly assailed by accusations, which I abstain from characterizing. The chief vehicles of these accusations have been various newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets, which have either originated them, or have, more or less, lent them-

selves to their circulation. For some time the accusations referred to were chiefly directed against a few persons, especially the late Professors of the Seminary, who were denominated "the prime movers" in the affair; but more recently they have been extended to the Directors, and by implication to the Synods by whom the conduct of the Directors and Professors has been approved.

All these accusations have reference to alleged opinions of the late Directors and Professors on the subject of slavery, and alleged designs on their part to make the Seminary an agency for the promulgation of extreme opinions on that subject, and the instigation of divisive and schismatic courses on account of it. It is not my purpose to discuss, in this connexion, the merits of slavery. This is not the subject now before you. I refer to it here only so far as by others it has been connected with this subject of the Seminary. I regret the necessity of any reference to it in this connexion. But others, not I, or those with whom I have acted, have created this necessity. Opinions on the subject which we never held, and designs in relation to it which we never entertained, have been imputed to us; and these imputations, not only without evidence to support them, but in utter disregard of abundant evidence to the contrary, have continued to be reiterated and, with a diligence and zeal becoming a better cause, to be circulated, down to the present time. These alleged opinions and designs of ours, in relation to slavery, have been made the matter of appeals to a morbid state of mind extensively existing in the country and in the church. By these means, in the minds of many, perhaps of not a few even in this Assembly, the whole subject of the Seminary has been subjected to prejudice, which may seriously affect the disposal of the question of its proper establishment. Without a pusillanimous betrayal of our trust, we cannot allow this great public interest to be thus brought in jeopardy, without showing to the Assembly the true state of the case.

I have said that all the accusations which have been brought against the Professors and Directors, and by implication against the Synods, have reference to their alleged opinions and designs in relation to slavery. No matter of accusation has been brought against them, which does not resolve itself into and find its whole importance in this. This is the whole head and front of their offending. I proceed to examine it.

Among other accusations is made the following specific charge, viz: "IT IS EVIDENTLY THE DESIGN OF DR. MAC MASTER AND THOMAS TO FORM A THOROUGHLY ABOLITIONIST SEMINARY IN THE NORTH-WEST, AND THERE TO TRAIN YOUNG MEN TO BECOME AGITATORS AND DESTROYERS OF THE PEACE OF THE CHURCH."—(*St. Louis*

*Presbyterian*, of Jan. 22, 1857.) Upon this alleged design is invoked the anathema of all good men, in the following terms: "Let all who love the peace and unity of the Presbyterian church, at once throw their decided influence against THIS UNHALLOWED ATTEMPT TO DIVIDE ITS COUNSELS AND DESTROY ITS EFFICIENCY."— (*St. Louis Presbyterian*.)

Let it be observed what this accusation is. It is not that these men are *unwittingly* pursuing a course, *the tendency* of which, *unperceived by them*, is to the result which is deprecated. But it is that "*it is evidently THEIR DESIGN to train young men to become agitators and destroyers of the peace of the church;*" and that they are the authors of "AN UNHALLOWED ATTEMPT to *divide its counsels and destroy its efficiency.*"

Against these men the further accusation is brought, that this schismatic and wicked design they have sought to effect, and this unhallowed attempt to accomplish, by *concealment*, by *misrepresentation*, by *conspiracy*, and by *fraud*. Here are the charges in the words in which they have been made: "We learned that a few individuals, including the Professors at New Albany, *had conspired* to deprive the Synod of Missouri of its rights." Again, "The prime movers were very anxious, *for reasons not avowed*, to exclude that body." Again, "When the question was asked in the other Synods, why Missouri was left out, its position and action were *wholly misrepresented.*" Again, "Thus our Synod finds itself disfranchised *by the trick* of a few individuals. They *had tricked* the Synod out of its rights, and secured the adoption of a constitution which was likely to keep it out."

These are some of the accusations, in the words in which they are made, which have been brought against the persons designated as "the prime movers" in the affair, and which in various forms, more or less distinct, have continued to be reiterated till the present time, against these men, the Directors, and the Synods which have sustained them.

To these accusations, in these terms, as hitherto I have made, so now I make no reply whatever. To them, on my own behalf, or on behalf of the Directors, or the Synods, as I have answered, so will I answer, never a word.

But, far short of, and widely different from, these accusations, there are other imputations, which to some extent may have obtained credence. It is perhaps not to be wondered at, if to many persons unacquainted with the facts of the case, it should seem to be a thing incredible, that accusations, such as these which I have here read, should be made with a vehement zeal, and industriously and perseveringly, through months and years, in all forms of publication, be spread over the country, unless

there were at least some show of evidence that there had been something very exceptionable in the views, and projects, and measures of the parties so accused. Many such persons may have supposed that, while the accusations which I have recited are no doubt untrue, yet it may be true that these men hold extreme opinions on slavery, and on the question of the way in which it ought to be dealt with, and that they had some design to make the Seminary an agency for an agitation of this subject, the tendency of which, though not so intended, was to disturb the peace and injure the welfare of the church. How far this effect has been produced it is impossible to say. For the sake of this great public interest of the church, I deem it my duty to disabuse the minds of those who have been thus misled, by a brief historical review of the whole course of the authorities of the Seminary, and in particular of the persons accused by name, in reference to the position of the Seminary on this very subject of slavery. For this purpose I ask the attention of all who desire to know the truth, to a plain statement of the facts in the case, sustained in every material point by documentary evidence, chiefly derived from official records and papers.

In search of the facts of the case let us go to the beginning.

I.—The Seminary was originally established by and was under the control of Synods in these *free States* of Indiana and Ohio. The Seminary, so established and controlled at first, *sought* the union and co-operation of their sister Synods in the slaveholding States of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri. The Seminary sought this union and co-operation, despite of coldness and rebuffs on the part of some of these last mentioned Synods, from year to year, *with a perseverance and an importunity*, which some of us at the time thought exceeded the bounds consistent with a proper self respect.

The Synods of Missouri, Kentucky, and West Tennessee, (now Nashville,) at length accepted the invitation to co-operate in the direction of the Seminary. This union, during its continuance, it has been said, was merely nominal. However this may have been, a sincere, cordial, and practical union and co-operation *was earnestly sought and always desired by the Seminary and by the Synods in the free States*, by whom it was originally established. As serving to show the dispositions of the Directors in general, and in particular of the men who have been accused by name, of a design to make the Seminary an agency for effecting a schismatic and wicked division of the church on account of slavery, I quote the following extract from a Report of a Committee of the Directors, adopted by the Board, June 30th, 1842, viz :

“*Resolved*, That it is with great pleasure that this Board has



heard that the Synod of Missouri, at its last sessions, resolved to unite in the direction and support of this Seminary, and appointed Directors to represent it in this Board; that we cordially welcome the Synod to a participation with us in the work of providing for the education of candidates for the ministry; and that, whereas the Directors of the Synod have been prevented from attending the meeting of the Board, the Secretary be instructed to send to the Synod such an abstract of the proceedings of this meeting as he may deem proper."

Signed

"E. D. MAC MASTER,  
*Chairman of the Committee.*"

This is the first group of facts: let it be noted.

II.—As special mention has been made of the Synod of Missouri, and as we have been accused of ejecting that Synod from its rights in the Seminary, and this has been urged as one of the chief proofs of our "Abolition" designs, it may be convenient here, though chronologically a little out of place, to refer to that subject.

The proposal of measures, in 1856, for uniting all the Synods of the North-West in the control of the Seminary, was not made to the Synod of Missouri. The reason assigned at the time was that that Synod, along with the Synods of Kentucky and Nashville, was understood to have withdrawn from the Seminary. This it was understood to have done, like the Synods of Kentucky and Nashville, not by any direct and formal act expressly to that effect, but yet virtually and in fact. It has been denied that the Synod of Missouri did so withdraw. I state the evidence of the fact that such was the general, if not the universal, understanding; and the reasons on which this understanding was grounded.

1. The evidence of the fact that such was the general, if not universal, understanding.

(1). In a printed circular addressed, in 1856, to the Ministers, Elders, and Members of the Presbyterian Church, in connection with seven Synods, and widely circulated over the whole field, nine ministers and eight ruling elders of the church affirmed that such was their understanding.

(2). In no one of these seven Synods which, in October, 1856, adopted the new Constitution, was any man found in any way to intimate, or suggest, that the Synod of Missouri was at that time united with others in the direction of the Seminary, and had therefore a right to be consulted: but on the contrary all these seven Synods united in the adoption of a Constitution, the first words of which are the following: "*Whereas the Synods of INDIANA, NORTHERN INDIANA, and CINCINNATI have now in operation a Theological Seminary at New Albany,*" &c.

(3). The Assembly's Digest, prepared by the Rev. Samuel J. Baird, with remarkable accuracy as to matters of fact, published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, and by the authority of the General Assembly, not only in the first edition, but in the last, published two years after the bruit about the matter, affirms that, "At a meeting of the Board of Directors in June, 1854, the New Albany Seminary was continued *under the direction of the Synods of CINCINNATI, INDIANA, and NORTHERN INDIANA.*" *Digest*, pp. 469, 470.

(4). The *St. Louis Presbyterian*, of October 9th, 1856, then edited by a person whom I prefer not to name, in an editorial article containing the first assault made on the late movement to unite all the Synods of the North-West in the control of the Seminary, in urging objections against action on the subject, holds the following language. "*The New Albany Theological Seminary is now controlled by a Board of Directors appointed by the SYNOD OF CINCINNATI and the TWO SYNODS OF INDIANA.* Why not have a Seminary supported by all the Western Synods *which are not pledged to any of the existing Seminaries?* Why, should the Synod of Missouri, *for example*, be excluded?" So then, the Seminary in 1856 was controlled by three Synods, of which Missouri was not one; and Missouri was an "example" of the Synods "which were not pledged to any of the existing Seminaries:" and yet we are accused of "Abolition" designs; and the proof is, that we conspired to eject Missouri from its rights in the control of the Seminary!"

I submit to all candid men, whether in point of fact it was not the *general* understanding that the Synod of Missouri had ceased to be united with the other Synods in continuing the Seminary.

2. The reasons on which this understanding was grounded are found in the following facts.

(1). The Synod had never, during the whole period of its nominal connection with the Seminary, made any official communication whatever, either to the Directors or to any one of the other Synods, on the subject of the Seminary, with the single exception of a copy of the resolutions in 1852, for the transfer of the Seminary to the General Assembly. Not even so much as a letter informing the Directors, or the other Synods, of its own resolution in 1842 to concur in the direction and support of the Seminary, was ever received from the Synod. Moreover, in the *twenty-eight meetings* of the Directors between 1841 and 1857, a period of sixteen years of its alleged connection with the Seminary, the Synod was represented in the Board of Directors but *twice*, and then by *one* Director only. From 1850 to 1857, a period of seven years, no Director ever appeared in the Board. During the same period of sixteen years of the Synod's alleged connection

with the Seminary, the whole amount, so far as can be ascertained, contributed to its funds from within the bounds of the Synod, was less than \$3,000. These facts indicate that the friendly interest in the Seminary, to be either relinquished, or retained, was not very great.

(2). From 1852 to 1857, a period of five years, the Synod, as I have been informed, appointed no Directors. It was only in 1857, after an oblivion of five years, that the Synod awoke to a remembrance of its rights and its duties in carrying on the Seminary.

(3). In 1853 the Synod adopted the following minute, of which we have a certified copy; viz: "After discussion Synod *Resolved*, 1, That *they disapprove of the re-appointment of Professors to the chairs of the New Albany Theological Seminary.* 2, That a Committee be appointed to correspond with the Directors of said Seminary, for the purpose of ascertaining the amount and condition of the funds belonging to the institution, *especially such as have been contributed within the bounds of this Synod*, and to procure such other information as may be desirable." That is, the Synod condemned the continuance of the Seminary, and appointed a Committee to look after its share of the money.

(4). In one of the pamphlets, in which many accusations are brought against us, is found the following statement: "After the Assembly's Seminary was located in Danville, the Synod refused by a distinct vote, at two successive meetings, to sever its connection with that Seminary (New Albany) and appointed a Committee to correspond with the Board in regard to the funds. One of the principal reasons in view of which this action was taken, was that the Synod might hold itself in readiness to co-operate with the North-western Synods, whenever they should be prepared to found a Seminary, when it was believed that the New Albany Seminary, might be removed and its funds made available. At two successive meetings of the Synod the Committee reported that no answer had been received to their letters, and it was ascertained that Dr. MacMaster had received them, but had neither answered them nor presented them to the Board."

In reference to this representation I make the following statement.

(a). If, at any time between 1853 and 1857, the Synod by any vote, distinct or indistinct, refused to sever its connection with the New Albany Seminary, or assigned any such reason as is here represented for any action of its on the subject, it is certain that neither the Directors, nor any one of the Synods continuing the Seminary, ever received information of any such action, or any such intention on the part of that Synod.

(b). There is reason to believe that neither the Synod's Com

mittee, nor its Chairman, nor any member of it, ever wrote a letter on this, or on any other subject, to the Board of Directors, or to its President, or Secretary, or to any member of it. At all events, it is certain that no such letter was ever received by the Board.

(c) I never received a letter from that Committee, or its Chairman, or any member of it, addressed to, or intended for the Directors or the Trustees; nor a request in any form, to make any communication to them, or obtain any information from them, or from any officer of either, on that subject, or on any other. I received, in September, 1855, a *private letter* from the person, said to be the Chairman, four-fifths of which was occupied with topics wholly foreign to that subject, but containing at the close a request *that I would furnish the information sought*. That is all. Why I did not make haste to hunt up and furnish the information for such a purpose as that for which it appeared to be sought, I need not say. Perhaps I had other occupation which I thought more my business. When, more than two years after, the Chairman called on me about the business, I put all the books and papers into his hands, and furnished him the hospitalities of my house, as long as he chose to stay and make his explorations. I might inquire here to what credit accusations, of which this is a fair specimen, are entitled. But my object is to show that we had no reason to suppose that the Synod had any desire to be united with us in carrying on the Seminary.

These are the reasons on which was grounded our understanding, which was also the general understanding, that the Synod of Missouri had, perhaps not by any formal action expressly to that effect, but virtually and in fact, just as much as the Synods of Kentucky and Nashville, withdrawn from the Seminary, so far as concerned any intention to concur in its continuance. I submit to all candid men, whether the reasons are not sufficient to warrant this understanding.

But the main position which I wish to establish by all which I am now saying is that the Synods in the free States, and the Seminary, and the men accused by name of schismatic schemes on account of slavery, have always desired the co-operation of any and every Synod of the Church which desired to be associated with the Synods already in the union in building up the Seminary, irrespective of any question whether it was situated in a free or a slaveholding State. Of this in the case of the Synod of Missouri in particular, there is further proof in the following facts. First, this desire on our part was constantly affirmed, from the time that it was first said, not by the Synod, but by certain individuals, that the Synod desired to be associated with the other Synods in building up the Seminary, and a willingness to admit it to the union whenever it expressed such desire, in the only way in which it

could be admitted without a violation of the Constitution. Second, at the meeting of the Directors on the 3d of February, 1857, a few members of the Board urging that the Synod never meant to withdraw from the Seminary, and that it ought to be included in the present union, I went to the leader of those who urged this view, and with difficulty prevailed on him to move the appointment of a Committee to draw up a paper, recommending to the Synods the admission of the Synod of Missouri, at their next sessions, in advance of any intimation from the Synod of any desire for such admission. Such a paper was drawn up by me, and at my suggestion adopted by the Committee and by the Board, one member only of the majority voting in the negative. Yet I am stigmatized as "an Abolitionist," forming a conspiracy to eject by fraud that Synod from its rights, for a factious and schismatic purpose. Some believed that those who showed such zeal on the subject desired that Synod to be brought in, not to help to build up the Seminary, but to pull down and destroy it, and doubted the propriety of its admission, till it should be known in what spirit and with what aim it came in, if it came at all. But we were willing to confide in the great mass of our brethren in Missouri, that when fully informed on the whole subject they would not lend themselves to any schemes of faction. Hence the action that was taken. Some of the Synods adopted the action recommended by the Directors, some thought it would be time enough to take such action when the Synod should have in some form intimated a desire for admission. Many, first and last, who were willing the Synod should come in, if it desired to do so, thought that to continue to dog it with importunities to come into an association, to which it had shown so much disinclination, was inconsistent with a decent self-respect, not to say a proper respect to the Synod.

This is the second group of facts, specially touching the Synod of Missouri, and our willingness to have it associated with us, in building up and controlling the Seminary: let it also be noted and remembered.

III—The connection of the Synods of Kentucky and Nashville with the Seminary was terminated in 1853, by their abandonment of this Seminary and concurrence in the setting up of a new one at Danville. The Synod of Missouri terminated, as was generally, if not universally, understood, its connection in the same year, in the way I have here stated, by an express condemnation of its re-organization, a refusal to appoint Directors, and the appointment of a Committee to look after the money, especially its own share of it. No one has ever pretended to deny that the Synod did withdraw, for a period of five years, from any actual co-operation in carrying on the Seminary.

By these acts these three Synods, situated in *slave-holding*

States, voluntarily withdrew from the union into which they had been invited, and some of them importuned to enter, by persons representing the Synods situated in the *free States*.

I have no desire to re-open any past controversy concerning this withdrawal of these Synods, or the circumstances of it, or to express in this connection any opinion of my own in relation to the subject. My sole object in referring to it here is to say, that these acts of withdrawal were the acts respectively of the Synods in the slave States; that on them alone rests the responsibility of these acts, with all their consequences; that the Synods in the free States deeply regretted and very strongly disapproved of the withdrawal; and that the Seminary itself shared in this regret; and in two printed publications, one of the Directors and the other of the Trustees, of which they caused to be circulated, in various forms, about 40,000 copies, expressed *its* disapproval of this separation, and the manner of it, in terms which at the time were generally thought to be sufficiently clear and decided.

In order to show what was the mind of the Seminary on the subject of its relations to slavery, so far as it had any such relations, I quote from these documents two passages.

The first of these passages is from a Report of the Directors to the seven Synods then having the control of the Seminary, adopted June 16th, 1853, and is as follows.

“On one aspect of this subject, as it now exists, to prevent misapprehension, the Directors deem it incumbent on them to make an explicit declaration. From the beginning, we have earnestly desired the establishment, on the Ohio river, of a school for the professional training of our candidates for the ministry, in the support and control of which the Churches in the slaveholding States and the free might be united. It has been our desire that this should be done; on the one hand, without any unworthy compromises of principle in favour of *slavery*; while on the other hand there should be found the discrimination which truth and justice require us to make between the system and those who are unwillingly connected with it, and who seek by feasible means its termination, a clear apprehension and full appreciation of the manifold and perplexing difficulties which encompass the friends of freedom where slavery is strongly established, a correct view of the appropriate means of bringing the system in due time to an end, and of the true office of the Church and its ministers in effecting, by the religious instruction and elevation of the slaves, as well as their masters, this great work, in a way consistent with the safety and advantage of all parties. Enlightened and comprehensive views of the method of the Divine procedure against great systems of evil which

oppress and afflict man, if they could have been kept free from irrelevant and disturbing influences, might have preserved this union of counsel and co-operation. We deeply regret to have observed that it was urged, in the late General Assembly, in reference to this question of slavery, in the argument for establishing a new Seminary, that it *must* be placed within the slaveholding States. It may be that by the pressing of this consideration, and the founding of a new Seminary, having by its location and organization essentially a sectional and local character, the Churches on the north of the Ohio will find *forced* upon them, *contrary to their own desire*, the necessity of building up, without the co-operation of their brethren in the South, a Seminary for these great and free States of the North-West, destined to be one of the most populous and powerful regions of the whole country. What the Directors wish now to say is this: that we deeply regret the introduction of this argument, and the action for the establishment of a Seminary based on such argument, both strongly tending to divisive courses and unblest issues; that for these things we are not responsible; and that we are well assured that the Churches of the free States will not be driven from the just and truly conservative ground upon which, on this subject, they have so long stood, but will still continue to cherish the hope of union and co-operation with their brethren at the South, in providing a well qualified ministry for the whole Church."

The other passage is taken from A Defence of the Seminary by the Trustees, September, 1853, and is as follows:

"The attempt to shift the odium of this separation upon the New Albany Directors and their friends is unworthy a fair and honourable opponent. It can not be done. No; it is written in a book, graven with an iron pen in the rock forever, and no power can change the fact, that upon the projectors and advocates of the Danville Seminary rests the responsibility of this schismatic course. It is *they* who have hunted up and set this wedge of division. We shall see whether they will drive it. We are well persuaded that the friends of the New Albany Seminary will have no part in this evil work."

It is under the circumstances proper for me to say that both these passages were written by me, and the first of them was approved by Dr. Thomas, then a prominent member of the Board of Directors. And yet I am stigmatized as "an abolitionist," seeking to divide and destroy the Church on account of slavery.

This is the third group of facts; let it be noted and remembered.

IV—The course of the Seminary and the Synods which continued it—what was this?

The Synods in the free States, thus abandoned by the Synods in the slave States, whose union with them they had importunately sought, and always desired, nothing was left to them but to continue, as they best could, their Seminary greatly damaged, first by the indifference towards it, and then by the abandonment of it, by the Synods in the slave States. Those who cared enough about the matter, to occupy their thoughts with it, soon perceived that the ends for which the Seminary was established could be in any adequate manner attained, only by uniting upon it all the Synods of the North-West, or at least a majority of them. It was in the expectation of such a union that the Seminary was continued at New Albany. But to anticipate a movement for this end before the time, would have been fatal. Nothing was left to the Seminary but to put down its anchors where it was, and await the development of events and the indications of Divine Providence. At length it seemed to those who had concerned themselves with the matter, that the time for action had come. In August, 1856, an Address to the Ministers, Elders, and Members of the Churches in the seven North-West Synods, signed by the two Professors, and fifteen other gentlemen, most of them Directors, and printed in pamphlet form, was sent to all the ministers and a large number of elders and members of the Churches, proposing this long contemplated union. In October a Constitution, adapted to the new relations contemplated, was drawn up, and, by the two Professors and a respected brother, then pastor of the Church at New Albany, was presented to the seven North-West Synods, and was by them, after animated, interesting, and harmonious discussions, unanimously adopted, with but the voice of one individual in the negative in all these seven Synods.

This is the movement which has been denounced as sectional, divisive, schismatic, designed to make the Seminary an agency for a mischievous agitation of the Church on account of slavery. On what ground is this accusation made? Is there a word in the address about slavery, or abolition, or any sectional interest separate from that of the whole Church? Not a word. Is there any thing of the kind in the Constitution? No. On the contrary, there is a provision that "*any* Synod of the Presbyterian Church may be admitted to this union." Was any thing of this kind said by the men who initiated this movement and presented it to the Synods, or by any one else in the Synods, in the discussion on the adoption of the Constitution? Nothing of the kind. The subject of slavery was not once named in any of the Synods. In the Synod of Illinois, I, not in reply to any inquiry or suggestion of any one in the Synod, but in consequence of the first assault on the movement, contained in a newspaper pub-



lished outside of the Synods concerned, which had fallen into my hands, without any allusion to the paper, took occasion to say, that the project was not *sectional* in any sense, except that in which all our Synods and Presbyteries, having defined territorial boundaries, are sectional; and that if the Synods of Kentucky, Nashville, and Missouri, which had formerly been nominally united with us, were now separated from us, the separation was *their* act, not *ours*, and for it *they*, and not *we* were responsible.

We have been accused because, in our Circular of August, 1856, we proposed a convention of delegates from the Synods to consult, and in October presented to the Synods instead a Constitution, and proposed its adoption; and plots, and conspiracies, and treasons, have been seen lurking in that. Well, Sir, you may lay the whole iniquity of that on my head. It was I who proposed and urged the change. On second thoughts it occurred to me, that if a Convention were appointed, probably few would come to it, that the whole matter would be left at loose ends for a whole year till the Synods should meet again, and the business would get into the newspapers and pamphlets, and we would have "a sea of distracted talk," casting up mire and dirt; and I thought it was best to go directly to the Synods, who alone had power to act definitively and authoritatively, and propose to them that they themselves should say what was their will in the case; and sad to say, the whole seven Synods, with the exception of one faithful man, were wicked enough to join in the plots, and conspiracies, and treasons! Surely, brethren, it is a case for tears, and shall be for a perpetual lamentation!

This is the fourth group of facts; let it be noted.

V—As the whole burden of the opposition consisted in accusations against the Professors of designs to make the Seminary an agency for the inculcating of extreme opinions on the subject of slavery, and these accusations continued to be reiterated and diligently spread abroad, I, in September, 1857, addressed to the Board of Directors a letter, containing a full and explicit statement of my opinions on slavery, and the relations of the Seminary to that subject, so far as it has any; in which statement Dr. Thomas subsequently expressed his concurrence. With only one vote in the negative, the Directors adopted in reference to this letter the following declaration, viz: "We have received with much pleasure from one of the Professors elect, (in which it is understood that the other also concurs,) an open and manly exhibition of his views upon this vexed question, in which he declares himself as entirely in harmony with the position of the General Assembly." In accordance with my request, a copy of this letter was sent to each of the seven Synods united in the direction of the Seminary. The Synods of Cin-

cinnati, Indiana, Northern Indiana, and Iowa, declared their approval of the views therein expressed, as being in harmony with the doctrine of the Church on the subject. The other three Synods expressed no opinion upon its contents; but, it is believed, that no man in any one of the Synods pretended to controvert any sentiment or statement in the letter. This action of the Board of Directors, and of these four Synods, gives to the letter an official character, and serves to show what were the views, not only of the writer, but of these bodies on the subject, and how utterly unfounded are the accusations against them. The letter is as follows.

*"To the Reverend the Board of Directors of The Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the North-West:*

A heathen magistrate once, when sending an accused party to the judgment-seat of Cæsar, to which he had appealed, made the very sensible remark, that it seemed to him to be an unreasonable thing to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crime laid against him. I feel a somewhat similar embarrassment, in making to you this communication, which, though not formally a defence, yet has in part virtually that character; when you have not arraigned me at your bar, nor found against me any indictment, and when no prosecutor has appeared before you to convict me of any offence. In these circumstances, I am under the necessity of myself informing you of the state of the case on which I address you.

It is known to you that, in August, 1856, I and sixteen other gentlemen, most of them Directors of the Seminary then at New Albany, though not acting in any official capacity, sent in pamphlet form a circular address to the ministers, ruling elders, and members of the churches under the care of the synods of Cincinnati, Indiana, Northern Indiana, Illinois, Chicago, Wisconsin, and Iowa, proposing the union of all these Synods in the direction of the Seminary, and the adoption of whatever measures might be deemed necessary and proper for the establishment of an institution worthy of the North-West, competent to the service demanded, and meet for the Master's use. In September and October following, I and two other brethren in person brought this matter before these seven Synods, and presented to them the draft of a constitution, which, after animated, harmonious and interesting discussions, was unanimously adopted by them all, with the exception of a single vote in one of the Synods. The Directors appointed under the Constitution in November, 1856, elected me one of the Professors of the Seminary, and in February, 1857, I accepted the appointment.

This whole movement, and in particular the circular by which it was initiated, and a few persons, including myself, who have been designated as "the prime movers" in the affair, have been, through a period of ten months, beginning from the time when the subject was yet pending in some of the Synods down till the present, assailed from without these Synods, with accusations, of whose origin, character, or motives, I will say not a word. All these accusations, so far as they have reference to me, ultimately rest on the ground of objection to my alleged views of slavery, and my alleged design, along with other persons, to make the Seminary an agency for a factious and schismatic agitation of that subject.

How far the representations, which have been industriously spread abroad through out these Synods, may have been mischievous in their effects, in inducing apprehensions and fears that I hold views of slavery and its relations to the Seminary and the Church, which, from my connection with the Seminary, may be of evil tendency, it is impossible for me to know, without a fuller knowledge than I possess of the extent to which there may exist, in those on whom they are intended to operate, a morbid state of mind on the subject of slavery, predisposing them to give to such apprehensions and fears a ready entertainment. For the sake of the Seminary and the Church, I am willing to do whatever I can, not only to satisfy reasonable inquiries, but to allay unreasonable apprehensions and fears, if such exist, and to quiet the minds of those who are disturbed. I therefore deem it proper for me, so far as in my relations to the Seminary I am involved in the

matter, to make to you, and through you to all whom it concerns, a clear and explicit statement of my views on the subject.

1. If, then, the question be asked me, 'What are the objects for which the Seminary has been established?' I answer, the objects declared in the Constitution, in the circular of August, 1856, by which the movement was initiated, in all the discussions of the subject in the Synods, and in all which has been said and done before and since by the friends of the Seminary. And they are all comprehended in the training of young men for the ministry.

2. If the question be asked, Was it not the design of those who have been designated as 'the prime movers' in the measures which have resulted in the establishment of the Seminary at Hyde Park, to make it an agency specially for the agitation or discussion of slavery? I answer, that I think the proper reply to this inquiry is the simple statement that, neither in the circular of August, 1856, which emanated from them, nor in the constitution of the Seminary, which was drawn up and presented to the Synods by them, nor in the discussions of the subject in any of the Synods, by them or any one else, was the subject of slavery so much as mentioned.

For myself I would say that, so far as my agency in the business is concerned, precisely the same movement would have been made, and precisely the same measures in all respects would have been adopted, if no such thing as slavery had ever existed in the country, or in the world.

The brethren who have been disturbed have allowed themselves to be unnecessarily put into a flutter on the subject. Slavery may have been thought of along with many other things, but the story that the Seminary was designed to be an agency specially for the agitation or discussion of slavery is so absurd, that those who told it must have counted largely on the credulity of their hearers.

3. If the question be asked, "What are the relations which I think the Seminary ought to have to the subject of slavery?" I answer, I think it ought to have *no relations* to slavery different from those which it has to twenty or forty other acknowledged evils of like character and magnitude, and to which the church and the country of the North-West stand in a like relation as to slavery. It certainly is not the business of a Theological Seminary to organize agencies and institute measures for the removal of slavery, or of any other particular form of evil, moral, or political, or ecclesiastical, or domestic, existing in society; but to teach young men how to expound and apply the Scriptures, and to fulfil the work of the gospel ministry. Christianity, which it is the business of the ministry to expound and preach, is a system of *practical* truth, intended for the remedy of *all* moral evils, and of all other evils which are the penal effects of moral evil; and hence it has various relations to and bearings on all such evils; and these I think it is the business of the Professors in a Theological School, in proper connections to indicate; whether in the didactic exposition of Theology, theoretical and practical, in the exegesis of the Scriptures, or in recounting the history of Christianity, and the church. If any man be held to be so wanting in discretion that he can not be trusted to do this according to the truth, certainly it is not fit that he should be put into the place of an instructor in a Theological School.

4. If the question be asked, "What are my views of slavery? of the question, whether Christianity sanctions slavery? and of the duty of Christians in relation to slavery?" I answer these questions severally.

(1.) To the question, "What are my views of slavery?" I give this answer. I wish to define what I understand to be meant by the term *slavery*, in distinction from a system of *mere involuntary servitude*, which is either right or wrong, according to the circumstances of each case. By slavery, then, I understand to be meant that system which, according to the doctrine of the most eminent among the Greek writers on Moral and Political Philosophy, current throughout the civilized world in the days of Christ and his apostles, held that the relation between master and slave is like that between the artizan and his tools; and that a slave is "*an animate tool*," or "*a tool with a soul in it*." See Aristotle Eth. Nicomach, L. ix, c. 13. By *slavery* I understand to be meant that system which obtained in the Roman Empire, in the days of Christ and his apostles, according to which "slaves were held *pro nullis; pro mortuis; pro quadrupedibus*;" that is as *not persons*; as *dead in law*, or *without civil rights*; as *brute beasts*. By slavery I understand to be meant that system which obtains in our own times, and in some of the states of our own country, under which, as it is expressed in the

Laws of South Carolina, "Slaves shall be deemed, held, taken, reputed, and adjudged in law, to be chattels personal, in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever," or, as their status is defined by the laws of other states, they are "held to be real estate."

And now, if the question be asked, "What are my views of slavery?" I answer, I think the system of *slavery*, which has now been defined, to be intrinsically, essentially, and necessarily immoral. Or, in the words of the Presbyterian Church itself, in its action of 1818, "We consider the voluntary enslaving of one portion of the human family by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves; and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ, which enjoin that all things whatsoever ye would that others should do to you do ye even the same to them."

(2.) If the question be asked, "Do I think that Christianity sanctions slavery?" I answer again, in the words of the Church, that I think that *slavery* "is totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ."

(3.) If the question be asked, "What do I think is the duty of Christians in relation to slavery?" I answer yet again in the words of the Church, that "it is manifestly the duty of all Christians who enjoy the light of the present day, when the inconsistency of slavery, both with the dictates of humanity and religion, has been demonstrated and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavours, to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and, if possible, throughout the world." At the same time, I fully agree with the exhortation of the Assembly, to those exempt from this great evil, "to forbear harsh censures and uncharitable reflections on their brethren, who unhappily live among slaves whom they can not immediately set free; but who are really using all their influence and all their endeavours to bring them into a state of freedom, as soon as a door for it can be opened." And, moreover, I would use stronger terms than any General Assembly has ever used, to express my sense of the manifold, complicated, and embarrassing difficulties which encompass the practical question of emancipation and the proper disposal of the slave population; and of the wisdom, and prudence, and patience, required in dealing with the whole subject.

5. If the question be asked, "Do I think that the holding of slaves is in all cases an immorality, the renunciation of which ought to be made a condition of membership in the Church?" I answer that I think there are many cases where men stand, in the view of the law and its ministers, in the legal relation of slaveholders, which, for various reasons, they are unable rightfully to terminate; and that in such cases, while they can not without immorality deem, hold, repute and adjudge their servants to be *chattels* in the hands of their owners, to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever; it is not only their right, but their duty, to hold them, so long as the necessity exists, as their bond-servants, and, if need be, their involuntary bond-servants. Of course, in any such case, it is only that which is an immorality, the renunciation of which ought to be made a condition of membership in the Church.

6. If the question be asked, "Do I approve of the position of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of slavery?" I answer, that I approve of the position of the Church on the subject of slavery, as this is determined by a full and fair collation and interpretation of all her public authoritative acts in relation to it; upon the acknowledged principle of interpretation, that what is obscure, ambiguous, doubtful, or otherwise exceptionable, is to be interpreted by what is clear, unambiguous, certain, and unexceptionable.

7. If the question be asked, "Do I think it my duty, either in my professorial or my non-professorial relations, to discuss the subject of slavery?" I give the following answer.

(1.) I do not think that I have any special vocation to discuss the subject of slavery more than other evils; and that it is less my duty to discuss it than evils existing among ourselves, and to which we have a nearer and more immediate relation.

(2.) I think that all my habits of mind and of life indispose me to exaggerate any one evil; or to give to any subject, however important, an undue prominence;

or to take in relation to it extreme views. As to this great evil of slavery, I may appeal to my past course in relation to it. I have now been twenty-five years in the ministry. In all that time all that I have ever printed on the subject of slavery amounts to less than twenty-five pages; till last year to less than seven pages; and much of that occupied in guarding against extreme views. I have never belonged to any Abolition or Anti-Slavery Society, but have always on fit occasions publicly and privately expressed my disapproval of much in the measures and spirit of those to whom the name of "Abolitionists" has been improperly appropriated. I have never preached a sermon on the subject. I have never treated of the subject, except occasionally in an incidental reference, in my instructions in the Seminary. I have never introduced the subject into any of the Church judicatories. I have never participated in any discussion of the subject in the judicatories, when introduced by others, except once in 1845, in the Synod of Cincinnati, and then in support of a paper intended to harmonize the conflicting views in that body, by distinguishing between the slavery which is to be condemned and mere involuntary servitude, which is right or wrong according to circumstances. Such has been my past course in reference to the subject. I do not mention it here in order to claim commendation for it, for I think it doubtful whether it is worthy of commendation, but simply as what is historically the truth.

(3.) I think it is my duty to maintain for myself freedom of opinion and of speech on all questions of public morals, inclusive of that of the moral character of slavery; and that of the place, and time, and measure, and manner, in which I shall discuss such questions, I must myself be the judge, under my proper responsibilities to God, and to my fellow-men in the relations which I sustain to them for any abuse of my right.

These, gentlemen, are my views of slavery, and of all the various questions in relation to it, on which I have supposed that an expression of my views might be desired. They are the views of slavery which I have always held, ever since I have been in the ministry and for years before, and which I have uniformly expressed whenever I have said anything on the subject and the various questions in relation to it. Perhaps the misrepresentations of my views on the subject have produced very little effect anywhere; and this communication may be wholly a work of supererogation; but as the Synods united in the direction of the Seminary are, under the constitution, the bodies which have the supreme control of its affairs, I desire that a copy of this letter be sent to each of them.

I am, reverend and dear brethren, your fellow servant in the gospel,  
E. D. MAC MASTER."

Chicago, Sept. 1st, 1857.

This is a fifth group of facts: let it be remembered.

VI—But the Professors have not an unqualified and profound admiration of the paper on slavery adopted by the Assembly of 1845; and the Directors knew that, and yet appointed them Professors; and the Synods knew it, and yet approved their appointment. How is this?

The question which the paper itself, at the outset, says is the question which the Assembly was called to decide is this: "Whether the holding of slaves is, under all circumstances, a heinous sin, calling for the discipline of the Church," or, in other words, "Do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin, the renunciation of which should be made a condition of membership in the Church?" To the answer in the negative given to this question, in the sense in which the terms of the question were no doubt, understood by the Assembly, I have never had any objection. That is, as I prefer to express it in my own language, "I think that there are many cases where men stand, in

the view of the law and its ministers, in the legal relation of slaveholders, which from various causes they are unable rightfully to terminate, and that, in such cases, while they can not, without immorality, deem, hold, adjudge, and repute their servants to be *chattels* in the hands of their owners, to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever, it is not only their right, but their duty, to hold them, so long as the necessity exists, as their *bond-servants*, and, if need be, as their *involuntary bond-servants*. Of course, in any such case, it is only that which is an immorality, the renunciation of which ought to be made a condition of membership in the Church."

The Professors happen to have upon this point a record, nearly as old as the Assembly's paper itself, which no ingenuity, however perverse, of any special pleader of the Old Bailey class, has been able to wrest. In the autumn of 1845, the Synod of Cincinnati adopted the following resolution, viz: "*Resolved*, That this Synod cordially approve the action of the Assembly, in refusing to make slave-holding, in itself and without regard to circumstances, a bar to Christian fellowship. To this resolution I entered my dissent in the following words. "I dissent from this resolution; because I think that, while there might exist circumstances under which *it would be proper for the Assembly to take such action*, there was no occasion for this in the case in question, and in the connection in which it appears it is exceedingly likely to be misunderstood." In this dissent Dr. Thomas subsequently concurred.

Even at that early day I foresaw that my vote in this case would probably be misrepresented; and hence I chose, in the form of this dissent, to put on record the reasons of my vote. The reasons are two. 1. There was in my opinion no sufficient occasion for this deliverance of the Assembly; because, at that time, as at this time, the truth as to the moral character of Slavery and the duty of Christians to seek its abolition, this being openly impugned in and out of the church, needed reiteration and vindication, quite as much as unreasonable abolitionists seeking unreasonable and wrong decisions, needed an answer to their demands; and because the conscience of slave-holders needed a stimulant, quite as much as it needed an opiate. 2. The action of the Assembly on the question proposed for decision, in the connection in which it appears with much else in the paper which is at best ambiguous and doubtful, was, in my opinion, exceedingly likely to be misunderstood. It was, in my opinion, exceedingly likely to be misunderstood by many slave-holders, seeking a decision of the church which, though in itself right, yet from the connection in which it appears, they might interpret as sanctifying "*slavery*, under the circumstances in which it is found in the Southern portion of our country." It was, in my opinion

exceedingly likely to be misunderstood by perverse and infidel "Abolitionists," so called, seeking occasion to reproach the Church of Christ, and by unreasonable and captious fault-finders in and out of the Church. It was, in my opinion, exceedingly likely to be misunderstood by many intelligent and candid persons, in our own and in other connections, and by many sister churches in our own and in other lands, who desire only the true honour and glory of the Presbyterian Church. Whether all this has so turned out, or not, let history testify. But these opinions of mine are of no sort of consequence in the case now in hand. The only question now in point is, whether I approved the answer of the Assembly to the question proposed. To this question my answer in the *affirmative* is on record in this dissent from the action of the Synod of Cincinnati in October, 1845, and in many other forms of later date. As to much else in the paper adopted by the Assembly of 1845, while, since the explanatory and qualifying deliverance of the Assembly of 1846, I have, with others, quietly acquiesced in this action, yet I have never hesitated to say, on any fit occasion, that I think the paper of 1845 an ill-considered, ill-digested, crude, ambiguous, and in many respects objectionable document; and the Directors of the Seminary have always known that such is my opinion. This is not the place to justify this opinion by an examination of the paper.

This is a sixth group of facts: let it be remembered.

VII.—But in our accusers' searches after knowledge, two *private letters* of one of the Professors have been discovered, and published, which it is alleged, contain proof positive of all the accusations of schismatic schemes, plots, conspiracies, and treasons, which have been made against him and others. What have I to say to this?

Well, I have somewhat to say to this.

First of all, I give extracts from these two letters, including the whole of what they contain on this subject. The passage from the first of these letters is the following.

"There are other difficulties. The men at the South who are leaders (I might say *the hierarchs*) of our church have long since abandoned the old doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, and what, so far as the public authoritative declarations of the church are concerned, is still its doctrine on slavery—that it is a great evil, moral as well as political, social and economical, a violation of the natural rights of man, contrary to the divine law, and the principles and spirit of the gospel, and which the country and the church are under obligation to use all feasible means, wisely, prudently, in all patience and forbearance, to bring to an end. The doctrine now is that slavery is *no evil*, but the system best adapted to the actual condition of mankind in the world, and which, purged so far

as may be of its grosser cruelties of a physical kind, is to be perpetuated. See the writings of Thornwell and Adger of South Carolina, Armstrong of Virginia, Smylie of Mississippi, Stuart Robinson's Critic, and others. This doctrine has been openly and zealously inculcated at the South for ten years past; and now, the way being prepared South and North, *the slave drivers* are determined, with an iron rod over our heads, to force it upon us, and to make it the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church. Any man who demurs at this new doctrine, and ventures to utter, no matter how carefully guarded his language, the old doctrine of the church, is to be ostracised, proscribed, quietly strangled, or if this cannot be done, hunted down and destroyed. This slave-driving domination has never been without injurious effect upon both political and ecclesiastical interests in the so called "Free States." This is our humiliation; and it pains me to say it. But it is needless to delude ourselves on the subject. The question to be soon forced upon us is that of an unquestioning, absolute subjection, to this new doctrine, and a reduction to the condition of abject serfs upon our own soil in all things political and ecclesiastical; or a refusal of this subjection, and the making of a stand against it, on the principles and in the spirit of our christian profession. To this complexion the question is speedily coming, and we had better know it in time to prepare to meet it as we ought. I know well our want of preparation for such an issue; for we have no forces, and no organization even of the few who see the approaching evil. I am deeply convinced of the need of the utmost circumspection in all we say and do. I feel, too, the danger to ourselves, and to the sacred interests which we have so much at heart of an exciting agitation on slavery, or any other one question, subordinate altogether to the great cause of making known the gospel of Christ for the salvation of our fellow-men. The influence of this is likely to be injurious to the general interests of religion, and to the particular interest of a sound, scriptural and christian opposition to slavery. but we cannot submit to the slave-drivers' test and domination in all things; and it remains to be considered what we can and ought to do. These suggestions I have thrown out, rather for reflection and mutual counsel, than that I have any definite measures to propose at present in reference to this aspect of the subject. Our present business, I think, clearly is, to go forward with the greatest possible vigour in the prosecution of measures for building up our Seminary, for the accomplishment of that which is its main object, and which infinitely transcends all side issues and subordinate questions, meeting this question of slavery frankly, kindly, reasonably, where it is forced upon us, but avoiding public controversy on the subject, for which the mind even of our friends generally is in no wise prepared."



The passage from the second letter is the following.

"I mentioned, when I had last the pleasure of seeing you, a subject which ought to engage serious attention and corresponding action. I take it for granted that the ministers and churches of these Synods of the North-West generally, while they do not wish any divisive or violent course in respect to slavery, or any undue prominence given to that subject, are unwilling themselves to be slaves, in bondage, forbidden to speak what they may think right on any or all subjects whatever of public interest, and subject to the domination of cliques of men in other parts of the church who may seek to usurp lordship over them. If they would prevent this, they ought to be aware of the evil and take measures against it. So in respect to our Theological Seminary, among other church interests. We ought not to deceive ourselves. We may rely upon it, that the scheme of our opponents is to get the Seminary put under the Assembly, with the ulterior design of putting into it men who will be sufficiently subservient to our slave-driving rulers and their allies in the so-called free States. This ulterior design will not be avowed till the Synods are inveigled into the measure of a transfer of the Seminary to the Assembly on other grounds. Then the way will be clear to compass their objects and subjugate the whole to this outside and impudent domination. If not forwarned, nine-tenths of every one of the Synods will go for the transfer to the Assembly, without seeing or thinking of the ulterior objects. Now, if this issue is not desired, prompt, efficient and adequate measures ought to be taken to prevent it. One obvious measure is, immediately to communicate with as many brethren as possible who would deprecate this issue, especially those of the greatest influence in each Presbytery, and engage their co-operation to prevent the transfer to the Assembly. There is another measure which, if adopted, would be effective. None will pledge money for the endowment of the Seminary, buildings etc., except men friendly to the Seminary as now constituted. Donors of money have a right to make their own conditions. They may make it a condition in their bonds and notes, that *"the Seminary shall remain under the control of the Synods now united, or which shall become united, in conformity to the provisions of the constitution, in the direction thereof; or of such of these Synods as shall continue to be united therein."* I suggest for your consideration, whether this condition ought not to be inserted in the bond of yourself, Dr. Newkirk, and Mr. Cornell. The bond has not been delivered and is yet in your own power. Do you wish this money, and all the other property you have secured, to go into a concern subjected to the offensive domination referred to?"

Now, on these letters I have somewhat to say.

These letters being exclusively my own, neither the other Professor, nor the Directors, nor the Synods, are in any way responsible for them, except that, since their discovery and publication, they have not withdrawn from me any confidence or support which they had before given me. To this extent they may be responsible.

This most lucky discovery of these *private letters* has furnished, some seem to think, what had been long and diligently hunted for in vain. Lucky discovery! These two private letters are to furnish the post and the beam of the cross,—the *cruz fatalis*,—on which their hapless author is to expiate his guilt, in saying that Slavery is a bad system which ought to be done away; that some men in the church approve it, who ought not; and that we will not have the approval of it as good, and only good, imposed upon us, under pain of being ostracised, proscribed, and either quietly strangled, or, if that cannot be done, openly hunted down and destroyed. Lucky discovery! But let us look a little at these letters.

To an attentive and candid reader these letters sufficiently explain themselves. Being *private letters*, written without any view to general circulation, for careless readers, and especially those who are blinded by pro-slavery prejudices, they may perhaps require a few words of explanation, that their true scope, intent, and spirit, may be understood. Upon them I offer the following remarks.

1. In one of these letters I say, what no man will deny, and what those specially referred to openly avow and glory in, that the men who are leaders of our Church at the South, have long since abandoned the old doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, and what, so far as the public authoritative declarations of the Church are concerned, is still its doctrine on Slavery; and I refer to certain writers in proof of this statement. My reference to the writers named is to them merely as prominent advocates of the new doctrine. It is proper for me to say that, so far as known to me, these gentlemen have not intermeddled at all with the affairs of our Seminary; and these letters do not impute this to them.

2. I say in these letters, that certain other persons and parties, whom I do not name, are attempting to force upon us this new doctrine on slavery, and to make it the doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, under pain if we oppose it, of being ostracised, proscribed, and quietly strangled, or, if that cannot be done, hunted down and destroyed. The state of the case which gave occasion to what is here said, and in reference to which it is said, ought to be distinctly understood. It was this. What the Synods in these free States, north of the Ohio, were doing and proposing

to do, with remarkable unanimity and great promise of success, was to take their Seminary, after the withdrawal from and abandonment of it by the Synods in the slaveholding States whose union with them in its direction had been sought, and, carrying it two hundred miles farther away from any other Seminary of the Church, there to establish and build it up, no one concerned in the movement saying, in connexion with it, one word about slavery. From the moment the movement was known beyond the boundaries of the Synods concerned, first by a newspaper published outside of these Synods, and in a slave State, and then by other newspapers and magazines, speaking in the interest of slavery and on behalf of its rights and immunities in the Church, not only without a shadow of evidence to support the accusation, but with abundant evidence to the contrary, the whole movement was denounced as sectional, factious, schismatic, and its authors set upon with a hue and cry as being "Abolitionists," designing and attempting to set up a thoroughly Abolitionist Seminary, to train young men to agitate, and divide, and destroy the Church, on account of slavery. In behalf of the interest of slavery an attempt was made to wrest the Seminary from our hands, or, if this could not be done, to defeat the whole project of its establishment. Now, Sir, what I say in these letters is, that this was understood, and can be understood, as nothing else than an attempt, with an iron rod over our heads, to force upon us this new dogma concerning slavery, and to ostracise, proscribe, and destroy men, because they reject it, and adhere to the old doctrine of the Church on the subject. This I denounced, Sir, in these letters, and I have no hesitation to denounce it here, as an attempt, in the name of slavery, at *an impudent and odious domination* on our own free soil, to which, for one, I will never consent to submit.

3. The casual remark concerning our having "no forces, and no organization even of the few who see the approaching evil," has reference to forces and organization to oppose this impudent and odious domination; as the whole context shows, and as must be apparent to every man of common intelligence and candour.

4. What is said of it being the scheme of our opponents to get the Seminary put under the Assembly, with the ulterior design of effecting thus by indirection ends which they could not effect directly, there will perhaps be evidence enough of before this Assembly when the business shall have been disposed of.

5. What is said of the General Assembly evidently has reference to the danger of the Assembly's being misled by misrepresentation. That the vast majority of every General Assembly, nearly all, intend to do what they think to be right no one doubts. But I do not hesitate to say, that it is my opinion that any body of men constituted as the General Assembly is, of more than

three hundred men promiscuously gathered from all parts of a wide-spread country, most of them strangers to one another, continuing in session only ten or fifteen days, occupied with multifarious business, and the great majority of whom of necessity can know little of the condition and wants of any particular Seminary, is peculiarly liable, unless forewarned, to be misled by misrepresentation, in a case such as that to which these letters relate.

6. While these letters speak of the schemes of certain men in terms sufficiently decided, and there may be in their phraseology a few expressions the application of which, as a matter of taste and propriety, I do not care to justify, to all candid men the general *animus* of the letters, in respect to any extreme opinions on slavery, or any violent and divisive courses in relation to it, is sufficiently indicated in such passages as these.

“I am deeply convinced of the need of the utmost circumspection in all we say and do. I feel, too, the danger to ourselves, and to the sacred interests which we have so much at heart, of an exciting agitation on slavery, or on any other one question, subordinate altogether to the great cause of making known the gospel of Christ to our fellow-men. The influence of this is likely to be injurious to the general interests of religion, and to the particular interest of a sound, scriptural, and christian opposition to slavery.”

And again; “Our present business, I think, clearly is to go forward with the utmost possible vigour in prosecuting measures for building up our Seminary, for the accomplishment of that which is its main object, and which infinitely transcends all side issues and subordinate questions; meeting this question of slavery, frankly, kindly, reasonably, where it is forced upon us, but avoiding public controversy on the subject, for which the mind even of our friends generally is in no wise prepared.”

With these explanations, Sir, I am perfectly willing that what I have written in these *private letters*, made public by an agency which I need not characterize, shall stand of record, as an expression of my sentiments concerning this attempt, in the name of slavery, at an impudent domination in the Church, and proscription of men for their want of fealty to it. Whatever may be said of the agency by which their publication has been procured, there is not in these letters a statement, or a sentiment, which I am not prepared to reiterate in the presence of this General Assembly, in terms, perhaps in some particular expressions modified, but equally emphatic. On such an occasion, let those peep and mutter who think that this becomes them. The sentiments are such as, on such an occasion, it becomes *me* to utter in clear and unmistakable words.

Such, Mr. Moderator, *is the whole chain of facts*, from the

beginning down to the present time, as indicating the relations of the Seminary to slavery, so far as it has any, all pointing in the same direction. In the face of all these facts, this whole movement for the building up of our Seminary, and the uniting in its direction and support these Synods of the North-West, and thus providing for the training of men for the ministry of the Gospel, to meet the urgent demands of this great field, has been set upon, and through two years and a half perseveringly pursued, with accusations such as those to which I have referred. Without a shadow of evidence to sustain these accusations, and with the whole history of the Seminary, and of the men specially accused, clearly showing the contrary, there has been brought against us, and perseveringly reiterated the accusation, that "it is evidently our design to set up in the North-West a thoroughly Abolitionist Seminary, to train young men to become agitators and destroyers of the peace of the Church"; that we have been engaged in "an unhallowed attempt to divide its counsels and destroy its efficiency"; and that all this we have sought to effect, by concealment, by misrepresentation, by conspiracy, and by fraud; accusations to which I have made no reply whatever. Without one word of comment, all men are left to say by what terms these accusations ought to be characterized. All men are left to say with what reason some, perhaps many, who have given no credit to these grosser accusations, have allowed themselves to believe that the Seminary was likely to be made an agency for the inculcating of extreme opinions concerning slavery and the way in which the Church ought to deal with slavery, which, though not so intended, were likely to disturb her peace and injure her welfare. To disabuse the minds of those who may have had such apprehensions, I have given this historical review of the past course of the Seminary in relation to this subject.

Now, Mr. Moderator, in the face of this whole mass of accumulated evidence which I have here brought forward, in the face of this whole record which I have here exhibited, all going clearly to define the position of the Seminary, and of the men specially accused in their connection with it, to have been that of the Church itself, as determined by its testimonies, and to show our whole course to have been, in reference to the peace and welfare of the Church, prudent, guarded, conservative, an attempt has been made, by the means which I have indicated, to wrest the Seminary out of the hands of those by whom it was founded, and in whose possession it has been from the beginning. This has been done *professedly on the sole ground of our opinions and our course on the subject of slavery, these opinions and this course having been such as I have shown.* This, sir, can be under-

stood as nothing else than an attempt, in the interest of slavery and its rights and immunities in the Church, to wrest the Seminary out of our hands, because we refuse to accept the new dogmas of pro-slaveryism, and adhere to the old doctrine of the Church on the subject. It can be understood as nothing else than an attempt, in the name of that Pro-slavery Power, which has for more than sixty years dominated over the country, seizing upon, and perverting, and prostituting the powers of the government of this great Confederacy of States, ordained for very different ends, to the protection, and perpetuation, and extension of slavery, to come into the Church, and to usurp lordship over it, and to proscribe men, because they refuse to do homage to that Power and to be obedient to its behests.

Now, Sir, in opposition to this attempt thus made, in the name of this Pro-slavery Power, and in behalf of the rights and immunities of slavery, to usurp this lordship in the Church, we take our stand, and upon its claims to this lordship we join issue. With the Church itself from the beginning, we make, and have always made, the discrimination which truth and justice require us to make, between the system of slavery, as defined by the laws of the States where it exists, and good men who stand, in the view of the law and its ministers, in the legal relation of slaveholders, which from any cause, they are unable rightfully to terminate. But we do not think that that system of slavery which defines *the legal status* of men to be the same with that of the soil which they till, or of the mules which they drive, that of *real property*, or of *chattels* to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever, and which authorizes and protects other men in so treating them, has any claim to come into the temple of God, and take hold on the horns of the altar, and find sanctuary there, as a thing so sacred that it must not be touched, possessed of rights and immunities which must not be questioned. Much less is it to be endured, that that Pro-slavery Power, which has so long borne sway over the country, shall come into the Church, and lifting its rod over our heads, proscribe all who refuse to bow down to it, and worship and serve it; and, opposing and exalting itself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, shall sit in the temple of God, showing itself that it is God. Sir, there are more than seven thousand in Israel, there are many seven thousands, who will never submit to that; never, no, never!

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not impute this attempt to establish in the Church the domination of this Pro-slavery Power to this General Assembly. I do not impute it to the Church itself. I do not impute it to the great mass of our brethren in the slaveholding States, of many of whom I know it is

not true. I do not impute it to brethren in the slaveholding States any more than to many in the free States. I impute it to no man who has not, by his own action, made himself justly obnoxious to the charge. What I say is, that this war upon the Seminary, and the men connected with it, has been waged, by the persons and parties by whom it has been waged, be these who they may, in the interest of this Pro-slavery Power, for the rights and immunities of slavery in the Church. I do not stop here to inquire whether all this has been *a mere pretext*, which another interest infinitely smaller has seized upon and used for its own ends, because judging that it was the means by which most successfully an appeal could be made to a morbid state of mind, extensively existing in the country and the Church, and there be raised against us a hue and cry which should overwhelm us. I take the state of the case as this has been made by those who have waged this war upon us. This war has been waged upon us, ostensibly and professedly, in the interest of slavery, and for its rights and immunities in the Church, our opinions and course on the subject being what I have shown. Other interests may have allied themselves with, and still other interests may ally themselves with it, and seek to use it for their own ends. With these other interests we will deal as we shall think fit. But we are not now to have substituted here any other instead of the principal adversary, or any other but the true issue. This war has been waged against us in the interest of this Pro-slavery Power, for the rights and immunities of slavery in the Church, and it is demanded that we shall be ostracised, proscribed, hunted down, and destroyed, because we refuse to acknowledge our fealty to this Power. This is the whole ground, and the only ground which has been alleged, of the accusations against us. They all hinge upon this. They all resolve themselves into and rest in this. No other disqualification has been alleged. It is now too late to hunt up and bring forward other reasons of opposition. This is the ground, and the only ground, on which this opposition has been placed by its authors.

The question then, Mr. Moderator, which is brought, in this affair of our Seminary, before this Assembly, and on which its decision is asked, is this: Shall men, some hundreds of ministers, some thousands of ruling elders, some tens of thousands of members, in regular and good standing in the Church, and who have never been unloyal to the Church, or her true interests and glory, be proscribed, put under the ban, as men unworthy of confidence, in the name of this Pro-slavery Power which thus seeks to lift itself up in the Church and usurp lordship over God's heritage, because they refuse to do homage to that Power, reject its dogmas, and adhere to the old doctrine of

the Church on the subject. This, Sir, is the question upon which, by its action on this affair of our Seminary, this Assembly is asked to give its decision. The parties are recognized ; the issue is joined ; and we await your judgment.

This controversy, Mr. Moderator, is not a paltry and disgraceful wrangle among a few individuals, nor yet among many, over a matter which is of no public interest : nor is it merely the personal rights or interests of a few individuals which are concerned in it. The case is one in which greater principles are involved, and deeper and more wide-reaching interests are at stake, than some perhaps dream of. Many eyes, Sir, are turned upon this Assembly in its action upon this subject, with profound interest, not unmingled with anxiety. The transactions of the last three years which have gone to make up the issue now before you, of however little account personally may be the men immediately concerned in them, for sake of the principles and the interests involved, have challenged, and have engaged, the attention of the whole Presbyterian Church, and of all in other Churches of the land, and of many of no Church, who take interest in such matters. These things, Sir, have not been done in a corner. And now that they are brought to an issue in this high seat of judgment, all men will have knowledge of the case. The true nature of the issue is well understood. This cannot now be evaded, nor disguised under any pretext, nor hidden from the light of the sun. The true nature of the issue is well understood ; and so also will be your judgment upon it. The eyes of the Church and the eyes of the world are upon you in these proceedings. The Muse of History, too, sits among you, taking her notes, and all these transactions, and your judgment upon these transactions, will enter into the history of the Presbyterian Church in this great land, and will be read by your children, and your children's children, to many generations. My desire is that that history may be such as shall do honour to the Church.

I will not pretend to anticipate what the judgment of the Assembly may be. If it shall be erroneous, this will arise from misapprehension of the merits of the case, and from the infirmities incident, even in the wisest and best men, to our fallen nature. It is an article of our faith, that " all councils, whether particular or general, since the apostles' times, *may* err ; and many *have* erred." So may this Assembly err in the present case. If so, we will reverence the Assembly, maintain our loyalty to the Church, and continue to contend as long as we live for the truth. We shall not do this in the spirit of schism, nor of faction ; but in the spirit of sons of God, whom the truth has made free. There is another day after this day, and another age after this age ; and there are other conflicts to be



maintained for the repression of Error and the defence of the Truth. The event is not doubtful. Whatever becomes of us, Truth will triumph in the end. Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again; the eternal years of God are hers: but Error writhes, and dies, amidst her worshippers.

Mr. Moderator, I have now performed, in the best way I could, in the extremely embarrassing circumstances in which I have found myself placed, a duty, which it would have been a great relief to me to have been able to see to be no duty of mine; but a duty to which I seemed to be shut up by the action of others and by the Providence of God. And now, submitting to the Assembly the question, whether it will postpone further action at present, and defer the whole subject to next year, when it may be better understood, I await the event, whatever it may be, without the slightest anxiety on any personal accounts.

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## APPENDIX.

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### THE CONTRAST.

The action of the Assembly in the case of the Seminary is known to the Church, and to the public. That action has appointed as its professor of Theology the chief author of the clamours against the late Professors, and Directors, on account of their opinions on slavery, and against the Synods which sustained them, and three other persons, friends of the accuser of the brethren, as his associates, with Mammon for their Patron.

I said in my speech that, if the Assembly should thus err, this would arise from misapprehension of the merits of the case, and from the infirmities incident, even in the wisest and best men, to our fallen nature. It becomes us now to ascribe to these causes the action of the Assembly. It becomes us to say now what I said before, that "We will reverence the Assembly, maintain our loyalty to the Church, and continue to contend, while we live, for the truth."

I say now, what I have said in my speech, that I do not impute to the late Assembly subjection to the domination of that Pro-slavery Power, whose hand has prevailed in procuring the present result. I do not impute this to the Church. I do not impute it to the great mass of our brethren in the slaveholding States; in that charity which hopeth all things, I desire to believe that in the present case they have been misled by misrepresentation. I impute this to no man who has not, by his own action, made himself justly obnoxious to the charge. But in reference to the party in the Church, let it include few or many, and whom it may, which, acting under the dominion and in the interest of the Pro-slavery Power, has wrested from us this Seminary, it becomes us to use great plainness of speech.

Upon this subject, it may be instructive to draw attention to *the contrast* between the opinions, sentiments, and practices, in relation to slavery, of this Seminary, its late Professors and Directors, and the Synods sustaining them, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the opinions, sentiments, and practices, on the same subject, of another Seminary, its Professors, Directors, and controlling Synods, and between the treatment which these parties have respectively received, and which those who control the affairs of the Church have seemed to consent that they should receive.

The Theological Seminary, at Columbia, South Carolina, was established by the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, is now under the control of the Synods of South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, and has been lately strongly recommended by the Synod of Mississippi to the confidence and patronage of its Churches.

Let us see what are the opinions, sentiments, and practices in relation to slavery, of that Seminary, its Professors, Directors, and controlling Synods.

*The Southren Presbyterian Review* is published at Columbia, the seat of the Seminary, is conducted by an association of ministers, the chief of whom are Professors in the Seminary, and is recognized as the organ of the opinions of themselves and their associates. I quote from the Review, for the purpose of showing their principles and opinions on the subject of slavery.

First, on *the moral character* of slavery.

In an article entitled "NORTH AND SOUTH," in the Review for January, 1850, are found the following passages.

"If any thing has ever been proved and demonstrated again and again, it is **THE LAWFULNESS OF SLAVERY**, whether judged by the Divine Word of Holy Scripture, or tested by the conclusions of human reason."

“Again, it has been proved that the maxim, ‘*partus sequitur ventrem*,’ or that the offspring inherits the status of the parent, is a law of nature, reason, religion, and providence; and that *no man has any rights* but those to which he is born, or which belong to that condition in which God places him by the hand of providence. \* \* \* \* He that is born a slave, therefore, has no right to liberty, and can acquire none, so long as the right of his master to his service stands in the way. That may be forfeited under certain conditions—it may be resigned, or it may be sold to the slave, when he justly and rightly becomes free.”

Again, “Our ears have been so long stunned with the cry of the *evil* of slavery, that the South had almost come to acknowledge it herself. But when we undertake to examine the matter, and ask what is meant by ‘the *evil* of slavery,’ where is it, and what? we can not find it.”

In an article in the Review for May, 1857, from the pen of one of the Professors in the Seminary, we find the following sentences.

“The truth undoubtedly is that slavery, in the circumstances, is undoubtedly *good*, and *only good*. \* \* \* \* \* We say, therefore, to the Colonization men at the North, that what they would have us destroy is not only *not an evil*, but that *it is the only good* there is in the whole affair of negro existence in America.”

“The true and only title of any man to liberty is inheritance, or legal acquisition. The legal maxim is just and right, *Partus sequitur ventrem*; that is, all men have a right to the status in which they are born, with its rights and privileges; and also to whatever else they can legally acquire; if a slave, only the rights of a slave.”

Let it be observed, that the *legal status* of slaves, with its chaste maxim, *Partus sequitur ventrem*, which these divines say, is all to which the slave has any just claim, is, by the laws which define it, either that of *real estate*, or that of *chattels*. These writers, indeed, contend that what the slave laws hold as real property, or as a *chattel*, is not the person of the slave, but the right to his labour. But this is directly in the face of the express language of the laws defining the status of slaves, as well as of the language of universal popular usage in the case. One of these writers admits this. Says he, “It is true that our laws in their phraseology speak of the ‘slaves,’ and not of the simple right of their owner to their labour.” He naively adds, “but this is for the sake of convenience.” These writers plead that there are other laws which recognize the slaves as persons, having personal rights, and that they are in fact so regarded and treated. Certainly, the slaveholders are not so bad as the laws which define the legal status of slaves. In these very essays, from which I have quoted, these dogmas on slavery are qualified and garnished with many humane and Christian sentiments. Nevertheless it is the laws which define the status of the slave which give to slavery its essential character.

On the *perpetuity* of this system of slavery, I quote from this Review the following passages.

In an article of the Review for March, 1849, entitled, "The Christian Doctrine of Human Rights and Slavery," we find the following language.

"Are we, then, asked whether we believe slavery among us will be perpetual? We say, as far as Christianity is concerned, we do not see why it might not be perpetual. \* \* \* We cannot reason that Christianity will operate now as it did of old upon slavery, because new elements have come in. There is the new element of democracy, on the one hand, which may not allow Christianity to work in its own healthful and peaceful way. \* \* \* \* On the other hand, there is the new element of a *difference of race*. Will Christianity ever allow us to manumit here our three millions of Africans, our three millions increased to five or ten millions? Will Christianity ever satisfy us that it is possible for two such dissimilar races to dwell together on equal terms? Or will Christianity and the Providence of God ever point out a way for their removal to their own or some other country? We count it almost profane to hazard one speculation about such hidden things of God."

Another of these divines, of a stouter heart and firmer hand, is, not only "almost profane" enough to speculate, but altogether profane enough, if it be profane, to dogmatize on this question in no doubtful language. In the Review for January, 1850, we find the following sentences.

"We believe the negro race is incapable of an improvement which will qualify it to live on an equality with the white. \* \* \* The only alternative is an entire separation of the races, or *slavery*. The first is impossible; the second becomes a sacred and solemn duty, just, right, and good."

In an article in the Review for July, 1850, from the pen of a highly distinguished Professor of the Seminary, we have the following deliverance.

"That the design of Christianity is to secure the perfection of the race, is obvious from all its arrangements; and that when this end shall have been consummated, slavery must cease, is equally clear. This is only asserting that there will be no slavery in heaven. \* \* \* When the effects of transgression shall have been purged from the earth, and the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, given to the saints, all bondage shall cease. \* \* \* \* The Gospel does not propose to make our present state a *perfect* one; to make our earth a heaven. \* \* \* \* For aught we know slavery may stand in somewhat the same relation to political society, in a world like ours, in which mortality stands to the human body; and it may be as vain to think of extirpating it, as to think of giving immortality upon earth."

These passages, taken from long and elaborate essays to the same effect, may serve to give, to those who may not

otherwise have knowledge of these, some taste of the new dogmas on slavery. Nor are these merely the private opinions and sentiments of individuals, however prominent and influential. These opinions and sentiments have taken form and found embodiment in the public official acts and declarations of at least two of the largest and most influential Synods in the South.

There lies before me an extended testimonial adopted by the Synod of Mississippi, in 1853, on the occasion of the death of the Rev. James Smylie, in which the Synod represents that that gentleman had some years before revolutionized the views of his brethren on the subject of slavery, and lauds him, in high terms of praise, as the real father of the new dogmas on slavery, as being sanctioned by the Bible, and in its own character right, just, and good.

I have also before me a Report on Slavery, adopted by the Synod of South Carolina in 1851, "as its testimony and appeal to all the churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth." The Report is too long for insertion here. I give the following extracts.

"The Scriptures not only fail to condemn—they as distinctly sanction slavery as any other social condition of man. \* \* \* *According to the rule of faith which gives to the Church its being, the relation of master and slave stands on the same footing with the other relations of life. In itself considered, it is not inconsistent with the will of God; it is not sinful. This is as much a doctrine of Christianity as the obligation of obedience to law.*"

This is the *doctrine*. Now for the application of the doctrine in *discipline*.—

"The Church cannot undertake to disturb the relation. The Bible teaches that there are duties growing out of this relation,—duties of the master, and duties of the slave. The Church must enforce these duties upon her own members. Here her jurisdiction stops. As a Church, she must venture to interfere no further; *unless it be to repress the agitation of those who assume to be wiser and purer than the word of God.* \* \* \* \* The members of the Church transcend their sphere, and bring reproach upon the Scriptures as a rule of faith, when they go beyond political considerations, and condemn slavery as essentially repugnant to the will of God. They then corrupt the Scriptures, and are exposed to the malediction of those who trifle with the Divine Testimony."

So then, *the new pro-slavery dogmas are, by the Church authority of this Synod, defined as of faith, and any earnest opposition to them as an offence amenable to the discipline of the Church!*

A Northern Presbyterian paper some time ago challenged us to name any instance in which any of the Judicatories of the

Church had sought to change the doctrine or the action of the Church in relation to slavery. Well, here are two instances. As the acts of two large and influential Synods, they are pregnant instances. It is said that these acts of these Synods have not been seen by our Northern Presbyterian papers, which have been so vigilant and so industrious in taking up and retailing the clamours and calumnies against the men lately connected with the Seminary of the North-West.

One other item shall close these notes and references. As I have not seen the original publication, I give it on the authority of the late Hon. William Jay of New York, a son of Chief Justice Jay, himself for nearly fifty years a distinguished member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, an exemplary Christian, and of irreproachable character in all the relations of life. The item is this: "In the Savannah Republican, 23d March, 1845, C. O'Neal, Sheriff, advertised *eight slaves* for sale for cash, to satisfy a mortgage in favour of '*The Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary of South Carolina and Georgia.*' Jay's Works, p. 474. As the authority is so respectable, and the transaction is only a carrying of the principles of the Seminary into effect, I see no reason to question the authenticity of the account. A gentleman in the late Assembly was at a loss to understand the meaning of the term "*Practical Theology*," as the title of a professorship in one of our Seminaries. This transaction may serve to furnish an illustration of the *practical theology* of the new dogmas on slavery, which are urged upon our acceptance.

Now, I ask all right-hearted Presbyterians, North and South, East and West, and especially the Presbyterians of the North-West, to read, mark, and inwardly digest, the testimonies, which I have here brought together, concerning the opinions, sentiments, and practices, in relation to slavery, of this Theological Seminary at Columbia, its Professors, Directors, and the Synod in whose bosom it is established. I ask them to contrast with these the testimonies which I have brought together, in my speech in the Assembly, concerning the opinions, sentiments, and practices, in relation to slavery, of the Seminary of the North-West, its late Professors, Directors, and the Synods united in its control. I ask them to contrast both these with the public authoritative testimonies in relation to slavery, of the Church, from the beginning down to its latest deliverance on the subject. I ask them to inquire, why it is, that the Columbia Seminary, established under Synodical control, the opinions, sentiments, and practices of whose Professors, Directors, and controlling Synods, are in direct contravention of the authoritative testimonies of the Church on this subject, has not only been allowed to go on in its own chosen course, without molestation

or interference from any quarter, but has enjoyed the confidence and good-will of the Church, and its doctors have received the incense of praises smoking upon every censer in all our tabernacles? I ask them to inquire, why it is, that the Seminary of the North-West, also established under Synodical control, the opinions, sentiments, and practices of whose Professors, Directors, and controlling Synods, have been confessedly in harmony with the public testimonies of the Church on this subject, have been set upon with a hue and cry, on the sole ground of their opinions and course in relation to slavery, the arrangements entered into by these seven Synods of the Church, and their solemn covenant engagements with one another for building up the Seminary, have been broken up, and the Seminary has been wrested out of the hands of those in whose possession it had been from the beginning, and put for safe-keeping into the hands of the men who have originated and joined in these clamours against us. Why this discrimination in favour of a Seminary and its Professors, Directors, and controlling Synods, situated in slave States, and openly maintaining dogmas directly contradictory to the public testimonies of the Church, and against a Seminary, its Professors, Directors, and controlling Synods, situated in free States, and found in every utterance of theirs in harmony with the doctrine of the Church on the subject? Is the vindication of slavery orthodoxy, opposition to slavery heresy? Are we, because we are citizens of free States and utter the sentiments of freemen, to be put under masters?

It is with extreme reluctance and profound regret, that I bring out, in the form I here do, opinions, and sentiments, and practices, on this subject of slavery, which I think are not honourable to the Church. I have known these things, as from time to time, through ten years past, they have come to light, with other things of like bearing of earlier date. I have known these things, and have kept silence. I have kept silence, because I desired peace,—my own peace, I hope, still more the peace of the Church. I have kept silence, because I have always deprecated violent agitation over particular forms of evil, which is so apt to run into exaggerations and extremes, damaging alike to personal character and to the best interests of truth and righteousness. I have kept silence, because I have no aptitudes and no taste for such conflicts. I have kept silence, because I have known something of the manifold complications and difficulties of this whole problem of slavery and the slave population, and because it has long been my settled conviction, that men living in the midst of slavery, and to whom immediately and chiefly it belongs, alone are competent to deal wisely with it, and to devise and execute measures for abating its evils, and effecting ultimately its abolition. Gladly would I have continued to be

silent, as I have been habitually silent concerning the relations of the Church to the whole subject. But when the minions of that Pro-Slavery Power which has, through a long series of years, so prostituted and demoralized the administration of our noble political system, to the protection, perpetuation, and extension of slavery, obtrude themselves into our heritage in these *free States*, and, on our own *free soil*, professedly in the interest of slavery, impudently interfere with us when quietly prosecuting, upon our own field, the work of the Church, and wrest from us an institution established for its service,—then, I say, that the question is no longer about the slavery of the negroes, but whether we ourselves shall be brought in bondage to this impudent and odious domination. Is Liberty,—born of Christianity, baptized in the blood of our fathers, rocked in the cradle of Presbyterianism, amidst the shock of arms in the battles of the old Dutch Republic and on the brave old hills of Scotland, and standing up here, so proudly in the fullness of its strength, in this great land, the land of the free and the home of the brave,—is Liberty to perish at last here among American Presbyterians? This is the question which I ask all right-hearted Presbyterians to ponder well, to lay up in their hearts, and to make the subject of their meditations.

No:—Liberty shall not so perish. Truth and righteousness shall not be so borne down, and their voice smothered. This great wrong against the Church herself shall not be perpetrated for sake of *slavery*, so utterly heterogeneous and alien to our principles, our character, and our spirit, as a people. Let not the enemies of the Presbyterian Church reproach her. Let not the uncircumcised in heart rejoice over her. It may be she sleeps: but her heart waketh. Soon she will hear the voice of her Lord, touching this anomalous and heterogeneous thing, and will arise to vindicate her honour, to reiterate her ancient testimonies, and to renew her labours, to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world.