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Reformation principles
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North America, General Synod
REFORMATION PRINCIPLES EXHIBITED

BEING THE

DECLARATION AND TESTIMONY

OF THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN

NORTH AMERICA.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule; let us mind the same thing."

"Bind up the Testimony, seal the Law among my disciples."

"And they overcame—by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their Testimony."

SIXTH EDITION.

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NEW YORK, May 15, 1806.

THE Presbytery resumed the consideration of the *Draught* of a Testimony with the Amendments. A member was called upon to pray for divine direction. After prayer, the Moderator put the question, Approve or disapprove of the Draught as now amended? The members answered unanimously, Approve.

The Court do therefore approve and ratify this Testimony, as the Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States of North America.

WILLIAM GIBSON, *Moderator.*

JOHN BLACK, *Clerk.*

THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA, being in session in the city of New York, on the 17th day of October, 1848,—

Resolved, That a Fourth Edition of the *Declaration and Testimony* be published, and that the *Book of Discipline* be appended to it.

Attested by

JOHN N. McLEOD, *Stated Clerk.*

THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA, being in session in Cincinnati, Ohio, on the 25th of May, 1870,—

Resolved, That this Sixth Edition of the *Declaration and Testimony* be published.

Attested by

JOHN N. McLEOD, *Stated Clerk.*

DECLARATION AND TESTIMONY.

CHAPTER I.

OF GOD.

1. THERE is one infinite, eternal, self-existent, independent, omniscient, omnipresent, and unchangeable Being, who is the Creator, the Preserver, and the Governor of all creatures which exist.

Deut. vi. 4. The Lord our God is one Lord. Job xi. 7. Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? Ps. xc. 2. From everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Ex. iii. 14. God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. Ps. cxlvii. 5. Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite. 1 Kings viii. 27. Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. Mal. iii. 6. I am the Lord, I change not. Rev. iv. 11. Thou hast created all things. Heb. i. 3. Upholding all things by the word of his power. Ps. ciii. 19. His kingdom ruleth over all.

2. This only true and living God hath, in and of himself, all goodness, glory, and blessedness; is a most pure Spirit, invisible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, most just, most gracious and merciful.

Jer. x. 10. The Lord is the true God ; he is the living God, and an everlasting King. Acts vii. 2. The God of glory. Ps. cxix. 68. Thou art good and doest good. Rom. ix. 5. Who is over all, God blessed forever. 'John iv. 24. God is a spirit. 1 Tim. xi. 17. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. Rev. iv. 8. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. Ps. cxv. 3. He hath done whatsoever pleased him. Eph. i. 11. Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Ex. xxxiv. 67. The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.

3. God is unto himself all-sufficient, deriving no help or glory from any of his creatures ; but manifesting his own glory by them, unto them, and upon them, having sovereign dominion over them, to do to them whatsoever it pleaseth him ; and, by a holy and wise providence, directing and disposing of them, and all their changes and actions, without any violence to their nature, according to the immutable counsel of his own will.

Job xxii. 2. Can a man be profitable unto God? Rom. xi. 36. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory forever. Dan. iv. 35. He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. Acts xv. 18. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Matt. x. 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Acts xxvii. 24. So God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 31. Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Acts ii. 23. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowl-

edge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

4. The One infinite and eternal God subsists in three distinct divine persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, all equal; the same in substance, in power, and in glory.

Matt. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. 1 John v. 7. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are One.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That this world is eternal, or caused by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, without the agency of an intelligent Creator.

2. "That there are more Gods than one.

3. "That God hath not determined by an unchangeable decree, every event which comes to pass.

4. "That God doth not, by a particular providence, govern all his creatures and all their actions.

5. "That it is not criminal to be discontented with any providential dispensation.

6. "That there is no distinction of persons in the Godhead; but that man can demonstrate the impossibility of the existence of three persons in the unity of the infinite and incomprehensible Godhead."

CHAPTER II.

OF MAN.

1. MAN is created with a rational and immortal soul, capable of ascertaining that God his Maker is worthy of being loved, feared, and served ; and he is accountable unto God for all his emotions, expressions, and actions.

Is. i. 18. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Matt. x. 28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Rom. i. 19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them. 21. When they knew God they glorified him not as God. Chap. ii. 6. Who will render to every man according to his deeds. Matt. xii. 36. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

2. Man is a free agent, unrestrained in his volitions by the immutable decree of God, although it is not possible for him in any instance to avoid fulfilling that decree : the divine commandment is the rule of his conduct, and after the death of the body he shall be judged by a righteous God according to his works.

James i. 13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. 14. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Heb. vi. 17. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel. Deut. xii. 32. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it ; thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it. Heb. ix. 27. It is appointed unto men once to die ; but after this the judgment.

3. Man, entirely dependent on God for his being, preservation, thoughts, and works, and bound to perfect obedience to whatever God commands, is nevertheless sinful in his disposition, criminal in every part of his conduct, incapable of ascertaining, without supernatural aid, the extent of his own guilt and depravity, or a method of reconciliation with a holy and just God.

Acts xvii. 28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being. Rom. iii. 19. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Eph. ii. 3. And were by nature the children of wrath. 5. Even when we were dead in sin. 1 Cor. i. 21. The world by wisdom knew not God. Chap. ii. 14. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. Prov. xxix. 18. Where there is no vision the people perish.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That man has no soul distinct from his bodily organization.

2. "That he is necessarily impelled to choose or act as an unconscious machine.

3. "That he can will or act independently of the purpose or the providence of God.

4. "That he is not exposed to punishment from God, on account of his evil disposition and criminal conduct.

5. "That the light of nature is sufficient to direct him to the highest perfection and happiness of his nature."

CHAPTER III.

OF DIVINE REVELATION.

1. THE eternal God can, in consistency with his own glorious perfections, and with the nature of man, make known to the human mind doctrines and facts, which could not have been discovered by any other method.

Is. lxiv. 4. For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. 1 Cor. ii. 11. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

2. God hath, from time to time, made known to men his will, respecting the salvation of sinners, and hath authorized certain persons, qualified for the work, to communicate a Divine Revelation to mankind, specifying the only method of escaping eternal punishment on account of sin, and accompanied with sufficient evidence of its authenticity.

Heb. i. 1. God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. Eph. iii. 9. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.

3. It hath pleased God, in condescension to human wants and weakness, to inspire, and infallibly to guide, chosen men to commit to writing the Rev-

elation of his Will, for the instruction and comfort of his Church in the world.

2 Tim. iii. 16. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 17. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

4. All the books of the Old and New Testaments, and these only, are given by inspiration of God ; they contain a complete system of faith, and a perfect rule for our direction in all the duties of life ; unto these Scriptures nothing is at any time to be added by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.

2 Pet. i. 21. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Ps. cxix. 105. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. John v. 9. Search the Scriptures. Rev. xxii. 18. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

5. Rational arguments, drawn from the miracles which were wrought to attest the Divine Mission of the inspired writers, the fulfilment of prophecy, the sublimity of the doctrines, their divine efficacy, the purity of the precepts, and from the scope of the whole, being to give all glory to God, are useful in opposing infidels, and are sufficient to produce a rational persuasion of the truth of Christianity : But the influence of the Holy Spirit on the heart is necessary to give to any man that full

assurance, and comfortable sense of the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, which is included in a saving faith.

1 John v. 9. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. 1 Thess. ii. 13. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing; because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, (as it is in truth,) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

6. There is a variety in the style and manner in which different parts of the Bible are written: The sacred penmen used means of information, and employed different talents, and peculiar modes of expression; but in all they wrote, they were infallibly guided, as to matter and manner, by the Holy Ghost. Translations may be imperfect; but the genuine text of the Old Testament in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek, is infallible. The Holy Ghost, speaking in the Scriptures, is the supreme Judge in all matters of religion.

2 Pet. iii. 16. In which are some things hard to be understood. Chap. i. 21. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Verse 19. A more sure word of prophecy: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed. Matt. v. 18. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. Is. viii. 20. To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That a Divine Revelation is impossible, or unnecessary.
 2. "That the Old and New Testaments are not the word of God.
 3. "That the Old Testament is not the word of Christ, and of equal authority with the New.
 4. "That there can be any errors in the Bible.
 5. "That any inward light can set aside the obvious meaning of the Scriptures.
 6. "That ecclesiastical authority, the writings, or traditions of the ancients, can be admitted in whole, or in part, as the supreme judge of religious controversy."
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CHAPTER IV.

OF HUMAN REASON.

1. THE exercise of Reason, with respect to Revelation, is lawful and necessary. God addresses man in the Scriptures as a rational creature: the faculty of reasoning is the gift of God; and men are bound to exercise it in searching the Scriptures, in ascertaining all the ideas which the word of God conveys to man, and drawing inferences for the direction of faith and manners from Scripture doctrines; and these inferences, as well as the express words of Revelation, are of divine authority. God hath spoken nothing the full force of which he did not comprehend.

1 Sam. xii. 7. Now, therefore, stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord. Ecces. vii. 25. I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom and the reason of things. 1 Pet. iii. 15. And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. Acts vi. 2. It is not reason, that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.

2. Human reason cannot previously determine what God should or should not reveal. There are in the Scriptures doctrines which unassisted reason could never have discovered; and yet, when revealed, are perfectly intelligible by the human mind.

Is. xl. 13. Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? 1 Cor. i. 20. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? Ps. cxix. 130. The entrance of thy words giveth light: It giveth understanding unto the simple.

3. There are taught in the Sacred Oracles doctrines which human reason cannot fully comprehend. The fact, that they are taught in the Scriptures, is perfectly intelligible. What these doctrines are, and that they are not inconsistent with any other truths, may be ascertained by reason. These doctrines are to be received on the authority of God. There is no perception, of which the mind is capable, more certain, than that God is incapable of mistake or falsehood.

1 Tim. iii. 16. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. Verse 9. Holding the mystery of the faith

in a pure conscience. Tit. i. 1. And the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness. 2. In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised.

4. The veracity of God, and not the reasonableness of any doctrine, is the ground of our faith. It is the work of the gospel to cast down reasonings against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought unto the obedience of Christ.

1 Cor. ii. 5. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 2 Cor. x. 5. Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them.

1. "That reason is the proper standard of religious truth.

2. "That any doctrine contained in the Scriptures is unreasonable.

3. "That there is no incomprehensible mystery taught in the Holy Scriptures."

CHAPTER V.

OF THE FALL OF MAN.

1. MAN was created an intelligent, active being, having a living and immortal soul, and a body which had no tendency to sickness or death. His

principal glory was his having the image of God drawn upon his soul, and this image chiefly consisted in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

Gen. ii. 7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Chap. i. 27. So God created man in his own image. Eccles. vii. 29. God hath made man upright.

2. God created man male and female; and having purposed that this first pair, Adam and Eve, should have a numerous offspring, he appointed Adam the public head and representative of all mankind, and entered into a covenant with him in behalf of himself and all his posterity. In this covenant God promised to the whole human family eternal life and happiness (with the preservation of men in their natural holiness), upon condition of Adam's perfect obedience in his state of probation, and threatened eternal misery (implying the total depravity of their nature), in case of disobedience; pointing out to Adam, at the same time, the *tree of knowledge of good and evil*, as the special sign of his probationary state, and prohibiting him to eat of its fruit.

Gen. i. 27. Male and female created he them. Acts xv. 18. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Gen. i. 28. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. Rom. v. 14. Adam—who is the figure of him that is to come. Gal. iii. 12. And the law is not of faith. But the man that doeth them shall live in them. Gen. ii. 17. In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

3. Adam consented to the terms of this covenant; and having violated the condition of it, by eating the forbidden fruit, involved himself, and all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation, in guilt and ruin.

Rom. v. 18. By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation. 1 Cor. xv. 22. In Adam all die.

4. Mankind are all now, by nature, the children of wrath, conceived in sin, brought forth in iniquity, sunk in total depravity, become mortal in their bodies, subject to disease and pain, incapable of doing any thing spiritually good, in a state of enmity against God, and condemned to endless misery in the world to come.

Eph. ii. 3. And were by nature the children of wrath. Ps. li. 5. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Eph. ii. 1. Dead in trespasses and sins. Rom. v. 17. By one man's offence death reigned. Chap. vi. 23. For the wages of sin is death. Chap. viii. 7. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God: Gal. iii. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That Adam was not a covenant head and representative to all his posterity.

2. "That none of Adam's posterity is esteemed guilty or condemned on account of his first transgression.

20. "That fallen man is not so depraved but he is able to please God, and offer acceptable worship in his own natural strength."

CHAPTER VI.

OF ELECTION.

1. JEHOVAH, according to his own most wise counsel, and for his own glory, hath, from all eternity, unchangeably determined the final state of all his creatures.

Acts xv. 18. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Prov. xvi. 4. The Lord hath made all things for himself.

2. In order to make a glorious display of his own infinite excellences, he hath eternally elected, in Christ Jesus, a definite number of mankind, sinners, unto everlasting holiness and happiness; and in his sovereign pleasure, passing by the rest, he hath, on account of their sins, ordained them to everlasting condemnation.

Eph. i. 4. He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. 11. Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Rom. ix. 22-23. What if God, willing to show his wrath, and make his power known, endured, with much long suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.

3. God did perfectly foreknow all the effects which all the second causes which he appointed should produce. But it is not on account of the foreseen faith or goodness of any man, that God predestinated him to everlasting life.

Ps. cxlvii. 5. His understanding is infinite. Rom. ix. 11. For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. 18. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

4. In the Decree of Election are included all the means necessary to the salvation of sinners, in a manner perfectly consistent with the attributes of God, and the faculties which he hath given to the human mind.

Eph. i. 5. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Ps. cx. 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Rom. viii. 30. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That God created anything without determining what should be its final end and condition.

2. "That election to eternal life is founded upon the foreseen improvement of the means of grace.

3. "That election means no more, in Scripture,

than the choice of some persons, as church members, to external privileges.

4. "That it is unjust in God to choose some sinners to salvation, and leave others, no more sinful than they, to suffer merited condemnation.

5. "That any of the Elect shall be eternally lost, or any except the Elect finally saved."

CHAPTER VII.

OF CHRIST THE MEDIATOR.

1. IT pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus Christ to be the only Mediator between God and man, and to constitute him the public Head and Representative of all the Elect.

1 Tim. ii. 5. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Pet. i. 20. Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Eph. 1. 22. And gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body.

2. Christ the Mediator is the Second Person in the Godhead — the true and eternal God, equal with the Father — having the names and all the perfections of God ascribed to him — the Creator, the Preserver, and Governor of all the creatures which exist; and equally with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the object of the worship both of angels and men.

1 John v. 20. And we know that the Son of God is come — This is the true God. Phil. ii. 6. Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Rom. ix. 5. Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Heb. i. 3. Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power. 6. And again, when he bringeth the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. 8. But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. Rev. v. 11. And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders. 12. Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. 13. And every creature heard I, saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

3. Jesus Christ our Lord is the eternally begotten Son of God ; he is not called the Son of God on account of his office or his human nature, but is naturally, necessarily, and eternally the Son of the Father.

Heb. i. 5. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Prov. viii. 22. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. 23. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. 30. And I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. John i. 14. And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John iii. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

4. The eternal Son of God did, in the fulness of time, assume into an inseparable union with his

Divine Person, a human nature (soul and body), being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

Gal. iv. 4. God sent forth his Son, made of a woman. Heb. ii. 17. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren. Luke i. 31. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. 32. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. 33. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Heb. vii. 26. For such an high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

5. Jesus Christ, as Mediator, is God-man, in one person and two natures, whole, perfect, and distinct, inseparably joined together, without composition or confusion.

1 Tim. iii. 16. God was manifest in the flesh. John i. 14. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Rom. ix. 5. Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Matt. xxvi. 38. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Heb vii. 24. But this man, because he continueth forever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

6. God manifested in the flesh will never cease to be the Mediator; but as the Prophet, the Priest, and the King, shall remain through eternity in full possession of the glory of God, the Head of his body the church.

John xvii. 5. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Heb. i. 3. Being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Rev. xxi. 23. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine on it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Acts iii. 23. A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you — him shall ye hear. Heb. v. 6. Thou art a priest forever. Rev. xix. 16. King of kings, and Lord of lords.

7. Jesus Christ in his human nature was anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure, and thoroughly furnished for executing the work of the mediatorial office, which he voluntarily undertook, having been appointed thereunto by God.

Acts x. 38. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost. John iii. 34. For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. Chap. vi. 57. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That Jesus Christ is no more than a creature.
2. "That the Mediator does not possess the same nature with God the Father.
3. "That the Sonship of Christ is not necessary and eternal.
4. "That the Mediator has not a true body and a reasonable soul.
5. "That the man Christ Jesus could have been influenced by any bias contrary to holiness.

6. "That the Divine nature is not personally united to the human nature.

7. "That the human nature is blended or mingled with the Divinity.

8. "That the human soul of Christ did exist previously to the incarnation.

9. "That Jesus Christ is not a distinct person from the Father and the Holy Spirit.

10. "That God-man, the Mediator, is not entitled to the worship of angels and men."

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1. THE Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, who understands, wills, and acts, in teaching, witnessing, sealing, sanctifying, and comforting.

Luke xii. 12. The Holy Ghost shall teach you. Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit. Eph. iv. 30. The Holy Spirit wherewith ye are sealed. 2 Thess. ii. 13. God hath chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit. John xiv. 16. I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, even the Spirit.

2. The person of the Holy Spirit is naturally and necessarily distinct from the person of the Father, and from the person of the Son: and it is his personal property, that he eternally *proceeds* from the Father and the Son, in a manner which is incomprehensible by man.

1 Pet. i. 2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. John xv. 26. The Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father. Gal. iv. 26. The Spirit of his Son.

3. The Holy Spirit is equal in perfection and glory with God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and equally the object of religious worship; the Author of life, vegetative, animal, and rational, the Preserver and Sanctifier.

Psalm cxliii. 10. Thy Spirit is good. 1 Cor. ii. 10. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 1 Pet. iv. 14. The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. Matt. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Gen. i. 2. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. Job xxxiii. 4. The Spirit of God hath made me. Psalm civ. 30. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth. Job xxxiv. 14. If he gather unto himself his Spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together. Rom. xv. 16. Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That the Holy Spirit is no more than a Divine attribute.
2. "That he is a creature.
3. "That he is essentially inferior to God."

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. GOD, from all eternity, having foreseen the fall of man, by the breach of the covenant of works, and having predestinated some sinners to everlasting life and happiness, did enter into a Covenant of Grace, to deliver them from an estate of sin and misery, and bring them into a state of salvation by Jesus Christ.

1 Thess. v. 9. For God hath not appointed us to wrath; but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Tit. i. 2. In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Is. xlii. 6. And will give thee for a covenant of the people.

2. The Covenant of Grace is an agreement between God, in the person of the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ as the public Head of elect sinners, in which God engages to bestow eternal life and glory upon all the Elect, on condition that Christ shall fulfil all righteousness as their Representative.

Zech. vi. 13. And the counsel of peace shall be between them both. John vi. 57. The living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father. 1 Cor. xv. 22. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23. Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's. Is. liii. 10. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed. 11. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.

3. This is, unto us, a covenant of Promise, in which God, being moved thereunto, not by any

excellency in the creature, but by his own love and grace, promises to all whom Christ represented, all the good things of which they shall have need in the present and future states of existence.

Is. lix. 21. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and forever. Rom. viii. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 2 Cor. i. 20. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

4. All the promises of God to the Elect are made upon condition that Christ shall fulfil the law, and satisfy Divine Justice, as their Substitute, so that the condition, upon which the things promised shall be conferred, is not to be performed by the Elect, but by the Surety; and that same *establishment*, which is to them a Covenant of free Grace, is to him a Covenant of Redemption.

Is. liii. 5. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 10. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Heb. vii. 22. Jesus made a surety of a better testament. Chap. ix. 15. He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which were called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Chap. x. 5. Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not. 9. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O

God. 10. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Christ, once for all.

5. Christ Jesus our Lord, having fulfilled the condition of the Covenant of Grace, has purchased a right to have all the promises applied in their true spirit and design to all his people, and has consequently received from God all fulness, that he might himself dispose of all the promised blessings, as purchased benefits to his spiritual seed.

Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood. Heb. ii. 9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. Chap. i. 2. Whom he hath appointed heir of all things. Luke xxiv. 49. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. 2 Cor. i. 20. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him, Amen. Chap. iv. 15. For all things are for your sakes. Col. i. 19. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. John i. 16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. Matt. vi. 32. For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 1 Cor. iii. 21. For all things are yours. 22. Things present, or things to come, all are yours.

6. Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man, makes of the Covenant of Grace a testamentary dispensation to all his people; and, as by his death he fulfilled what he undertook as our Representative to God, so also he hath sealed and ratified the dispensation of God's grace to man, as his own proper testament, which he ever lives to execute and administer.

Luke xxii. 29. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me. Heb. vii. 22. By so much

was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. Chap. viii. 6. He is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. Chap. ix. 16. For where a testament is, there must also, of necessity, be the death of the testator. 24. For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands — but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Chap. x. 16. This is the covenant that I will make with them — I will put my law into their hearts. 21. And having an high priest over the house of God, 22. let us draw near with a true heart.

7. The Covenant of Grace being formed with Christ as a Federal Head, all the Elect are in him, as their Representative, a party with God in the covenant, and to this each individual shall consent, when effectually called, to choose the Mediator as his Representative in particular; every true believer has to say, God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

Is. lv. 3. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

8. Every blessing, which God promises to bestow upon believers, and every thing which they receive in time, and through eternity, comes through the channel of the Covenant of Grace, and is purchased for them by Christ's obedience unto the death; nevertheless, the grace of God, as well as that of Christ, shines forth in our salvation, inasmuch as the Saviour himself is the *gift* of God to man, and the *evidence* of God's infinite mercy, grace, and love.

1 Cor. iii. 21. Therefore let no man glory in men; for all things are yours. 23. And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. 2 Cor. i. 20. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him, Amen. John iii. 16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Rom. v. 21. Even so might grace reign through righteousness.

9. The goodness of the Elect is not the cause of their being taken into this covenant, neither is faith, repentance, sincere obedience, nor any other thing, except the righteousness of the Surety, the condition of it; but God has promised, in this covenant, to bestow on all the Elect, faith, repentance, and holiness, as well as happiness; and Christ, their glorious Head, enables them to believe, repent, and live a life of sincere godliness.

Tit. iii. 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. 6. Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. 7. That being justified by his grace we should be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life. Jer. xxiii. 6. This is the name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness*. Phil. i. 29. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Heb. xii. 2. Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That Christ is not the Representative of any definite number of mankind.

2. "That God has formed no covenant with Jesus Christ as our public Head and Saviour.

3. "That there are, besides the Covenant of Works, two distinct covenants; *one*, a Covenant of Redemption made with Christ; and the *other*, a Covenant of Grace made with us, *distinct* from the Covenant of Redemption.

4. "That Faith is the condition of the Covenant of Grace.

5. "That God's gracious promises are suspended upon conditions to be performed by man.

6. "That God promises any favor to sinners in any other way than through the purchase of Christ."

CHAPTER X.

OF CHRIST'S SATISFACTION.

1. IN every display of his grace, God preserves the lustre of his holiness and justice. The harmony of his attributes necessary to the eminence of his perfection, requires that a complete satisfaction be made for all the sins of those who shall be saved.

Rom. v. 21. Grace reigns through righteousness. Psalm lxxxv. 10. Mercy and truth are met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Heb. ix. 22. And without shedding of blood is no remission.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ, as the public Head of his Elect, assumed a human nature, perfectly holy, in which he, in the room of his people, fulfilled the law, and suffered its penalty; making a perfect

atonement for all their sins, by offering himself as a sacrifice unto God.

Heb. x. 5. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. 9. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. 14. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Chap. vii. 26. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

3. Christ did not in any sense suffer for the sins of all mankind, nor did he lay down his life to make an atonement for an indefinite number of sinners. There is indeed an infinite sufficiency in his sacrifice to save the whole world, had it been designed to produce that effect; but in the purpose of God and in the undertaking of Christ, it was not contemplated that he should make atonement for any except those who were elected in him to everlasting life: these only he represented, and these only shall be saved through his redemption.

John x. 14. I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep. 15. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 26. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them. 28. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. 29. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30. I and my Father are one. Is. xlii. 2. The Lord is well pleased, for his righteousness' sake he will magnify the law and make it honorable. Rom. iii. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation. Acts xx. 28. The church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. John xvii. 9. I pray not for the world, but for them which

thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10. And all thine are mine, and mine are thine. Rev. v. 9. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

4. The reprobate world, by means of their connection with God's Elect, who live among them, or may descend from them, are partakers of some benefits which flow from Christ's death; the gospel Revelation meliorates the state of society; Divine judgments are sometimes averted for the sake of the saints; the peace and prosperity of nations are furthered by the providence of God over his people; benevolence and temperance are promoted by ecclesiastical discipline; the world is continued under its present economy until all the Elect are brought to salvation: these and similar benefits, of which the ungodly partake, are necessary consequences of Christ's purchase and care of his church, foreseen by God, in forming the system of grace, having been predestinated from eternity.

Is. xlv. 1. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before thee. 2. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight. 3. And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches. 4. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect. Matt. v. 13. Ye are the salt of the earth. 14. Ye are the light of the world. Chap. xiii. 29. But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Is. lxxv. 8. Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sake, that I

may not destroy them all. Matt. xxiv. 22. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened. Jer. xxix. 7. And seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. Gen. xxxix. 5. The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake. Gal. vi. 10. As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Gen. xviii. 26. And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. Psalm lxxv. 3. The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear up the pillars of it. Heb. xi. 7. By faith, Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house. Gen. ix. 11. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. Is. vi. 13. As a teil-tree, or as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, so the *Holy Seed* shall be the *substance* thereof.

5. Christ has redeemed all the Elect, soul and body, from the curse of the Law, and has purchased for them all the comforts promised in God's word; and every believer has a new covenant right, through the precious blood of Christ, to every thing necessary for body and soul, in time and through eternity.

Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood. 1 Cor. vi. 19. What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?—and ye are not your own, 20. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. xv. 44. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. 45. The last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Ver. 21. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the

dead. 2 Cor. i. 20. For all the promises of God in him are yea. 1 Tim. iv. 8. Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Matt. vi. 11. Give us this day our daily bread. 31. Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32. For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33. And all these things shall be added unto you. Rom. iv. 13. For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 16. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed—which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. 1 Cor. iii. 22. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours. Acts ii. 46. Did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. 1 Tim. iv. 3. Meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 4. For every creature of God is good—if it be received with thanksgiving: 5. For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. Deut. xxviii. 5. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. 1 Cor. x. 31. Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Heb. xi. 6. But without faith it is impossible to please him.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That God saves sinners without any atonement.
2. "That Immanuel died merely as a martyr.
3. "That Christ died equally for all mankind.
4. "That Christ died for no person in particular, but that the atonement is indefinite.

5. "That the sacrifice of Christ is not a perfect and complete satisfaction to Divine Justice, and fully adequate to our eternal redemption.

6. "That Jesus Christ did not purchase temporal benefits for believers.

7. "That Christ purchased any benefit for the reprobate."

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE GOSPEL OFFER.

1. THE Gospel is the Revelation, which God has given to man, of the plan of salvation by a Redeemer: this is glad tidings, worthy of all acceptance by sinners.

Acts xv. 7. That the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe. 1 Tim. i. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

2. Preaching the Gospel consists in the offer of salvation through Christ to sinners, accompanied with such an explanation of the various parts of God's word as may tend to persuade men to receive Christ as a Saviour, and to live and walk in him.

2 Cor. v. 20. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you; we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God. Matt. xxviii. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Is. lv. 1. Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. 2. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread,

and your labor for that which satisfieth not? 3. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live.

3. The Gospel offer is not a declaration to any individual sinner, that his particular name is in the Book of Life; it is not immediately founded upon the decree of election, but upon the commandment of God, authorizing the minister of the gospel to offer Christ and all his benefits to sinners, as such, however aggravated their crimes may have been, accompanied with information that every one who accepts the offer shall be saved.

Deut. xxix. 29. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us. Mark xvi. 15. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Acts ii. 22. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth — 23. Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. 38. Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; 39. For the promise is unto you and to your children. 40. Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

4. Preaching the Gospel does not consist in promising salvation to all who hear it, or in affirming that Christ has redeemed each of them; but in a free and full offer of a Saviour to every individual, declaring that he who believeth shall be saved, and he who believeth not shall be damned; there is no inconsistency between the doctrine of particular redemption and an unlimited Gospel offer.

John x. 15. I lay down my life for the sheep. 26. But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep. 37. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; 38. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him. Matt. xxii. 4. All things are ready, come unto the marriage. 12. How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? 14. For many are called, but few are chosen. John iii. 36. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. Rev. xiv. 4. These were redeemed from among men. Mark xvi. 15. Preach the Gospel to every creature.

5. Every assertion contained in the Gospel is true, independently of man's works or faith, and every promise of the Gospel shall be fulfilled, because God is true; the fulfilment of the promise depends on Christ's righteousness as the only condition, and all the blessings promised shall be distributed precisely in the order and connection in which the promises are made, to all for whom Christ suffered, and upon whom he bestows saving faith.

Ps. xxxiii. 4. For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth. Heb. x. 23. He is faithful that promised. Chap. ix. 15. And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. Joshua xxi. 45. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That the Gospel is a new and more easy Law, which, accommodated to human depravity, promises salvation, upon condition of faith and repentance, as constituting the proper title to its blessings.

2. "That eternal life is promised to any sinner, without respect to faith in Jesus Christ.

3. "That the Gospel is not to be preached to sinners, as such.

4. "That the Gospel offer consists in declaring to sinners, that Christ has redeemed each of them in particular.

5. "That the unlimited offer of the Gospel is inconsistent with the doctrine of particular redemption."

CHAPTER XII.

OF REGENERATION.

1. THE effectual application of the Holy Spirit is necessary to render any sinner a partaker of the spiritual blessings purchased by Christ.

Rom. viii. 2. The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 9. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 1 Cor. ii. 14. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.

2. The Holy Spirit applies the benefits of redemption to all the Elect of God, renewing the soul after

the image of God, enlightening the understanding, and directing the affections of the heart to God in Christ Jesus.

1 Cor. ii. 10. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. John xiv. 26. The Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance. Rom. viii. 6. To be spiritually minded is life and peace.

3. Regeneration is the infusion of a new principle of life, by the Holy Ghost, on account of Christ's atonement, into an elect soul, previously dead in trespasses and in sins; in order to enable the sinner to embrace the gospel offer and to become united to Christ by faith.

Tit. iii. 4-7. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

4. The human soul, although in its nature an active spirit, is absolutely incapable of contributing to its own regeneration; but, in relation to this change, is as passive as it was in its own creation.

John iii. 3. Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Eph. iv. 24. The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. John iii. 8. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. Eph. ii. 5. Even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us, together

with Christ. 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast, 10. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.

5. No previous discipline, of any kind whatever, can so prepare the sinful soul as to give unto it any bias toward holiness; regeneration is supernatural and instantaneous.

James i. 18. Of his own will begat he us. Prov. xvi. 1. The preparations of the heart in man are from the Lord. John i. 13. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That Regeneration is no more than the influence of a rational argument producing moral suasion.

2. "That Regeneration is no more than baptism by water rightly administered.

3. "That any preparatory work can predispose the soul for Regeneration.

4. "That Regeneration is not a blessing of the covenant of grace, purchased by Christ.

5. "That the soul is active in its own Regeneration.

6. "That the influence of the Holy Ghost in Regeneration is dependent upon the exercise of man's free will."

CHAPTER XIII.

OF FAITH.

1. God hath purposed that union with Christ in his righteousness should be established through Faith. The Redeemer hath provided by his death for having the grace of Faith bestowed upon the Elect, in order to unite them to him; and the Holy Spirit, accordingly, regenerates each of Christ's ransomed ones, enabling them to receive Jesus Christ by Faith, as their public Head and only Saviour.

Rom. iii. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. 26. That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth. Phil. i. 29. Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ — to believe on him. Acts xiii. 48. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. 2 Cor. ii. 13. Having the same spirit of faith — we also believe.

2. Faith is the first and immediate act of the regenerate soul, under the powerful influence of the Holy Ghost, embracing Christ as offered by God in the gospel to sinners.

John i. 12. But as many as received him — even to them that believe on his name. 13. Which were born — of God. Eph. ii. 5. When we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. 8. For by grace ye are saved through faith. 1 Cor. xii. 13. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body. Gal. iii. 26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 1 John iii. 23. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. Zech. xii. 10. And I will pour upon the house

of David the Spirit of grace, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn.

3. The infinite sufficiency of Christ to save, the freeness of the gospel offer, the unlimited extent of the invitation to come to him for salvation, the authority of God commanding all to receive him, and the infallible promise of salvation to as many as do receive him, constitute the proper ground of Faith.

Heb. vii. 25. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him. Is. lv. 1. Come ye, buy and eat—without money and without price. 7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him. Rev. xxii. 17. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. 1 John iii. 23. This is his commandment, that we should believe. Chap. v. 13. These things have I written unto you that believe, that ye might know that ye have eternal life.

4. The proposition to which God demands the sinner's assent is true, independently of man's belief. It is not that he shall have eternal life in Christ; but that Christ and salvation are freely offered to him. True faith, however, although it implies necessarily an assent to this proposition, chiefly consists in embracing the gospel offer, and thus appropriating the salvation which it contains.

John viii. 26. He that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. 46. And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? Chap. vi. 64. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from

the beginning who they were that believed not. Chap. vii. 37, 38. Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Chap. vi. 69. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God. Rom. x. 10. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. John vi. 53. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

5. Every true believer shall most certainly be saved, but an assurance that he is in a state of grace, and shall be saved, is not inseparably connected with true Faith in every believer's heart; nevertheless every Christian may, in the proper use of means, attain to it, and it is his duty to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure.

Rom. viii. 1. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. Ps. lxxvi. 6-10. I commune with mine own heart. Will the Lord cast off for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity. 2 Pet. i. 10. Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

6. It is dangerous for sinners to persuade themselves that they are interested savingly in the promises of the gospel without solid ground for their assurance. No man may conclude that he is in a gracious state and shall be saved, without a knowledge of the marks of grace described in the Scriptures, a consciousness that he possesses these marks, and an application of the appropriate promises in

which God declares that such persons shall be saved.

Jas. ii. 20. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves: Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 1 John iv. 13. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. Rom. viii. 38, 39. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7. The want of this assurance evidences a criminal neglect of self-examination and a deficiency in spirituality, but is not unbelief, unless it arises from doubting God's promise of perseverance in grace: unbelief consists in rejecting the testimony and offer of God, not in doubting of the exercise of a man's own heart: the testimony of God is infallible, but the testimony of the soul respecting its own state is often doubtful and false.

2 Cor. xiii. 5. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you? 2 Pet. i. 8, 9, 10. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Is. l. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Rom. iv. 20, 21. He staggered not at the prom-

ise of God through unbelief — being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform. Psalm lxxxviii. 14. Lord, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me? 15. While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted. 16. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me. Psalm lxxiii. 13. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. 22. So foolish was I and ignorant. 23. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee. 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.

8. The strength of Faith is ascertained by its *fruits* — the love, the zeal, the holiness, the faithfulness it produces; and not by the *confidence* which a man may have of his being in a safe state. We often perceive those who are truly pious and faithful, possessed with doubts and fears respecting themselves, while the careless, the presumptive, and the enthusiastic, appear full of assurance that they are the favorites of heaven.

Matt. xv. 22. And behold a woman of Canaan cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David. 23. And he answered her not. 25. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs. 27. And she said, Truth, Lord: Yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28. Then answered Jesus and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith. Is. l. 11. Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled: this shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow. Matt. vii. 22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? 23. And then will I profess unto them, I never

knew you. James ii. 18. Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Heb. ii. 14. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. 15. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That an unregenerate man can believe to the saving of his soul.

2. "That any unbeliever shall be saved.

3. "That Faith is no more than a rational conviction of the authenticity of the Sacred Scriptures.

4. "That Faith is no more than the assent of the human mind to the truth of the speculative doctrines of the Scriptures.

5. "That Faith consists in a man's persuading himself that he has been elected to everlasting life.

6. "That Faith consists in a man's persuading himself that he has been redeemed by the death of Christ.

7. "That the appropriation of Christ, as he is offered in the gospel, is not essential to faith.

8. "That a full assurance of salvation is inseparably connected with saving faith, so that a believer cannot be without it.

9. "That fear respecting the piety of a man's own heart is the sin of unbelief, or the same with rejecting the testimony of God concerning his Son."

CHAPTER XIV.

OF JUSTIFICATION.

1. GOD did from eternity decree to justify the Elect in Christ; and Christ did in the fulness of time die for their sins, and rise again for their justification; nevertheless, they are not justified until they are united to Christ by faith.

Rom. viii. 30. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified. Chap. iv. 25. Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Chap. iii. 26. That he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. 28. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith.

2. Every one of God's Elect is, in the time appointed in the council of peace, apprehended of Christ by his Spirit, as one of his redeemed children; is regenerated, and thereby enabled to embrace the Saviour; and thus through faith becomes one with Christ in the covenant of grace, and acknowledging Jesus as his head and representative, is justified from all his sins.

John vi. 37. All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. Phil. iii. 9. The righteousness which is of God by faith. 12. That for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. John i. 12. Them that believe in his name. 13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Eph. ii. 5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. 8. By grace ye are saved through faith.

3. Justification does not make a person virtuous any more than condemnation makes a person criminal; it is a legal sentence, declaring the sinner acquitted from the guilt of sin, although the sinner, personally considered, is ungodly; yet being united to Christ, he has a perfect righteousness imputed to him, and thus, by an act of God's free grace, all his sins are pardoned, and he is received, as righteous in Christ the head, to the full favor of God.

Rom. viii. 38. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Chap. iv. 5. Believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly. Chap. iii. 22. The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe. Chap. iv. 6. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7. saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered.

4. No sinner can be justified in the sight of God on account of any merit in his faith or in his works; but the believer, having Christ's perfect righteousness imputed to him, is perfectly justified at once; this sentence, declaring him righteous in the surety, can never be reversed, all his future transactions notwithstanding.

Rom. iv. 4. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt. 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. 6. Unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. 8. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Chap. v. 8. While we were

yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9. Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved. Chap. viii. 1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

5. The Redeemer has purchased a perfect right to the justification of every individual for whom he became surety; possessing this right, he unites the sinner to himself through faith, in order to have him justified; the elect sinner, embracing the Saviour by faith, has then, and not till then, in his own possession a full and perfect title to the pardon of all his sins, to be received into the favor of God, to be delivered from the law as a covenant of works, and to be sanctified and glorified.

Rom. iv. 25. Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Phil. i. 29. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ — to believe in him. Heb. xii. 2. Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith. Rom. iv. 24. But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe. John iii. 18. But he that believeth not is condemned already. 36. The wrath of God abideth on him.

6. The union of a believer with Christ is not merely an agreement with the principles of religion and a love to the Saviour, which may be termed a *union of sentiment and affection*, but consists principally in the *oneness* of a person with his representative: it is upon the principle of this *representative oneness*, that the believer is in law perfectly entitled to salvation.

1 Cor. xii. 27. Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. Gal. iii. 28. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. Chap. ii. 20. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live;

yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Rom. v. 18. Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 2 Cor. v. 21. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

7. Those who are justified may sometimes suffer from doubts and fears, because their sanctification is not in this life complete; but they cannot fall into condemnation; it would be an act of distributive injustice in God to condemn a justified person to eternal misery; and yet the grace of God reigns, through righteousness, in our justification, inasmuch as he established the covenant of grace, accepted a substitute for our sins, provided his own beloved Son as that substitute, and bestowed upon us the grace of *faith in Christ* for justification.

Psalm xliii. 5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? John v. 24. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation. Rom. viii. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. Chap. iii. 24. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness through the remission of sins. 26. That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That any of Adam's race is justified from eternity.

2. "That men are justified before God, either in whole or in part, on account of a righteousness wrought in them, or works done by them.

3. "That a man may be justified while an unbeliever.

4. "That faith itself is the ground of our justification.

5. "That there is any inconsistency between the doctrine of justification by imputed righteousness and divine grace.

6. "That Justification is incomplete in the present life.

7. "That it would be no act of distributive injustice to punish believers eternally, Christ's atonement and their own faith notwithstanding."

CHAPTER XV.

OF ADOPTION.

1. ALL those that are justified, God is graciously pleased, in and through his only Son Jesus Christ, to take into his family, and bless with the adoption of sons; by which they are admitted to an intimacy with God, have his name put upon them, and receive the spirit of adoption. They have a special interest in God as a gracious Father, and enjoy liberty of access to the throne of grace with boldness. They are sealed to the day of redemption,

and made partakers of the various privileges of God's children here, and their inheritance hereafter.

1 John iii. 1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Gal. iv. 4, 5, 6. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Rev. iii. 12. And I will write upon him my new name. 2 Cor. vi. 18. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Eph. i. 13, 14. In which ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

2. All the Elect, and they only, are, in their respective times of love, adopted into the family of God. The adoption of saints under the Old Testament dispensation, was as perfect as that under the New. They were, however, treated as children under age. Still they were children. Under the New Testament, their service is more spiritual and reasonable. God bestows his Spirit more abundantly—gives more knowledge of, and intimacy with himself—admits equal access from every part of the world—allows greater boldness in approaching him, and calls to more direct and immediate views of the spiritual inheritance.

Eph. i. 5. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Is. lxiv. 8. But now, O Lord, thou art our Father. Gal. iv. 1-3. Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but he is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. Heb. vii. 19. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. Rom. xii. 1. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Psalm lxxii. 17. Men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. 2 Cor. iii. 18. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

3. Justification and Adoption, although inseparably connected, are nevertheless distinct from one another. They are both acts of God's free grace — they are both performed at once, and never repeated — they both spring from the mere good pleasure of God, — and they both give a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. Believers only are the subjects of both, and the instrumental cause in both is faith. In the economy of salvation, while they both are the act of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, yet are they more immediately the act of God the Father.

Rev. ii. 17. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving

he that receiveth it. Tit. iii. 7. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Eph. i. 5. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Jer. iii. 19. And I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me. Gal. iii. 26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Zech. xiii. 9. I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.

4. Justification, however, has respect to those who were guilty, and in a state of condemnation, but whose sins are now pardoned, and their persons accounted righteous. Adoption respects those who were in a state of alienation — strangers to God and to the household of faith — of the family of Satan, and heirs of hell: but who, by this gracious act, are brought near unto God — advanced to the high honor of being made the children of God, the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty — have a right to the protection of his providence — the support of his bounty — the ordinances of his grace — the enjoyment of his fellowship, and a right to God himself. They are placed in his family, and are made heirs of all the promises, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, of all the blessings of his purchased redemption. The right conferred in Justification, is a right of purchase, sustainable in law; but that conferred in Adoption, is a right of actual inheritance.

Eph. ii. 3. And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 1 Cor. vi. 11. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in

the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Eph. ii. 12, 13. That 'at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Rom. viii. 17. And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Gal. iv. 7. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Ps. xvi. 5, 6. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That men are not, by nature, estranged from God, and of the family of Satan.
2. "That visible membership constitutes the adoption of sons.
3. "That Adoption is merited by the creature, and not an act of God's free grace.
4. "That ever the sonship, conferred in Adoption, will or can be annulled by God."

CHAPTER XVI.

OF REPENTANCE.

1. BELIEVERS, although in justification they are delivered from the precept and penalty of the law

as a covenant of works, are still indispensably bound to yield a perfect obedience to all God's commandments, as the rule of life and standard of holiness.

Rom. vi. 14. For ye are not under the law, but under grace. Chap. vii. 6. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit. Chap. iii. 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law.

2. Christians are not entirely free from innate corruption, while they remain in this world; but do daily break the commandments of God in thought, word, and deed.

Psalm li. 3. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. cxix. 96. I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy command is exceeding broad. Rom. vii. 23. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

3. Divine grace influences all who are regenerated and justified in Christ, to hate sin, to love the law of God, to strive against indwelling corruption, and, pressing after perfect holiness of heart and of life, to *repent* of all their transgressions.

Rom. viii. 2. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Chap. vii. 22. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. 24. Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25. I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord: So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God.

4. Repentance is a saving grace wrought by the Holy Spirit in all believers. They are enabled to understand and lament the depravity of their own hearts — they mourn on account of their weakness and sinfulness — they love God, and esteem it happiness to live righteously and godly. The exercise of the grace of repentance chiefly consists in turning from sin unto God through Jesus Christ, with that *loathing* of sin and *thirsting* for holiness, which God by his grace produces in the souls of the saints.

Acts xi. 18. Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. Jer. xxxi. 19. Surely after that I was turned I repented, and after that I was instructed I smote upon my thigh. Ezek. xxxvi. 31. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and for your abominations. 2 Cor. vii. 11. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal. Jer. xxxi. 18. Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.

5. Unconverted sinners may, and often do, exercise a natural Repentance. Considering sin in general as the cause of misery, and particular crimes as procuring dishonor, or pain, or loss, they are sorry for sin, as it is an obstacle to the happiness which they desire; but they have no hatred of it as the opposite of holiness, or as dishonoring to God.

Matt. xxvii. 8. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself. 2 Cor. vii. 10. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

6. Evangelical Repentance implies union with Christ and true faith, but is not the ground of pardon, although the exercise of it precedes the joy which intimations of a gracious pardon communicate to the soul.

Zech. xii. 10. And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn. Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Rom. iii. 28. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith. Luke x. 3. Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. Acts iii. 19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. Psalm li. 1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. 12. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That a believer is under no law as the rule of life.

2. "That a saint is so perfect in this life as to have no sin of which he should repent.

3. "That Repentance is the ground of pardon.

4. "That an impenitent man should believe that his sins are pardoned.

5. "That an unbeliever can exercise evangelical Repentance.

6. "That a true believer can be destitute of the grace of Repentance."

CHAPTER XVII.

OF SANCTIFICATION.

1. THE dignity as well as the happiness of man, consists in the equable improvement and perfection of all his powers and faculties, and in contemplating, loving, serving, and enjoying his God.

Rev. iii. 17. Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. 18. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. 1 Cor. xiii. 10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Phil. iii. 8. And I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. 12. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. 14. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

2. The Holy Spirit, according to the promise of the Father, is commissioned by Jesus Christ, the administrator of the Covenant of Grace, to sanctify justified sinners, and to prepare them for heaven.

Luke xxiv. 49. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. John xiv. 26. But the Comforter, which is the

Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name, he shall teach you all things. Chap. xv. 26. But when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father. Chap. xvi. 13. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. Col. i. 12. Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

3. Sanctification is a work of God's grace, in which the Elect are, through the agency of the Holy Ghost, applying the spiritual benefits of Christ's purchase, renewed in the whole man after the image of God; and having all saving graces put into their hearts, these graces are exercised and strengthened, so that sanctified persons do more and more die unto sin and live unto righteousness.

1 Pet. i. 2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit. John xvi. 15. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you. Col. iii. 10. And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. John i. 16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. Is. xl. 31. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. Gal. ii. 19, 20. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 2 Cor. iv. 16. For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

4. The moral law is the declaration of God's will to man, binding him to perpetual and perfect con-

formity thereto, both in disposition and behavior. Although no man, since the fall, can attain to justification or life by the law, it is of use to all men, to inform them of the holiness of God, of their own duty, of the perfection of Christ's obedience in the room of sinners; and it is the standard of Sanctification.

James iv. 12. There is one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy. Ps. xix. 7. The law of the Lord is perfect. Heb. iv. 12. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Gal. iii. 21. For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. Rom. viii. 3. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh. Chap. vii. 10. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. 12. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. 1 Tim. i. 8. But we know that the law is good if a man use it lawfully. 1 John v. 3. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous. Rom. vii. 7. Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law. 22. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

5. Man, before the fall, was upright in his disposition, and able to keep the commandments; but no unregenerate sinner can do anything which is spiritually good, or acceptable to God. Nevertheless, all men are under obligation to yield obedience to the divine law in all its precepts and in its full extent; neither does the total depravity of the sinner,

nor the complete justification of the believer, in any degree diminish that obligation.

Eccles. vii. 29. God hath made man upright. Gen. i. 27. So God created man in his own image. Rom. viii. 7, 8. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Gal. iii. 10. For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse, for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Rom. iii. 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: Yea, we establish the law. 1 Cor. ix. 21. Being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ. Eccles. xii. 13. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

6. Good works are performed from a principle of faith and love, and are agreeable to the divine law; they are acceptable to God and useful to man; but they have no merit, neither do they procure pardon or eternal life. They are necessary in the Christian character to manifest the truth of grace in the soul, to strengthen assurance, to edify fellow Christians, adorn our profession, silence adversaries, and to glorify God who hath created us in Christ Jesus unto good works.

2 Cor. ix. 8. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. Gal. v. 6. Faith which worketh by love. Rom. xiv. 18. For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men. Luke xvii. 10. When ye shall have done all those

things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do. Rom. iii. 27. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. Eph. ii. 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast. James ii. 20. Faith without works is dead. 2 Pet. i. 10. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. Matt. v. 16. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Tit. ii. 10. That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. 14. A peculiar people, zealous of good works.

7. Sanctification is inseparably connected with Justification; but is distinct from it. By Justification the sinner is acquitted from condemnation; by Sanctification he is rendered holy and prepared for the happiness of heaven. Justification is complete at once and equal in all believers; Sanctification is neither equal in all, nor perfect in any, while in this life. Nevertheless, all who are justified shall be completely sanctified. At death, the soul, separated from the body, is made perfect in holiness.

2 Cor. v. 17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Rom. viii. 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 Thess. ii. 13. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit. Job i. 8. Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth? Rom. vii. 19. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. 21. When I would do good, evil is present with me. Phil. i. 6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Heb. xii. 23. The spirits of just men

made perfect. Eph. v. 27. A glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. " That Sanctification is not necessary to the happiness of man.

2. " That Sanctification is not a supernatural work of God's Holy Spirit.

3. " That any man can will or effect his own Sanctification without divine grace.

4. " That Christians by their good works may merit or procure the favor of God.

5. " That the works of an unregenerate man can be acceptable to God.

6. " That believers are not under obligation to love and obey the law of God as the rule of duty.

7. " That good works are necessary.

8. " That the law of God is not the criterion of Sanctification.

9. " That any man on earth is completely sanctified.

10. " That any justified person shall eventually fail of being made perfectly holy and happy."

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF PERSEVERANCE IN GRACE.

1. SOME who make a profession of religion may afterwards fall into carelessness, contempt, and even hatred of all religion, and so eternally perish.

1 John ii. 19. They went out from us, but they were not of us. Heb. x. 38. But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition. Matt. xii. 45. And the last state of that man is worse than the first.

2. True Christians may, through the influence of temptation, prevalency of corruption, and the neglect of the means of grace, be left in God's holy providence to fall into grievous sins, and so incur the displeasure of God, be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, scandalize the church, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.

Matt. xxvi. 72. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. Micah vii. 9. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him. Rom. vii. 19. But the evil which I would not, that I do. Ps. li. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. 2 Sam. xii. 14. By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. Ps. lxxxix. 37. Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

3. All those who have faith in Christ shall be preserved by God in a state of grace. None who

have ever received the special grace of God can ever lose it totally, or finally perish.

1 John ii. 19. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. Heb. x. 38. The just shall live by faith. 39. That believe to the saving of the soul. Phil. i. 6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Christ.

4. The Perseverance of the saints is not secured by their own industry, vigilance, and strength; but by the unchangeableness of God's purpose and love, the perfection of Christ's redemption, and the prevalency of his intercession, the constant efficacy of the Holy Ghost's influence upon the soul, and the stability of the Covenant of Grace.

1 Pet. i. 5. Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. Ps. lxxiii. 22. So foolish was I and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee. 26. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. Jer. xxxi. 3. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Heb. x. 14. By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Chap. vii. 25. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. John xiv. 16. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Jer. xxxii. 40. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them—that they shall not depart from me. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Rom. viii. 38, 39. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor pow-

ers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

5. The doctrine of Perseverance excites the saints to the study of universal obedience. Persuaded that their labor shall not be in vain, believers become steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. The love of Christ constraineth them; and the faith of its being unchangeable strengthens its influence.

1 Pet. ii. 9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Eph. iii. 17, 18. That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height — 19. and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That a person can, after conversion, be at any time totally destitute of grace or piety.

2. "That a saint can fall away from grace, and finally perish.

3. "That if the saints do persevere, it is on account of their own resolution and strength.

4. "That the doctrine of Perseverance is unfriendly to holiness."

CHAPTER XIX.

OF THE STATE OF MEN AFTER DEATH.

1. THERE is a time appointed for every man to leave this world. The immortal soul, leaving the body dead upon the earth, retains his consciousness, and shall immediately be rewarded according to his works. The spirits of the just made perfect are received into heaven, and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell.

Job vii. 1. Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Eccles. viii. 8. There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit: neither hath he power in the day of death. Chap. xii. 7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Gen. ii. 7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Matt. x. 28. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. 2 Cor. v. 10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Luke xxiii. 43. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Heb. xii. 23. And to the spirits of just men made perfect. 2 Cor. v. 6. Knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. 8. And willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Phil. i. 23. Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better. Matt. x. 28. Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Luke xvi. 23. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. Acts i. 21. Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

2. When all the generations of men shall have finished their appointed time on earth, there shall be a resurrection of all the dead, and the same bodies which were buried being re-united to their respective spirits, these and all who shall then be alive on the earth, must appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Acts xxiv. 15. There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. 1 Cor. xv. 42. So also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. John v. 28, 29. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 1 Thess. iv. 17. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. 1 Cor. xv. 51. I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. 52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (for the trumpet shall sound), and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 2 Cor. v. 10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

3. God-man, the Mediator, shall sit in judgment upon all mankind, and shall publicly pronounce sentence, determining their final state according to their several characters.

Acts xvii. 31. Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained. John v. 22. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. 27. And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, be-

cause he is the Son of man. Matt. xxv. 34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

4. The righteous shall be declared joint-heirs with Christ in happiness and glory, on account of the merit of the Redeemer, in whom they all trusted. The pious thoughts, words, and actions of believers, while they were on the earth, shall then be sustained as the evidence of their union with Christ, and of their gracious state: they shall accordingly be glorified.

1 John iii. 2. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. Rom. viii. 17. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ—that we may be also glorified together. 1 Pet. i. 5. Who are kept, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. 9. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 22. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit. Matt. xxv. 23. Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

5. God's Elect, being publicly recognized in Christ, shall all as one in him, their divine Head, join in the sentence pronounced by the Mediator upon all the wicked. Punishment shall be appor- tioned to the character of the ungodly by the om-

niscient and just Judge ; and their thoughts, words, and deeds, while they were on earth, shall be certain evidence of their total depravity and guilt.

John xvii. 22. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one. 1 Cor. vi. 2. Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? 3. We shall judge angels. Rev. xx. 12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. 13. And they were judged every man according to their works. 15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.

6. The wicked shall be banished, together with the fallen angels, into the regions of never-ending misery: and the righteous shall accompany Christ in triumph into endless happiness and glory.

Matt. xxv. 41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal. Psalm lxxiii. 24. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That the soul continues in a state of inactivity from death until the resurrection.

2. "That there is some other state, besides the states of misery and happiness, into which separate spirits may enter.

3. "That there shall be no resurrection of the dead.

4. "That there shall be no resurrection of the wicked, but of the saints only.

5. "That it is not the same body which died that shall arise.

6. "That the punishment of the wicked shall ever come to an end.

7. "That the Mediator is not the Judge who shall settle the unchangeable state of angels and men."

CHAPTER XX.

OF CHRIST'S HEADSHIP.

1. THE Mediator, having voluntarily humbled himself in human nature, for our redemption, is appointed to the highest power and glory, and in his exalted state he rules in and over all his children, as their living Head and Lawgiver; and governs all creatures and all their actions for his own glory and our salvation, as Head over all things to the church, which is his body.

Phil. ii. 8, 9. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God, also, hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. Eph. i. 20. When he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. 21. Far above all princi-

pality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. 22. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church. Heb. ii. 8. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him.

2. God-man laid the foundation of the church's existence and salvation in his own infinite righteousness. He quickens church-members by his divine Spirit; he lives in them and they in him as their life and strength; and he alone has a right to appoint ordinances and officers, and to establish laws, as the King and Head of his church.

Jer. xxiii. 5. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. 1 Cor. iii. 11. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. John vi. 63. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. Chap. xvii. 26. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them. Is. ix. 6, 7. For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders — upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.

3. Submission is due to the mediatory authority, from all the intelligent creatures of God. Men, not only as saints and church-members, but also in every possible relation and condition, are under obligation to subserve his gracious purposes according to his law. The holy angels minister under his directions to the heirs of salvation.

Phil. ii. 10. That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. Psalm ii. 10. Be wise, now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. 12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish. Heb. i. 6. And he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him. 14. Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.

4. The administration of the kingdom of providence is subordinate to the dispensation of grace. Christ Jesus, as the Head of the church, rules by his infinite power, and in perfect wisdom and justice, over all the parts of the inanimate and irrational creation, and over all wicked men and devils; making them and all their changes, counsels, and efforts, subservient to the manifestation of God's glory in the system of redemption.

Rom. viii. 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Eph. i. 22. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church. John xvii. 2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Rev. i. 18. I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That the authority of God-man, as Mediator, is confined to his saints, and does not extend to all the creatures of God.

2. "That a rational creature can, in any station or condition whatever, refuse submission to Messiah, and not be guilty.

3. "That there is any creature, or institution, which is not subjected to Christ, for the good of his church.

4. "That any king or magistrate, pope or council, has a right to dictate any part of the doctrine or the order of the Christian church.

5. "That Christ is not the sole Head and Law-giver of his church."

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

1. GOD, in order to display his own perfections, in the redemption of mankind, and to bring the redeemed to glory, hath appointed a church in this world, comprehending all those who are distinguished from the rest of mankind by the dispensation of the covenant of grace.

Psalm l. 2. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Eph. iv. 11, 12. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints. Eph. v. 24-26. The church is subject unto Christ—Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it by the word. John xvii. 14. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world.

2. The church invisible embraces all who are *really* interested in the covenant of grace; who have been elected in Christ and shall be saved. The church visible, standing in an *external* relation to Christ in the visible dispensation of the covenant of grace, comprehends all adults who profess faith in Christ, and give obedience to his law, together with all their children.

Eph. i. 22. Head over all things to the church, 23. which is his body. Chap. v. 27. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Acts ii. 38. Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ—39. For the promise is unto you and to your children. 41. Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 47. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Matt. xix. 14. Suffer little children—for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

3. The visible church, according to the institution of Christ the head, is ONE among all nations. The Scriptures direct, for the more convenient edification of believers, distinct congregations, and distinct judicatories, all connected under himself; but it is both the sin and the loss of professed Christians, to establish distinctions which destroy the UNITY of the church.

Matt. xvi. 18. And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Acts xv. 41. He went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Jas. iii. 16. Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. Eph. iv. 3, 4. Endeavoring to keep the

unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. 1 Cor. xii. 12. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.

4. It is the duty of a Christian to pray for the reformation of every part of Christ's church; to inquire what part adheres most closely to the Scripture plan; and without prejudice, join in that communion which is most pure, and in which he may prove most useful in the service of Christ.

Ps. cxxii. 6. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. 7. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. 9. Because of the house of the Lord, I will seek thy good. 1 Thess. v. 21. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 1 Cor. xi. 2. Keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you. 34. That ye come not together unto condemnation.

5. When any church imposes sinful terms of communion — when the constitution is anti-scriptural — when the administration is corrupt, and attempts at its reformation have proved ineffectual, it is the duty of Christians to separate from it; and if the majority should violate the terms, upon which church-members were united, it is lawful for the minority to testify against the defection, and to walk by the rule of their former attainments.

Rom. iii. 8. Let us do evil, that good may come? — whose damnation is just. 1 Cor. xi. 19. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. Is. viii. 20. To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is

because there is no light in them. 2 Cor. vi. 14. And what communion hath light with darkness? 16. And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? 17. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. 1 Cor. x. 18. Are not they which eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar? 20. And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. 21. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils. Rev. xi. 1. Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. Chap. xviii. 4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues. Phil. iii. 16. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

6. There may be associations of men called churches, which are founded upon antichristian principles, and some churches have degenerated into synagogues of Satan. Such are not to be considered as branches of the true Christian church.

Rev. xi. 1. And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: And the angel stood, saying, Rise, measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. 2. But the court which is without the temple leave out and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot. Chap. xvii. 5. And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth. Chap. iii. 9. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan (which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie).

7. No association of men on earth is infallible, and there is no certainty that any one particular church, in any particular place, shall remain always

pure. But God has engaged to preserve a visible church of Christ somewhere upon the earth, until the end of time. Sound doctrine, a legitimate ministry, and the proper use of the sacraments, are the characteristics of the true Christian church.

Rev. iii. 16. Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Matt. xvi. 18. I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Acts ii. 42. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Chap. xiv. 23. And when they had ordained them elders in every church. Matt. xxviii. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you, alway, even unto the end of the world, AMEN. Acts xx. 7. The disciples came together to break bread. 1 Cor. xi. 2. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That there can be a period in which there shall not be a visible church of Christ on earth.
2. "That it is not sinful to promote and maintain schisms destructive to the unity of the Christian church.
3. "That it is a matter of indifference to what church a person belongs.
4. "That separation from a corrupt or declining church is not a Christian duty.
5. "That any visible church can be perfectly pure and infallible while on earth.

6. "That the infant children of church-members are not members of the visible Christian church."

CHAPTER XXII.

OF CHURCH-FELLOWSHIP.

1. IT is the duty of all who hear the gospel to enter into the communion of the Christian church, and in order to comply with this duty, faith in Christ is necessary. He who is not a saint, does not love God, or God's children, and in offering to join the church, he either deceives himself, or acts the part of a hypocrite.

Acts ii. 38. Repent and be baptized, every one of you. 41. Then they that gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 47. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Heb. xi. 6. But without faith it is impossible to please him. 2 Tim. iii. 5. Having a form of godliness; but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

2. The qualifications for church-membership necessary in adults, are, that they knowingly profess a belief of the doctrine of Christ, promise submission to all the institutions of Christ, evidence repentance, and manifest no prevailing inclination to any kind of wickedness.

Acts viii. 37. If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. Gal. v. 22, 23. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,

peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. Acts xxvi. 20. That they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. Psalm xxiv. 3. Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place? 4. He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

3. The end of Church-Fellowship is to exhibit a system of sound principles, to maintain the ordinances of gospel worship in their purity, to promote holiness, and to prepare the saints for heaven.

Col. ii. 2. Being knit together in love — to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. Acts ii. 42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Rev. ii. 25. That which ye have, hold fast till I come. Phil. ii. 15. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke. Rom. xiv. 13. That no man put a stumbling-block or occasion to fall in his brother's way. Col. i. 12. Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

4. The Christian church, as a society of rational beings, must have explicit terms of communion, to which every member gives his assent. It is not to be expected that all men shall think alike about every object of thought; but Christians cannot cooperate, unless they are of one mind about the general principles of Christianity. Terms of Christian communion should embrace nothing but what is divine truth, and reject nothing for which the church hath faithfully contended.

Amos iii. 3. Can two walk together, except they be agreed? Phil. i. 27. With one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. Rom. xiv. 5. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Acts xv. 7. There had been much disputing. Rom. xiv. 1. Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. Jude, ver. 3. Ye should earnestly contend for the faith. Rev. iii. 10. Thou hast kept the word of my patience. 1 Tim. i. 4. Neither give heed to fables, and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying. Phil. ii. 2. Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Matt. xv. 9. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Phil. iii. 16. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Rom. xiv. 19. Follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Acts ii. 42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That it is not sinful to neglect Church-Fellowship.

2. "That an unbeliever has a right in the sight of God to enter into Christian communion.

3. "That saintship is the criterion of church-membership, so that the visible church may not, without guilt, receive any who is not really a saint, or exclude any who is regenerated.

4. "That it is not criminal to separate from the communion of a church which maintains Christian purity and faithfulness.

5. "That it is lawful for the church to be without any terms of Christian communion.

6. "That any person may be admitted to communion who opposes any of the terms of church-fellowship.

7. "That *occasional communion* may be extended to persons who should not be received to constant fellowship."

CHAPTER XXIII.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH.

1. CHRIST, the Head and Lawgiver, has appointed in his word a particular form of government for the New Testament church, distinct from the civil government of the nations in which Christians live. This form of church government is to continue until the end of the world.

Is. xxxiii. 20. Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. 23. The Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us. Chap. ix. 6. The government shall be upon his shoulder. Eph. i. 22. Head over all things to the church. Heb. viii. 5. See that thou make all things agreeable to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. 1 Cor. xii. 28. God hath set some in the church — governments. 2 Cor. iii. 10. The power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction. Heb. xiii. 7. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves.

2. Christ Jesus did commission several persons with extraordinary powers, such as Apostles, Proph-

ets, and Evangelists, at the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, to settle the constitution of the Christian church according to his appointment, and commit the administration of it into the hands of the ordinary and permanent officers.

Acts i. 3. Being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Eph. iv. 10-13. He that descended is the same also that ascended up, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things; and he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers—for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ—till we all come, in the unity of the faith—unto a perfect man. Acts xiv. 23. And when they had ordained them elders in every church they commended them to the Lord. Tit. i. 5. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.

3. The government of the church is presbyterian. Ministers or teaching elders are the highest officers, and among these there is a perfect parity of power. With teaching elders are associated, in the exercise of ecclesiastical government, other elders who only rule. These ministers and ruling elders meet in courts, congregational sessions, presbyteries, and synods, in regular subordination the one to the other. To these courts Christ has given the power of governing the church, and ordaining officers, and this power is entirely ministerial and subordinate to his law. The deacon has no power except about the temporalities of the church.

Acts xiv. 23. They had ordained them elders in every church. Chap. xx. 17. He sent to Ephesus and called the elders * of the church. 18. And when they were come unto him, he said unto them, 28. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers,† to feed ‡ the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 1 Tim. v. 17. Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine. 1 Tim. xiv. 4. Laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Matt. xviii. 17. Tell it unto the church. 18. Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. 20. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Acts xv. 2. They determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders about this question. Acts vi. 1. And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2. It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3. Look ye out among you seven men—whom we may appoint over this business. 4. But we will give ourselves—to the ministry of the word.

4. No ecclesiastical authority is lodged in the hands of private Christians or civil Magistrates. Church judicatories are subordinate only to Christ Jesus. They appoint, by an exclusive right, their own times and places of meeting and adjournment. But every congregation of Christians have the right of choosing all the officers who shall stand in a particular relation to themselves.

* Presbyters.

† Bishops.

‡ Perform the duty of a pastor.

Heb. xiii. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves. Matt. xvi. 19. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. 2 Cor. xiii. 10. The power which the Lord hath given me to edification. 1 Cor. xii. 18. But now hath God set the members, every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him. 20. But now are they many members, and yet but one body. 21. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That any power or person on earth has a right to exercise supremacy over the church, and that Christians may submit to such pretensions.

2. "That there is no form of church government of divine right.

3. "That pope or bishop, as claiming a power superior to a teaching presbyter, is an officer of the true church of Christ, appointed by divine authority.

4. "That there should be no ruling elders.

5. "That any assembly of private Christians may lawfully exercise any part of the government or discipline of the Christian church.

6. "That ecclesiastical judicatories are not subordinate one to the other.

7. "That the Christian church may give up to civil rulers the exclusive right of assembling judicatories, or any power whatever in dissolving them.

8. "That a Christian minister may lawfully relinquish his right to exercise the power of government and discipline in the church."

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

1. "God is to be worshipped by all his intelligent creatures, in such a manner as he himself shall prescribe ; and as no sinner can have access unto him, but in Christ Jesus, divine revelation is the supreme standard by which all modes of worship must be regulated.

Luke iv. 8. It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. John iv. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. Rev. iii. 22. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. Matt. xxviii. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

2. Conscience is not a rule of faith or practice ; but a power of the human mind, which is natural to man, and necessarily implies our accountability to God. The exercise of a good conscience consists, in comparing our motives, intentions, and actions, with the divine law, and in approving or disapproving of them, as they appear to be agreeable unto, or contrary to the law. The approbation

of this *moral sense* is accompanied with pleasure, and its disapprobation with pain.

1 Sam. xii. 21. And turn ye not aside : for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver ; for they are vain. Rom. ii. 14. These having not the law, *are a law* unto themselves. 15. Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing. Heb. xiii. 18. We trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. 1 Tim. i. 5. The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. 2 Cor. i. 12. For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.

3. Every man is bound to act conscientiously in every part of religious worship ; but the dictates of conscience cannot render false worship lawful in any man or body of men. The *rights of conscience* consist in the conscientious performance of every part of appointed worship, uninfluenced by the fear of man ; and *liberty of conscience* consists in enjoying these rights without restraint.

Acts xxiv. 16. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, toward God and toward men. John xvi. 2. Whosoever killeth you will *think* that he doeth God service. Is. i. 12. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand ? Ps. xii. 4. Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail ; our lips are our own : Who is Lord over us ? 2 Pet. ii. 19. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption. James ii. 12. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. Gal. ii. 4. And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in

privily to spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. 5. To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

4. It is the duty of every man to maintain a devout frame of mind, and to devote to secret prayer, at least, a part of every evening and morning. Families are under obligation to worship the great God socially, by singing Psalms, reading the Scriptures, and prayer, each night and day, and the head of the family should take care that these duties be performed, and that regular attendance be given by every member of the family.

1 Thess. v. 17. Pray without ceasing. Psalm cxix. 147. I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried; I hoped in thy word. 148. Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word. xcii. 1-2. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High; to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. cxviii. 15. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. Jer. x. 25. Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name. Gen. xviii. 19. I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. Eph. vi. 4. Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5. Christians should frequently meet, at stated times, for acts of private social worship, in order to strengthen each other in piety and zeal, and maintain sincere friendship upon evangelical principles.

Heb. x. 25. Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another. Mal. iii. 16. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard. Col. iii. 16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. Matt. xviii. 20. For where two or three are gathered together, in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Song viii. 13. The companions hearken to thy voice, cause me to hear it. John xx. 19. When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

6. The Lord of life and time hath set apart one seventh part of time, from the common work of life, to be employed, exclusively, in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much of it as may be taken up by the works of necessity and mercy; and since the resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week, comprehending twenty-four hours from midnight to midnight, is the weekly Sabbath.

Exod. xx. 10. The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work. Acts xv. 21. Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath-day. Chap. xx. 7. Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. Matt. xii. 12. Wherefore it is lawful to do good upon the Sabbath-day. John xx. 1. The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early when it was yet dark — and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. 19. Then the same day, at evening, being the first day of the week — came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

7. Those who are ordained, by the Head of the church, to preach the gospel, should labor faithfully in explaining, and applying the word of God to the assembled congregation every Lord's day, and all should conscientiously attend this public school of instruction, and sanctuary of devotion. The ministers of religion have no warrant for *reading* their sermons to the congregation.

Lev. xix. 30. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary. Rom. x. 15. And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace. 1 Tim. ii. 15. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Luke iv. 16. And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day. 17. And when he had *opened the book*, he found the place where it was written, 18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to *preach* the gospel. 20. And he *closed the book*. 21. And he began to *say* unto them, This day is the Scripture fulfilled. Acts x. 33. Now, therefore, are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded. Chap. xx. 7. Paul preached to them — and continued his *speech* until midnight. Tit. ii. 1. But *speak* thou the things that become sound doctrine.

8. Singing God's praise is a part of public social worship, in which the whole congregation should join. The Book of Psalms, which are of divine inspiration, is well adapted to the state of the church, and of every member, in all ages and circumstances; and these Psalms, to the exclusion of all *imitations* and uninspired compositions, are to be used in social worship.

2 Sam. xxiii. 1-2. The sweet Psalmist of Israel said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. 2 Chron. xxix. 30. Sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the Seer. Mark xiv. 26. And when they had sung an *hymn*. Ps. xevi. 1. O sing unto the Lord a new *song*. xcv. 2. And make a joyful noise unto him with *psalms*. Eph. v. 19. Speaking to yourselves in *psalms*, and *hymns*, and spiritual *songs*, singing, and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

9. Public prayer is to accompany the word preached. Written *forms* of prayer, whether read or repeated, are not authorized in the Scriptures — are not calculated to exercise the mind in the graces of the Holy Spirit — are not adapted to the varieties of the state of the church and its members; and are not to be used in approaching the throne of grace.

Acts. ii. 42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine — and in prayers. Matt. vi. 7. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do. 1 Cor. xii. 7. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every one to profit withal. Chap. xiv. 12. Even so ye, for as much as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Rom. viii. 26. The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints by the will of God. Heb. iv. 16. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

10. The ministers of the gospel are to pronounce publicly the apostolic benediction in some such

words as these : The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

Numbers vi. 23-27. Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel — and I will bless them. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. “That it is immaterial what form of worship is used.

2. “That man has a right to worship God, whatever way conscience may dictate, although that way should be opposed to God’s commandments.

3. “That any body of men may recognize such a right.

4. “That it is unnecessary for families to worship God every day, and particularly to make singing Psalms a part of their worship.

5. “That private fellowship meetings among the saints are not of divine appointment.

6. “That there is no Sabbath under the gospel.

7. “That any unauthorized person may take upon him to preach the gospel.

8. “That the Scripture psalmody is unfit for gospel worship.

9. “That the church should receive a liturgy of prayer.”

CHAPTER XXV.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

1. THE only Sacraments of the New Testament, are Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and these are peculiar badges of distinction for the church from the world.

Matt. xxviii. 19. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them. 1 Cor. xi. 24. This do in remembrance of me. 26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Chap. xii. 13. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body — and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

2. Baptism is administered by a Christian minister, applying water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to such adult persons as profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him. The infants of church-members are also to be baptized, and baptism is not to be repeated.

Matt. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Acts x. 47. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost? Matt. xix. 14. Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

3. The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ, in order to show forth his death, and as a special

mean of communion between himself and his people. It is administered only by a lawful minister of the word, to such baptized persons as, making a creditable profession of their faith, have a corresponding practice.

Luke xxii. 19. This do in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. x. 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ? Acts ii. 41. They that gladly received his word were baptized. 42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread.

4. The Lord's Supper is to be repeatedly administered to a Christian congregation, as a mean of strength and comfort to God's people, and a manifestation to the world of their continuing regular and steadfast in their Christian profession. It is not a necessary part of ordinary Sabbath sanctification; but previous preparation, by humiliation for sin, self-examination, and abstraction from the world, is proper for those who make this special, public, and social profession of their union with Christ, and love to him. It is the duty of all who hear the gospel, to believe in Christ, and commemorate his death in the Lord's Supper.

1 Cor. xi. 26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death. Chap. x. 17. For we, being many, are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread. 21. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Chap. xi. 28. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and

drink of that cup. 32. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

5. Bread and Wine are visible symbols of Christ's body and blood, which he appoints to be used in this ordinance. These are to be taken up by the minister, and then set apart by prayer to a sacramental use. The bread being broken is first to be distributed, and after this, the cup of wine is to be given to all the communicants.

1 Cor. xi. 23-25. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: This do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. Matt. xxvi. 26-29. Jesus *took* bread, and *blessed* it, and *brake* it, and *gave* it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. I will not drink henceforth of this *fruit of the vine*, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That there are more sacraments under the New Testament than Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

2. "That any sacrament can be administered by a person who is not ordained to the gospel ministry.

3. "That no person can be saved without partaking of one or both of the sacraments.

4. "That the infants of such as are members of the visible church are not to be baptized.

5. "That overwhelming with water is essential to Christian baptism.

6. "That infants are as heathens until they are baptized, and that baptism regenerates and christens them.

7. "That parents who are deemed unworthy of approaching the Lord's table, or who habitually despise that ordinance, may have their children baptized.

8. "That Christ is corporally present in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

9. "That the cup is to be withheld from the laity.

10. "That taking the sacramental elements, before they are set apart by prayer, is not a sacramental action.

11. "That a private administration of the sacraments is as proper as the administration of them in the presence of the church."

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF RELIGIOUS FASTING AND THANKSGIVING.

1. THERE is a general uniformity in the dispensations of Divine Providence to every age of the

world ; but there is also in them such a variety, as, in relation to individuals and communities, may prove somewhat extraordinary. It is the duty of men to observe the signs of the times, and endeavor after corresponding dispositions and exercises.

Eccles. ix. 2. All things come alike to all. Chap. i. 9. The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be ; and that which is done, is that which shall be done : and there is no new thing under the sun. Chap. vii. 14. In the day of prosperity be joyful ; but in the day of adversity, consider. God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

2. There is no day holy except the Sabbath ; but such duties as are to be performed require that time necessary for performing them be devoted to that purpose. When God calls upon us to solemn fasting or thanksgiving, the whole time dedicated to such exercises should be religiously observed.

Exod. xx. 9. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. Eccles. iii. 1. To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven. 11. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time. Rom. xiv. 6. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord. Jer. xxxvi. 6. Read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the Lord, in the ears of the people, in the Lord's house upon the fasting-day.

3. Religious fasting consists in abstinence from food, and from worldly employments and recreations, accompanied with solemn humiliation for sin, and is a mean appointed by Christ for warding off the effects of God's anger — exciting to sympa-

thy with suffering brethren — asking direction in difficult cases — mortifying the body of sin — recovering a sense of peace with God — and for obtaining more near communion with him.

Jonah iii. 5. The people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast. 9. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger. Neh. i. 3. The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province, are in great affliction and reproach. 4. When I heard these words I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Ezra viii. 21. Then I proclaimed a fast, there, at the river Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us. 2 Cor. xi. 27. In fastings often. 1 Cor. ix. 27. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection. Zech. viii. 19. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be unto the house of Judah, joy and gladness. Acts x. 30. Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold a man stood before me, in bright clothing, 31. And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard. Matt. vi. 17. When thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, 18. That thou appear not unto men to fast — and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

4. When God has manifested himself merciful, in any sudden, great, or distinguished manner, to a person or people, they are commanded to devote some time to solemn thanksgiving. Individuals, families, societies, congregations, churches, and nations, may appoint times of fasting and thanksgiving, and, such appointments being lawfully made, should be carefully observed.

Neh. xi. 17. And Mattaniah — was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer. Chap. xii. 43. Also that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced. Ps. cxvi. 17. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. “That any part of time is appointed in Divine Revelation, or may be appointed by the church, to be kept holy, in its weekly, monthly, or annual returns, except the first day of the week, which is the Christian Sabbath.

2. “That fasting is not an ordinance of the New Testament dispensation, but of the Old only.

3. “That civil rulers can have no right to call the nation to public fasting or thanksgiving.

4. “That it is *superstition* for a Christian congregation to examine themselves with humiliation and fasting, previously to their sealing their covenant with God in the Lord’s Supper.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF OATHS AND COVENANTS.

1. It is lawful under the New Testament, as well as under the Old, to take an oath in cases of importance. The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear, and it is to be used

with all holy fear and reverence. No man is to be admitted to make oath, or to administer oaths in an official character, unless he appear to know and fear God, and to understand the nature of an oath.

Deut. vi. 13. Thou shalt fear the Lord — and shalt swear by his name. Heb. vi. 16. For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Ex. xx. 7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

2. Swearing is an act of religious worship, which even a private person may voluntarily perform, or require another to perform, when a matter of importance exists, as a call in Providence thereunto; but it is proper, in order to prevent the abuse of this ordinance, that the administration of oaths in matters which relate to social transactions, should be exclusively committed to such civil or ecclesiastical officers as may explain the nature of an oath, administer it with suitable solemnity, and secure to the deposition its proper influence.

Eccles. ix. 2. The good — the sinner — he that sweareth — he that feareth an oath. Deut. vi. 13. Thou shalt fear the Lord — and shalt swear by his name. Gen. xiv. 22. I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God. 2 Cor. xi. 31. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ — knoweth that I lie not. Judges viii. 19. As the Lord liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you. Josh. ii. 12. Swear unto me by the Lord. Judges xv. 12. Swear unto me that ye will not fall upon me yourselves. Gen. xlvii. 31. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. Ex. xxii.

9. For all manner of trespass — the cause of both parties shall come before the judges. 11. Then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both. 1 Kings viii. 31. If any man trespass against his neighbor — and the oath come before thine altar, 32. Then hear thou in heaven and do and judge. Num. v. 19. And the priest shall charge her by an oath. Heb. vi. 16. And an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

3. An oath ought not to be withheld when it is required by a morally constituted civil or ecclesiastical authority, or when a cause of importance depends on it, provided there be nothing sinful connected with it. The Christian is nevertheless to take care, that he testify to the world; that although he makes oath before men, he is not to be understood as holding communion, in this solemn act of religious worship, with unqualified administrators, and that on no account he conform to the superstitious practice of kissing the book.

Deut. xix. 15. At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. 17. Then, both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges which shall be in those days. Matt. xviii. 16. Take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. 17. Tell it unto the church. 18. Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Heb. vi. 16. And an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Gen. xxi. 23. Now, therefore, swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me. 24. And Abraham said, I will swear. Chap. xxiv. 37. And my master made me swear. Chap. l. 5. My father made me swear. 1 Sam. xx. 17. And Jonathan caused David to swear. Jer.

iv. 2. And thou shalt swear—in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness. Rev. x. 5. Lifted up his hand to heaven, 6. And swore by him that liveth forever and ever. Jer. xxiii. 10. Because of swearing the land mourneth. 11. For both prophet and priest are profane. 2. Cor. vi. 14. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? 15. Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 17. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate. Hosea xiii. 2. Let the men that sacrifice, kiss the calves.

4. A vow, or religious covenant, is of the like nature with a promissory oath, whereby we bind ourselves, either individually or collectively to necessary duties, or to other things not forbidden, so far and so long as they conduce thereunto. It is an ordinance of God, which is to be attended to on special occasions under the New Testament dispensation, as well as under the Old, by individuals and societies, by churches and nations.

Num. xxx. 2. If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word. Ps. lxxvi. 11. Vow and pay unto the Lord your God. Ex. xix. 5. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people. 8. And all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. Deut. xxiii. 23. A freewill-offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God. Is. xix. 21. Yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord. Chap. xlv. 5. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand to the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. Chap. lxii. 4. Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. Zech. xiii. 9. It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.

Heb. viii. 7. If that first covenant had been faultless. 8. I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. 10. I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Jer. i. 5. Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant. Rev. xi. 15. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

5. Covenants entered into by an individual or a community, continue binding upon those who enter into them, either personally or by their representatives, so long as such persons live, unless the covenants have limited their own duration to a certain other period. The covenant obligation is admitted and sanctioned by God, as distinct from any previous obligation arising from the divine law; but no vow or covenant of man can bind to anything contrary to the law of God.

Eccles. v. 4. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it. 5. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow, and not pay. Jer. xi. 10. The house of Israel, and the house of Judah, have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. Deut. xxiii. 21. When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be a sin in thee. 22. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. Psalm lxxv. 1. Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That profane swearing is not a heinous crime.

2. "That it is unlawful to make oath on any account.

3. "That any oath may be taken with a mental reservation, or in any other sense than the obvious meaning of the words.

4. "That irreligious men may be appointed as the official administrators of the religious ordinance of swearing.

5. "That religious covenanting is not a duty in New Testament times.

6. "That it is unlawful for any civil society to enter into covenant with God.

7. "That no covenant into which any society enters, can be obligatory upon any of the members of that society, who did not personally subscribe such covenant."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF MARRIAGE.

1. MARRIAGE is an ordinance of God, instituted in the law of nature, and recognized in Divine Revelation. It is an agreement between one man and one woman only, in which the parties solemnly vow and covenant, that they will faithfully perform all the duties belonging to it.

Matt. xix. 4. Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female; 5. And said,

For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.

2. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife — the population of the world with a legitimate offspring — the increase and building up the church with a holy seed — and the prevention of uncleanness; and is common to all sorts of people.

Gen. ii. 18. It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him. Chap. i. 28. Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. 1 Cor. vii. 2. To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 14. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy. Heb. xiii. 4. Marriage is honorable in all.

3. For obtaining these important ends, the parties ought not only to marry in the Lord, but are bound also to cultivate mutual love, bear with, and cover each other's infirmities, keep the marriage oath inviolate, cheerfully submit to the yoke of religion, and carefully avoid all mutual recrimination.

1 Cor. vii. 39. She is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. 3. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Col. iii. 19. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. 1 Pet. iii. 1. Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; — won by the conversation of the wives; 2. While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear — 4. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.

4. Marriage ought not to be contracted within the degrees of consanguinity, or affinity, prohibited in the word of God; nor can any law of man or consent of parties legitimate such incestuous connections.

Lev. xviii. 24. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you. 26. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations: neither any of your nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you.

5. Though the validity of marriage depends upon the mutual vow of the parties, independently of official administration, yet, in order to prevent rash and inconsiderate connections, and that the parties may be duly impressed with the solemnity of the ordinance, and with the importance of its duties, the celebration of it should be exclusively committed unto duly qualified ecclesiastical or civil officers.

Matt. xix. 6. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. Neh. xiii. 25. And I contended with them — and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons; nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. 26. Did not Solomon, king of Israel, sin by these things; even him did outlandish women cause to sin. 1 Cor. vii. 39. She is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. Chap. x. 31. Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

6. As the good order of society, the honor and peace of families, as well as the interest of religion,

are greatly promoted by the regular administration of marriage, the civil magistrate ought to provide, that the ordinance be duly respected — sanction the manner of its celebration — enjoin and enforce its duties, and when the case requires it, conduct the process of divorce in a public and regular manner.

Deut. xxiv. 1. When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a bill of divorcement — 4. Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife — thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. Chap. xxii. 16. And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders of the city, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife. 17. And lo, he hath given occasion of speech against her. 18. And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him.

7. Though the marriage covenant is not dissolved by every argument which the corruption of man, excited by passion and disappointment, may produce, to separate those whom God hath joined; yet either adultery, or such wilful desertion as admits of no civil remedy, is a sufficient cause for its dissolution. And after the divorce has been regularly obtained from the ecclesiastical or civil authority, it is lawful for the innocent party to marry another as if the offending party were dead.

Matt. xix. 3. Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? 6. They are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. 9. Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be

for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. 1 Cor. vii. 15. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such a case.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That polygamy is in any case lawful.
2. "That vows of celibacy may be lawfully entered into by any description of men or women.
3. "That the clergy may not marry.
4. "That a man may marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own.
5. "That a woman may marry any of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than she may of her own.
6. "That divorce is lawful in any case, except adultery and wilful desertion."

CHAPTER XXIX.

OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

1. IT is the will of God, revealed by the constitution of human nature, and more clearly in the sacred Scriptures, that his rational creatures, living together in one part of the world, and connected by a common interest, and by common duties, should enter into a civil association, for the better preservation of peace and order, in subserviency to godliness and honesty.

1 Cor. xi. 14. Doth not even nature itself teach you? Gen. i. 7. All the *elders** of the land of Egypt. Ex. iii. 16. Go and gather the *elders* of Israel together. 1 Sam. xvi. 4. And the *elders of the town* trembled at his coming. Exod. xviii. 19. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee. 21. Thou shalt provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness. 22. And let them judge the people. 23. And all this people shall also go to their place in peace. Is. xxxii. 17. And the work of righteousness shall be peace. 18. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation; and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places. Rom. xii. 17. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18. As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 1 Tim. ii. 2. For kings and all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. Rom. xiii. 2. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the *ordinance of God*.

2. It is the duty of all men voluntarily to form civil societies, establishing such authority as may best tend to preserve order, liberty, and religion among them; and it is lawful for them to model their constitutions of government in such a manner as may appear most suitable to them, provided such constitutions, in their principles and distribution of power, be in nothing contrary to the divine law.

Prov. xxi. 3. To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. Ezek. xiv. 9. Remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord. Deut. i. 13. Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your

* Rulers.

tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. 14. And he answered me and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do. Chap. xvi. 18. Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates. Ezek. xxx. 21. And their governor shall proceed from the midst of them — this that engaged his heart to approach unto me. 22. And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 1 Tim. ii. 2. That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Deut. xvii. 14. When thou art come unto the land — and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me. 15. Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose — Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee. 16. But he shall not multiply horses to himself; 17. Neither shall he multiply wives — neither silver and gold: 20. That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment.

3. God, the supreme Governor, is the fountain of all power and authority, and civil magistrates are his deputies. In the administration of government, obedience is due to their lawful commands for conscience' sake; but no power, which deprives the subject of civil liberty — which wantonly squanders his property, and sports with his life — or which authorizes false religion (however it may exist according to divine Providence) — is approved of, or sanctioned by God, or ought to be esteemed or supported by man as a moral institution.

Rom. xiii. 1. There is no power but of God. 4. He is the minister of God to thee for good. 5. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. Prov. xxix. 2. When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn. Chap. xxviii. 15. As a roaring lion, and a

raging bear; so is a wicked ruler. Psalm xciv. 20. Shall the *throne of iniquity* have fellowship with thee? Psalm ii. 2. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel against the Lord. Hos. viii. 3. Israel hath cast off the thing that is good. 4. They have set up kings, but not by me. Rev. xiii. 1. And saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns — and *the* dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. Chap. xii. 9. The dragon — that old serpent, called the devil and Satan. Chap. xvii. 12. The ten horns which thou sawest are *ten kings* — receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 14. These shall make war with the Lamb. 17. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast.

4. God, who in his holy providence makes even the *wrath of man to praise him*, sometimes manages the magistrates which are over heathen and other wicked nations, balancing their ambition, their interest, and their power in such a manner as to maintain some degree of peace and safety in the empire, and sometimes makes use of them, as a scourge to punish guilty sinners for their rebellion against the King of heaven.

Ps. lxxxii. 1. God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. lxxv. 7. He putteth down one, and setteth up another. Is. xlv. 1. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, 5. I girded thee, though thou hast not known me. 13. He shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price or reward. Jer. xxix. 7. And seek the peace of the city — for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. Ezra ix. 7. For our iniquities have we — been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands. Neh. ix. 37. The kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins.

5. It is lawful for Christians residing in nations in which the light of the gospel has not been generally diffused, to continue in submission to such authority as may exist over them, agreeably to the law of nature, which, where revelation does not exist, is the only standard of civil duty. In such cases the infidelity of the ruler cannot make void the just authority conferred upon him by the constitution.

1 Pet. ii. 12. Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles. 13. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. 16. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. Rom. ii. 14. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Jonah iii. 7. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh, by the decree of the king and his nobles. 10. And God repented him of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

6. Christian rulers appointed to office according to a righteous civil constitution, have authority from God to rule in subserviency to the kingdom of Christ, and are to be conscientiously supported by the persons, the property, and the prayers of the ruled, in the maintenance of the peace, the safety, and the honor of the nation.

Ps. ii. 10. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. 11. Serve the Lord with fear. 12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry. Ps. lxxii. 11. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. Dan. vii. 14. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve

him. And all dominions shall serve him and obey him. Prov. viii. 15. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. Rom. xiii. 4. He is the minister of God to thee for good. 5. Wherefore, ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. 7. Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute, to whom tribute; fear, to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

7. It is the duty of the Christian magistrate to take order, that open blasphemy and idolatry, licentiousness and immorality, be suppressed, and that the church of Christ be supported throughout the commonwealth; and for the better discharge of these important duties, it is lawful for him to call synods, in order to consult with them; to be present at them, not interfering with their proceedings (unless they become manifestly seditious and dangerous to the peace), but supporting the independency of the church, and its righteous decisions, and preserving its unity and order against the attempts of such despisers of ecclesiastical authority as should endeavor, in a riotous manner, to disturb their proceedings.

Rom. xiii. 4. For he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Lev. xxiv. 16. And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death. 2 Chron. xiv. 2. And Asa did that which was good and right. 3. He took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down their images. Rev. xvii. 16. These shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. Prov. xx. 26. A wise king scattereth the wicked. Ps. ci. 8. I will early destroy all

the wicked of the land. Prov. xiv. 34. Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people. Chap. xvi. 12. The throne is established by righteousness. Is. xlix. 23. Kings shall be thy *nursing fathers*.* Chap. lx. 10. Kings shall minister unto thee. 12. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish. Chap. lxii. 4. And thy land shall be married. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. 2 Chron. xxix. 2. And he did right in the sight of the Lord. 4. And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together. 15. And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord. Chap. xxx. 22. And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites, that taught the good knowledge of the Lord. Rev. xxi. 24. And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. Dan. vii. 22. And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. 1 Cor. x. 31. Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Ps. cxxxvii. 5. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. cxvii. 7. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That Civil Government is not an ordinance of God.

2. "That Christians owe no allegiance to civil authority.

3. "That Civil Government is founded in grace.

4. "That the Scripture Revelation is not the rule by which Christians should direct their civil conduct.

5. "That the magistrate, as such, has nothing to

* Nourishers.

do with the Christian religion, nor the minister a right to examine the policy of nations, and teach civil duties.

6. "That Christians are bound to cherish, *as the ordinance of God*, all those who may be exalted in providence to power in a nation, although they may be tyrants and usurpers, and bound by an oath to give their power unto the beast, in the establishment of a false religion.

7. "That it is lawful for civil rulers to authorize the purchase and sale of any part of the human family as slaves.

8. "That a constitution of government, which deprives unoffending men of liberty and property, is a moral institution, to be recognized as God's ordinance."

CHAPTER XXX.

OF THE RIGHT OF DISSENT FROM A CONSTITUTION OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

1. CIVIL society being a *voluntary association*, the nation is not bound to admit to all its peculiar privileges every person who may reside within the reach of its power; nor is every person dwelling within the limits of a nation under obligation to incorporate with the national society. Every government has the right of making laws of *naturalization*, and every individual possesses the right of

expatriation; and both these *rights* are to be exercised in conformity to the law of God, the supreme Ruler and Judge.

Gen. xlvii. 4. For to sojourn in the land are we come. Now, therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. Num. x. 29. And Moses said unto Hobab—Come thou with us, and we will do thee good. 30. And he said unto him, I will not go. Chap. xv. 15. One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you. Deut. xxiv. 17. Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger. Deut. xxiii. 8. The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord, in their third generation. Acts xxi. 39. A citizen of no mean city. Chap. xxii. 27. Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, yea. 28. With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. James iv. 12. There is one Lawgiver.

2. It is the duty of Christians, for the sake of peace and order, and in humble resignation to God's good providence, to conform to the common regulations of society in things lawful; but to profess allegiance to no constitution of government which is in hostility to the kingdom of Christ, the Head of the church, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

Jer. xxix. 4. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives. 5. Build ye houses and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. 6. Take ye wives and beget sons and daughters. 7. And seek the peace of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. Ps. cxxxvii. 1. By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down: yea, we wept when

we remembered Zion. 4. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? 6. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. 8. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed. 9. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones. Acts iv. 19. Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye. Matt. vi. 10. Thy kingdom come. Heb. xii. 26. Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. 28. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved. Micah iv. 8. The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem. 13. Arise, and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.

3. Virtuous persons, who, in their private capacity, are endeavoring to further the true end of civil government, *the maintenance of peace and quietness in all godliness and honesty*, although they dissent from the constitution of civil government of the nation in which they reside, have a right to protection in their lives, liberties, and property, they contributing their proportion of the common taxation: but they are not to act inconsistently with their declared dissent, and it would be tyranny to constrain them to such measures.

Rom. xiii. 3. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. 1 Tim. ii. 2. That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. Num. xv. 16. One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth

with you. Exod. xxii. 21. Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Rom. ii. 3. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Jer. xxi. 12. Thus saith the Lord, Execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor. Est. iii. 8. And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws; therefore, it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. 9. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed.

4. Christians testifying against national evils, and striving in the use of moral means to effect a reformation, should relinquish temporal privileges rather than do anything which may appear to contradict their testimony, or lay a stumbling-block before their weaker brethren.

1 Kings xix 9. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there. 10. And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant. Heb. xi. 24. By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 26. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. 36. And others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments. Num. xxiii. 9. Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Rom. xiv. 21. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That it is lawful to profess or swear allegiance to an immoral constitution of Civil Government.

2. "That Christians, under pretence of bearing an active testimony, are bound to effect a change in the moral state of nations with the sword.

3. "That it is not lawful for Christians to wage war in defence of liberty, religion, or life.

4. "That the enjoyment of no temporal privileges may be relinquished for the sake of peace, or for fear of making a Christian brother to offend."

CHAPTER XXXI.

OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

1. IN the present imperfect state of the visible church, from the ungodliness of carnal professors of religion, and from remaining depravity even in the truly gracious, offences or SCANDALS must frequently arise.

Matt. xviii. 7. For it must needs be that *offences* come. Rom. xvi. 17. Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

2. A scandal is not everything which is *sinful* or *displeaseth*; but something in a professor's carriage, which either in itself or from its circumstances,

may tempt others to sin, expose the church to just reproach, or mar the spiritual comfort of the saints.

Rom. vii. 21. When I would do good, evil is present with me. Luke xvii. 1. It is impossible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come. Rom. xiv. 13. Judge this rather, that no man put a *stumbling-block*,* or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ hath instituted Church DISCIPLINE, in order to remove scandals, and prevent their unhappy effects; and no church can, without the faithful and spiritual application of it, hope for his countenance and blessing.

Matt. xvi. 19. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. 1 Cor. v. 12. Do not ye judge them that are within? 2 Cor. x. 8. Our authority which the Lord hath given us for edification. 1 Thess. v. 14. Warn them that are unruly. Eph. v. 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Rev. iii. 16. So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

4. The impartial and prudent exercise of Church Discipline is useful for vindicating the honor of Jesus Christ, maintaining the dignity of his ordinances, preserving the purity of the church, averting the judgments of God, and for the benefit of the offender himself, that by the administration of this ordinance of Christ, through grace, he may be humbled and recovered.

Eph. v. 8. Now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. Matt. xi. 29. Take my yoke upon you. Rom. xvi.

* Scandal.

17. Mark them which cause divisions, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 2 Thess. iii. 6. Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. Rev. ii. 14. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. 2 Thess. iii. 14. Note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. 1 Tim. v. 20. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them:

1. "That the exercise of Church Discipline is not a necessary part of ministerial duty.
2. "That a professor should be censured by a church judicatory for *everything* at which another may justly be displeased."

CHAPTER XXXII.

OF MINISTERIAL VISITATION AND CATECHISING.

1. It is the duty of the pastor of every Christian congregation to inspect the state of his flock, acquaint himself, as much as may be, with the knowledge, the character, the disposition, the conduct, and progress in spirituality, of every member thereof, in order that he may rightly divide the word of truth, giving unto each his portion in due season.

1 Tim. iii. 2. A bishop then must be blameless — vigilant — apt to teach. 2 Tim. ii. 15. A workman that needeth not

to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. iv. 2. Instant in season, out of season. Acts xx. 28. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.

2. He is to visit them from house to house, not merely as a friend, but as one who watches for their souls. In family visitation, the minister is to inquire how they attend upon the duties of personal and family religion, and the various ordinances of public worship, giving them suitable exhortations, and praying for them, and with them.

Heb. xiii. 17. They watch for your souls, as they that must give an account. Tit. ii. 2. That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. 3. The aged women, likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness. 4. That they may teach the young women to be sober. 6. Young men, likewise, exhort to be sober-minded. 9. Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters. 1 Tim. ii. 8. I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

3. The minister is to visit the sick who are incapable of attending the public ordinances, comforting them under their afflictions, admonishing them how they are to improve such dispensations of Providence, exhorting them to prepare for death, and praying for them, and with them, as opportunity may offer, watching for their souls until they are removed from being under his charge into their eternal state. The elders of the congregation are, in their station, to attend to the visitation of the flock, with or without the minister.

Is. xxvi. 16. They poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them. Matt. xxv. 36. I was sick, and ye visited me. 40. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. James i. 27. Pure religion—to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. Chap. v. 13. Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. 14. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him. 15. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick. 16. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Heb. xiii. 17. They watch for your souls.

4. Catechising, which is a plain and familiar way of conveying spiritual instruction to old and young, according to their respective capacities, is a necessary part of the minister's duty, and is to be performed, not for showing his own talents, but for ascertaining and improving the religious knowledge of the catechumens.

Matt. xvi. 15. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Chap. xxii. 42. What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? 45. If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? 1 Pet. iii. 15. Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. Acts viii. 30. Understandest thou what thou readest? 31. And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? 35. Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 37. If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. "That a minister may, in ordinary cases, take the pastoral charge of a congregation, to which it

is evidently impossible he can discharge ministerial duties.

2. "That the fear of giving offence, or the people's having been unaccustomed to it, is any excuse for a minister's neglect of the duties of ministerial visitation or catechising.

3. "That ruling elders are not under obligation to watch over and promote the spiritual improvement of the flock."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

OF TESTIMONY BEARING.

1. CHRISTIANS are WITNESSES for God among men ; and, having in their possession the testimony of God in the Holy Scriptures, it is the duty of the church to apply the doctrines of inspiration in stating and defending truth, and in condemning all contrary errors, bearing witness against all who maintain them.

Is. xliii. 10. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord. Acts v. 32. And we are his witnesses of these things. Chap. xxvi. 16. I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness. Psalm lxxviii. 5. For he established a testimony in Jacob. 1 Cor. i. 6. The testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. Chap. ii. 1. Declaring unto you the testimony of God. Mark vi. 11. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them.

2. The testimony of the church is progressive, in order to oppose and condemn the novel errors which each period may produce. And every generation is to take care that the truth, as stated and defended by their predecessors, shall be maintained and faithfully transmitted, together with the result of their own contendings, to the succeeding generation.

2 Thess. i. 10. Our testimony among you was believed. Rev. xi. 3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy one thousand two hundred and three-score days. 7. And when they shall have finished their testimony. Ps. lxxviii. 5. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; 7. That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children. xlvi. 12. Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof. 13. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

3. The church may not recede from a more clear and particular testimony to a more general and evasive one. But the witnesses must proceed in finishing their testimony, rendering it more pointed and complete, until God shall, according to his promise, overthrow the empire of darkness; and introduce the millennial state, in which the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Rev. ii. 25. But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come. Is. viii. 16. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among

my disciples. Rev. xii. 17. Which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Phil. iii. 16. Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Rev. vi. 9. I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. Chap. xii. 11. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. Dan. vii. 22. And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Rev. xx. 4. And judgment was given unto them — and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. Ps. lxxiv. 20. *Have respect unto the covenant.* 21. *O, let not the oppressed return ashamed.* 22. *Arise, O God, plead thine own cause.* Psalm lxxii. 19. AND LET THE WHOLE EARTH BE FILLED WITH HIS GLORY. AMEN AND AMEN.

We therefore condemn the following *errors*, and testify against all who maintain them :

1. “That the Bible is the only proper testimony of the church.

2. “That a Christian is under no obligation to follow Christ’s witnesses in their faithful contendings.

3. “That it is lawful, in order to enlarge the church, to open a wider door of communion, by declining from a more pointed testimony, to one which is more loose and general.”

APPENDIX.

ADOPTING ACT.

Resolved, That Synod adopt the Formula which refers to our Standards, supreme and subordinate, as presented in the following Articles ; and that it be published as an Appendix to the authorized editions of the Testimony, accompanied with the following

DECLARATION.

To prevent all misunderstanding of the matter of the second Article of this Formula, which embraces the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, it is declared, in reference to the power of the Civil Magistrate in ecclesiastical things, that it is not now, and never was, any part of the faith of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, that the Civil Magistrate is authorized to interfere with the Church of God in the assertion, settlement, or administration of her doctrine, worship, and order; or to assume any dominion over the rights of conscience. All that appertains to the magistratical power, in reference to the Church, is the protection of her members in the full possession, exercise, and enjoyment of their rights. The magistratical office is civil and political, and consequently altogether exterior to the Church.

PITTSBURGH, June 5, 1843.

TERMS OF ECCLESIASTICAL COMMUNION

IN THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA.

1. AN acknowledgment of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God.

2. AN acknowledgment of the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, and Reformation Principles Exhibited, the Testimony of the Church — as embodying, according to the word of God, the great principles of the Covenanted Presbyterian Reformation, to the maintenance of which this Church is obliged by solemn covenant engagements.

3. AN acknowledgment that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Redeemer and Head of his Church, has appointed one permanent form of ecclesiastical government; and that this form is, by divine right, Presbyterian.

4. AN acknowledgment that public, social covenanting, upon proper occasions, is an ordinance of God, and that such moral deeds as respect the

future, whether ecclesiastical or civil, are of continued obligation, as well as upon those represented in the taking of them as upon those who actually covenant, until the ends of them be effected.

5. An acknowledgment of the faithful contendings of the Martyrs of Jesus, and a recognition of all as brethren, in every land, who maintain a Scriptural Testimony in behalf of the attainments and cause of the Reformation, against all that is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness.

6. A practical adorning of the doctrine of God our Saviour, by a life and conversation becoming the gospel, together with due subordination in the Lord, to the authority of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America.

FORMULA OF QUERIES

TO BE PUT TO

MINISTERS AND RULING ELDERS AT ORDINATION.

1. Do you acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God ?

2. Do you acknowledge the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, and Reformation Principles Exhibited, the Testimony of the Church — as embodying, according to the word of God, the great principles of the Covenanted Presbyterian Reformation, to the maintenance of which this Church is obliged by solemn covenant engagements ?

3. Do you acknowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Redeemer and Head of his Church, has appointed one permanent form of ecclesiastical government ; and that this form is, by divine right, Presbyterian ?

4. Do you acknowledge that public, social covenanting, upon proper occasions, is an ordinance

of God ; and that such moral deeds as respect the future, whether ecclesiastical or civil, are of continued obligation, as well upon those represented in the taking of them as upon those who actually covenant, until the ends of them be effected ?

5. Do you approve of the faithful contendings of the Martyrs of Jesus, and do you recognize as brethren, all in every land, who maintain a Scriptural Testimony in behalf of the attainments and cause of the Reformation, against all that is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness ?

6. So far as you can know your own heart, is it the glory of God, and the edification of the Church, and not any selfish object, that moves you to undertake the sacred office of Minister [or Ruling Elder] ?

7. Do you promise, in the strength of divine grace, to rule well your own house — to live a holy and exemplary life — to watch faithfully over the members of this Church — to exhort with meekness and long-suffering — to visit the sick and afflicted — and to attend punctually the meetings of the Presbytery [or Session], and of the superior judicatories, when called thereunto, judging faithfully in the house of God ?

8. Do you promise subjection to this Presbytery [or Session], and to the superior judicatories

of this Church, in the Lord, and engage to follow no divisive courses from the doctrine and order which the Church has solemnly recognized and adopted? — And do you further promise to submit to all that brotherly admonition which your brethren may tender you in the Lord?

North America. General Synod

REFORMATION PRINCIPLES

EXHIBITED

BY THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

"He established a Testimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children: Who should arise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God; but keep his commandments."

THIRD EDITION.

NEW YORK:
LEE, SHEPARD AND DILLINGHAM.
1871.

NEW YORK, May 12, 1806.

THE Reformed Presbytery, impressed with the duty of exhibiting an *Historical View* of the Christian Church, as a Testimony of their thankfulness to God for his goodness to his covenant people, and of their approbation of the faithful contendings of the saints; and also to serve as a mean of instruction to those who are desirous to understand the Presbytery's FIXED TESTIMONY, Do hereby ratify and approve of the Preface and the *Brief Historical View of the Church*, with the proposed Amendments and Additions; and they hereby also appoint Messrs. William Gibson and Alexander McLeod a committee to insert those amendments and additions in their proper places, and to publish the work with all convenient speed.

May 15, 1806.

THE Presbytery referred, for publication, the *Declaration and Testimony* to the Committee to whom was referred the *Historical View*.

Extracted from the Minutes.

JOHN BLACK, *Clerk*.

THE Committee to whom were referred for publication, by the Presbytery, the *Testimony*, the *Historical View*, and the *Preface*, certify this to be a true copy.

WILLIAM GIBSON,
ALEX. McLEOD.

THE Committee to whom was referred for publication, by the General Synod, the "Historical View" revised, and continued to the present time, certify this to be a true copy.

SAMUEL B. WYLIE,
GILBERT McMASTER,
JOHN N. McLEOD,
WILLIAM AGNEW.

NEW YORK, June 20, 1852.

A TRUE copy of the *Historical View*, third edition.

Attested by

JOHN N. McLEOD, *Stated Clerk*.

NEW YORK, June 20, 1871.

P R E F A C E.

THE Gospel of Christ is a system of peace and benevolence. An exhibition of divine mercy to miserable man cannot justly be charged with a tendency to excite evil passions: it is calculated to soothe the heart, and to cherish meekness and love. They who live under the influence of true religion, exhibit a living proof that it does not impair the strength of the understanding, or spoil the temper of man. Christianity, as a subjective principle, is uniformly sober and lovely. Grace originating in Heaven, dispensed by the Blessed Spirit, and constituting *a bond of perfectness* by which men are united to one another and to God in an indissolvable union, is the grand characteristic of religion. In this there is nothing which deserves hostility from any part of the human family.

Those persons, nevertheless, who are separated from the world by the dispensation of God's gracious covenant, are beheld by others with an evil eye. The very existence of the Church is, alas! displeasing to those who are determined not to enter into its communion.

The separation of professors from others, is deemed a reflection upon the sincerity and the safety of their neighbors,

and is, of course, considered as meriting the opposition of those who do not choose to submit to the Christian system. This state of things imposes upon the disciples of the Redeemer a very important duty. They must render to the world, with becoming meekness, a reason of their own hope, and the opposition of adversaries must be repelled with suitable arguments. The sacred Scriptures are a fund of celestial wisdom, from which believers are enriched, and from these they derive resources necessary for their spiritual warfare.

The design of contending earnestly for the faith delivered unto the saints is not only to edify Christians, but also to convince and gain other persons, persuading *them* also to embrace the faith. The testimony of the saints should, therefore, be calculated to preserve the distinction between the world and the Church, to enlighten those who sit in darkness, and to establish those who have already embraced the faith.

The Reformed Presbytery in the United States of North America feel themselves under the most solemn obligations to exhibit to the world the Testimony which they maintain. They claim as a right the liberty of expressing their sentiments with becoming modesty and firmness. Diffident of their own talents and strength, they have no desire to provoke controversy; but sensible of the truth of the system which they have embraced, they invite candid discussion. It is not their interest to be in an error. It is not the true interest of any man to embrace a false religion.

The plan upon which the Reformed Presbytery propose to exhibit their principles to the world, embraces three parts.

The first is *Historical*; the second, *Declaratory*; and the third, *Argumentative*. The Historical part exhibits the

Church as a visible society in covenant with God, in the different periods of time; and points out, precisely, the situation which they themselves occupy as a distinct part of the Catholic Church. The Declaratory part exhibits the truths which they embrace as a Church, and the errors which they reject. The Argumentative part consists in a full investigation of the various ecclesiastical systems which are known in the United States.

The Declaratory part is the Church's *Standing Testimony*. It contains principles capable of universal application. To these principles, founded upon the Scriptures, simply stated, and invariably the same in every part of the world, every adult church member is to give his unequivocal assent.

The Historical part is a help to understand the principles of the Testimony. It is partly founded upon *human* records, and therefore not an article of faith; but it should be carefully perused as an illustration of divine truth, and instructive to the Church. It is a helper of the faith.

The Argumentative part is the particular application of the principles of the Testimony. It specifies the people who maintain errors; and it exposes the errors which they maintain. The confidence which persons may place in this part of the system will partly rest upon human testimony, unless every one who reads it shall have also read and known every work to which it refers. It is not, therefore, recommended as an article of faith; but as a mean of instruction in opposing error, and gaining over others to the knowledge of the truth.

Every human help which can be obtained is to be used in subserviency to the interest of religion. But Divine Truth is alone the foundation of our hope. Authentic his-

tory and sound argument are always to be highly valued, and have always been beneficial to the Church; but they should not be incorporated with the confession of the Church's faith. The argumentative part is a work of much care, and labor, and time. The Presbytery have not proposed to complete it at present.

It shall hereafter be published in distinct and separate dissertations, under such forms and in such order as circumstances may appear to demand.

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Authorities referred to in Book II., Chapter IV.

The statements of the history being made on the authority of the Supreme Judicatory of the Church adopting it, the reference to other authorities is not required. In this respect, the continuation in Chapter IV. is uniform with the previous chapters. As a matter of information, however, the authorities quoted are given here, as they occur in order.

History of the Presbyterian Church, pp. 229-282. — Presbyterian of October 30, 1827. — Hetherington's History, pp. 362, 363. — History of Presbyterian Church, pp. 295, 297, 484, 489, 490, 403. — Minutes of Synod 1827-1821-1812-1821-1823-1831-1846. — See respecting organization of the Associate Reformed Church, a document of the Scottish judicatory, written by the late Rev. Dr. Archibald Mason, pp. 5, 6, 10, 12; Glasgow, 1787.

REFORMATION PRINCIPLES EXHIBITED.

PART I.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH,

AS A VISIBLE SOCIETY IN COVENANT WITH GOD.

IN TWO BOOKS:

THE FIRST EXHIBITING

THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL,

AND THE SECOND

THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

BOOK I.

AN HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH FROM THE FALL OF MAN
UNTIL THE LAW WAS GIVEN BY MOSES AT MOUNT
SINAI.

IN proportion as objects exceed in grandeur, they demand the admiration of the human mind. And there is not among the ranks of created being one object worthy of comparison, in respect of sublimity, with the Christian Church. A moral empire, consisting of members animated by the Eternal Spirit, the mediatory person, God manifest in the flesh at its head, the vast machinery of creation moving in regular subordination to its interest, and exhibiting the ineffable glory of the Divinity, is an object to be contemplated with admiration and awe. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined."

The Church is the centre around which the Creator causes all terrestrial things to revolve. Our views, therefore, of the present world must be indistinct, unless we perceive its relation to the

kingdom of Christ. The history of nations must be imperfect and erroneous, unless they refer to the secret spring by which every motion is directed — the purpose of God to glorify himself in the salvation of his church. This is the meridian line which the Former of all things strikes out through the vast and crowded map of time, and to which every figure, however apparently indistinct and unconnected, is directed by an unerring hand.

The heavens and the earth were created by Jehovah, and each place is adapted by infinite wisdom to the end which it is designed to answer. The first man Adam was appointed to take possession of the earth, for himself, and the whole human race, represented by him, and to descend from him. The tenement was wisely fitted for the occupant. The earth was clothed with verdure; every vegetable in full maturity, and every tree laden with his fruit. The atmosphere was in its best state, and the various kinds of animals, in the perfection of their respective natures, came at the direction of the Creator to testify their submission to man.

A body formed of the earth, and organized upon principles of astonishing wisdom; capable of dissolution, but endowed with a natural immortality; being animated by an immaterial soul, constituted upon principles of necessary immortality, distinguished the common father of our family.

This man God took into covenant. Adam was naturally and necessarily bound to obey all the commandments of God ; but as a moral agent he also had power to consent to the terms proposed by his Creator, and to promise obedience. A covenant between God and man consists in a proposal made by God, and a corresponding engagement on the part of man.

In the first covenant, perfect obedience was required of man. The law of nature, reduced into a covenant form, had a positive precept annexed : “Thou shalt not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Adam, under the united temptation of Satan and of Eve, who had herself been first in the crime, transgressed the covenant of life, and incurred the penalty of death. As the representative of the human race he fell, and all mankind fell in him. This fatal event proved the mean of a further manifestation of the boundless perfection of God. The plans of heaven were not frustrated. It had from eternity been the purpose of the Godhead to exhibit mercy as soon as man should have become miserable.

The event of the fall was foreknown, and the remedy was predestinated. It was predestinated, too, upon the footing of a solemn covenant ; and this gracious covenant is eternal.

There never was a time in which the divine

mind was undetermined. He is of one mind ; and his purpose is unalterable. Each divine perfection, and the harmony of all the divine attributes, are to be exhibited in one system, which shall, at the same time, confer unbounded happiness upon that part of the intelligent family of God which are immediately included in it, and offer to the universe an object of contemplation, which is in reality the perfection of beauty.

There is a covenant of grace between God the Father and his eternal Son, for the redemption of human criminals. The magnitude and the condescension of this plan is an unparalleled instance of the grandeur of the conception of the divine mind. The immense distance between the creature and the Creator is filled up by the mediatorial person Jesus Christ, who, as the second Adam, undertakes to assume the human nature, complete in soul and body, into a union with his divine nature ; and by suffering as a substitute, secure the salvation of those whom it was purposed he should represent. God made a covenant with his chosen, promising, upon condition that he should make his soul an offering for sin, to confer eternal life upon all his spiritual seed.

No sooner was our family involved in sin and misery, than this covenant was revealed. When the first pair felt the operation of the curse, the Redeemer himself, the *personal voice or word of God*, appeared upon the earth, now preserved by his

power as the theatre upon which he is about to exhibit the most astonishing instances of majesty and condescension. He conversed with them, and in the same sentence pronounces the punishment, and proclaims the pardon. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

The covenant of grace was now for the first time revealed, and a suitable dispensation is made of it to fallen man. To this dispensation Adam professedly submits, and in evidence of his faith, calls his wife by the name of EVE, the mother of all living. Both submitted again to the government of God, upon the footing of the revelation of his grace, when they became clothed in those skins which were at once a present earthly benefit, and a type of that justifying righteousness, by which all believers are effectually preserved from condemnation. Immediately did the Redeemer thus dispense, as a new covenant benefit, *bodily raiment*, and a significant religious rite. Sacrifices typical of the sufferings of Christ were then first instituted. The original pair, our common father and our common mother, were the first Church, and the blessed Redeemer himself the first preacher and the first priest, who directed the worship of God upon the footing of the revelation of his grace. Mercy flows through a covenant system, and it is externally exhibited under a covenant form. The visible Church, as a Society, is in covenant with God. The covenant between God and his Church

consists in God's proposing a certain form of religion as the external dispensation of his grace, and the Church professing to receive, and engaging to perform, in the strength of promised grace, every part of religious worship, agreeably to that very form which God has appointed.

Not only are the saints interested in the covenant of grace, but the Church, as a visible Society, is a *Covenant Society*.

The visible Church, thus erected as a Covenant Society, waits for the accomplishment of the promise of God, in the use of the instituted means of grace. The children are included with the parents of the ecclesiastical covenant; the Sabbath is observed, and sacrifices are offered. On the seventh day of the week, in Scripture language, the end of days, Cain and Abel presented their offerings to the Lord. God was present in his Church, and familiarly conversed with men, and by this extraordinary condescension, supplied the want of other means of increasing in religious knowledge. Immediate revelations and domestic instruction supplied the Church, during this early period, with adequate information.

The whole of the human family was at first in the Church, but this did not continue a long time to be the case. Abel by faith offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than his elder brother. Cain was wroth, and the Lord reprovèd him. Instead of reformation, however, the reproof adminis-

tered by the Head of the Church himself, had a bad effect upon this unworthy member. He determined upon revenge, and he murdered his brother.

God called the murderer to an account, spared his life, but secluded him from all further connection with his Covenant Society. This excommunicated vagabond, despising ecclesiastical censures, although pronounced by God himself, and solicitous only about the effect as it respected the concerns of his body, went out from the presence of the Lord, and, together with his offspring, lived in the total neglect of all religious ordinances.

The Church progresses, however, through the medium of the other children of Adam, but especially in the line of Seth. In the days of Enos, who was born in the 235th year of Adam's life, men began to be *called by the name of the Lord*.* Church members are God's children in a special sense, and the disciples, as they are now called

* The marginal translation is preferable to that of the text, Gen. iv. 26. In the text the translation is, "then began men to call *upon* the name of the Lord." In the margin it is, "to call themselves *by* the name of the Lord." The professors of religion, now publicly renewing their covenant with God, are called by his name; and from this period until the days of Job, the discriminating title of the godly continued to be, *the Sons of God*. Gen. vi. 2. Job i. 6. The Covenanters, at this time, were called by the name of the Lord, as they afterwards surnamed themselves by the name of Israel. Isa. xlv. 5.

The best critics confirm this explanation of Gen. iv. 26. Tum cœptum est appellari de nomine Jehovæ. Quæ versio hoc tempore doctis interpretibus merito probatur. VITRINGA.

Nomen suscepisse peculiare cultorum seu filiorum Dei — et Dei nomine vocati sunt. OWEN.

Christians, were then called the sons of God, to distinguish them from the accursed offspring of Cain. The information and the wisdom which Adam obtained by his frequent conversation with God, and his own long experience, were calculated to render him highly useful in the Church. The age of the Patriarchs, before the Flood, being generally nine centuries, rendered them living libraries of sacred knowledge. Two eminent prophets, Noah and Enoch, were also inspired to make further revelations. And in this manner did the Church proceed, until, by the impiety of its members, forming intimacies with the wicked offspring of Cain, the power of religion became almost unknown. God was provoked to overwhelm ungodly professors, and open despisers of his mercy, in one common deluge.

Determined to punish such general corruption, and yet preserve his Church, the Lord renewed his covenant, establishing it with Noah and his family. Several pious persons were then living upon the earth, but they were not admitted into this covenant. They were all to be admitted into Heaven before Noah should enter the Ark. Methuselah died immediately before the flood.

The saints were preserved. Noah and his family were under divine protection. There was not any one of the election of grace found among the rest of the human family. No child of the new covenant was ever afterwards to descend from their

families. They are all destroyed by the judgments of God. The covenant of works procures their death; but the dispensation of the covenant of grace preserves Noah and his family. He by faith prepared an Ark for the saving of his house.

The Church is again reduced to a small compass. Eight souls only are saved in the Ark. God renews again his covenant with Noah and his sons, and in this dispensation of his everlasting covenant of free grace, engages to preserve the world from any similar destruction, and to continue both seed-time and harvest in their seasons.

The Church in a short time increased in numbers, and degenerated in practice. As nations were multiplied, men began to be guilty of idolatry. God, nevertheless, provides for his covenant people his protection. The truly devout found him an exceeding great reward. And they continue to inculcate upon their children the maxims of virtue, to observe the external forms of religion, prayer, conversation, offering sacrifices, and the observation of the Sabbath. Eminent men were raised up as types of the Saviour, and the Church was instructed by the transactions of God with these eminent characters. After Noah, Melchizedek, Abram, Isaac, and Jacob were types of Christ.

God's covenant with Abraham commences a distinct era in the history of the Church. The seed which was sown in the constitution of the Church is now expanded. The visible Church, as a Cove-

nant Society, is already bound to submission to all the institutions of the Lord. These institutions are adapted by infinite wisdom to the state of his Church. As the term of human life diminishes, domestic instruction becomes more precarious, and less effectual. As nations become more distinct, and have separate interests, there is the greater need of a more regular organization of the Church, that its unity may be preserved. And it is always proper that such ordinances as are conducive to edification, and the preservation of an evident distinction from the world, be observed by the disciples of the Lord. The covenant with Abraham was to himself personally interesting. It was a dispensation of the covenant of grace, in which he had already trusted. And, as a type sealed by a bloody rite, it pointed out the covenant of grace to others also.

It is, moreover, a renovation of the ecclesiastical covenant, with some appropriate variations. It is promised to Abraham, that from him the Messiah is to proceed, and that in his family the Church shall hereafter continue.

His first name, Abram, signified an eminent Patriarch, and being changed by God into Abraham, the Father of many people, it became still more significant. This distinguished character travels through the nations, and is universally known. Social worship continues to be conducted in the Church as it formerly had been, by the

observation of the Sabbath, sacrifice, domestic education, prayer, and conference. But God's gracious dispensation to Abram established a more compact ecclesiastical organization than any which preceded it. The Abrahamic covenant has the seal of circumcision affixed to it, and the promised seed is limited to the line of Isaac and Jacob. By this mean, intimation is given to all men, that in these families the Church is in future to be preserved, and in due time to be erected into a more regular visible organization. Although all the children of Abraham, and even his adopted offspring, his servants, are constituted members, and receive the seal of circumcision, yet it is well known that both these, and the other pious families which then lived, are, after the elect are carried to heaven from among them, to dwindle away from the visible Church, and become extinct as to covenant connection with God. Shem himself, who lived fifty years after the covenant was established with Abraham, Melchizedek, and his pious connections Job and Jethro, and all other good men who believed in God and worshipped him accordingly, are continued in the visible Church, according to its ancient patriarchal form; but are excluded from the more compact order, the foundation of which was laid in the covenant of Abraham, and which was at the appointed time to be completely established. Under every form of administration, the immediate children are included with the parents

in the visible Covenant Society, and every dispensation is introduced so gradually, as that they who lived under the former dispensation shall not lose any of their privileges; and thus the unity of the visible Church, although it experiences the necessary alterations in external form, may be constantly preserved. Four centuries did the arrangements made with Abram, as the Representative of the Church, remain for the consideration of the saints, before they were fully put in practice. Circumcision was indeed practised in his family; but the visible Church was not yet so organized as that all others were without its pale, and their forms of worship rejected of God. Prophets and priests were occasionally commissioned immediately by God to instruct, and conduct the devotion of certain parts of his Church. During this period there was no written Revelation, nor were the forms of worship such as required a regular stated ministry. This patriarchal dispensation, adapted wisely by the Redeemer to the state of the world, continued in operation until the Law was given by Moses at Mount Sinai. During this period the Church looked forth as the morning.

CHAPTER II.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH FROM THE GIVING OF THE
LAW UNTIL THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

LIFE and growth distinguish the works of God. These are characters which the utmost efforts of created power cannot bestow upon its own works. The analogy of nature teaches us to expect a progression from infancy to maturity, in the mystical body of Christ. The history of the Church exhibits the operation of this principle. The Covenant Society proceeds toward perfection.

The moral aspect of the world had greatly changed during the four hundred years which preceded the divine legation of Moses. Patriarchal simplicity was almost forgotten, and towards the close of this period the most abominable idolatries almost universally prevailed. These idolatries became incorporated with political institutions, and were supported by the progress of the arts and sciences. The godly men were gradually received into heaven, and their degenerate families became the votaries of the prevailing superstitions. The covenant with Abraham anticipated this event, and preserved the Church from destruction. Such an organization of the ecclesiastical body as may serve the purposes of piety, typify the Redeemer, and preserve the Church distinct from the nations, is now become more necessary than ever. Upon the

pillar of truth such inscriptions must appear as are fit to produce these effects in the present state of human society. Such a constitution is provided for the Church by the Divine Head; and the descendants of Jacob are miraculously delivered from Egyptian bondage, under the conduct of Moses, and, assembled at Sinai, they have this constitution delivered to them in a covenant form. The Sinai covenant is an external dispensation of the covenant of grace, a fulfilment in part of the first promise to fallen man, and a further development of the Abrahamic covenant, divinely adapted to the state of the times. This ecclesiastical organization provided rites which prefigured the coming of Christ, and the consequent change of dispensation. It established laws which directly condemned the idolatrous services of the heathen, and which were abundantly calculated to preserve the temporal interest of the society, and advance the eternal salvation of God's own people. A constant series of miracles during the course of forty years confirmed the divine origin of this new dispensation, and settled according to promise the Covenant Society in the land of Canaan. This people are now the only visible Church. The covenant between them and their God consists in his proposing to them the whole system of ecclesiastical policy now established, and requiring their submission to it, together with their express engagement to observe it in every particular. This dispensation is more

specific than any which preceded it. It requires the observation of the Sabbath, and the offering of sacrifices, as was the case from the first erection of the Church on earth. It requires punctual attention to family religion, and pious conference, as it also was from the beginning. It establishes a regular ministry, to be continued in uninterrupted succession, and institutes elders and judges to preserve order, and punish the rebellious. Divine Revelation is committed to writing, and this book of the covenant is deposited in the hands of the Hebrews, as the rule of their faith and manners. Circumcision, the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant, is continued, to show that this is an enlarged edition of that covenant; and the passover, instituted as the token of their separate preservation in Egypt, is also continued as a commemoration of their deliverance, a badge of their separation from the heathen, and a type of the great sacrifice which the Redeemer is once to offer for their redemption.

These two sacraments, circumcision and the passover, seal the ecclesiastical covenant to every member of the visible Church, seal eternal salvation to every believer, and serve as public declarations to the world of their distinguishing religious profession. The same people who were thus reduced into a Church state, were formed also by the same divine authority into a civil commonwealth. God commands that every part of human conduct should subserve the interest of his Church; and he, by a

divine act, exhibited to the nations an ever-memorable instance of the civil polity being so formed as effectually to answer this grand design. The policy of the heathen nations was to render religion a political engine for the support of daring ambition. Among the Hebrews, civil legislation was intended for the safety of the Church.

The Hebrew Church was, nevertheless, really distinct from the state. The proselytes of the covenant were admitted as full members of the Church, and thus engrafted on the stock of Abraham; but were not admitted to the same civil privileges as the native Israelites. The proselytes of the gate were admitted to some civil privileges, but not to any participation in the benefits of the ecclesiastical covenant. The courts were also different. The Sanhedrim and the Synagogue, to judge of religious concerns, were perfectly distinct from the civil Sanhedrim, and the courts of the gates which judged in civil matters. The Church had the power of settling controversies which respected the religious character, by the ceremonial law; and to the state belonged the decision of controversies respecting injuries and property, by the judicial law. The priests and Levites were the ministers of religion, acting with the assistance of the prophets occasionally sent by the Lord. The civil officers, judges, and kings were magistrates, but not as such authorized to officiate in religious services. And although the civil constitution under-

went many alterations during the existence of the Hebrew nation, the ecclesiastical form continued unaltered. The priesthood, the sacrifices, and the ceremonies are regulated by one uniform law. Divine revelations, however, continue from time to time, and inspired men are commissioned to write for the canon of Scripture. This had some influence upon the mode of social worship.

The state of religion among the Hebrews was much affected by their connection with other nations, and the Church suffered or prospered as the Lord withdrew or afforded his extraordinary superintendence. Eminent prophets and priests, and virtuous judges and kings, were reared up from time to time, as the instruments of reformation, and the sword of the heathen enemy was often providentially used to correct and punish the crimes of God's covenant Israel. The period of suffering was usually an admonition to the duty of repentance and fasting; and the dawn of reformation called the nation and the Church to a solemn renovation of their covenants with God. After the revolt of the ten tribes from the house of David, Jeroboam, their political leader, made Israel to sin against the Lord, by a violation of the covenant of Sinai. Many pious people tacitly countenanced the apostasy, and for several ages after the majority established idolatry, there was a minority in this declining Church who really desired to serve the Lord.

Prophets were sent to warn this degenerate

Church, and to gather the elect of God into their glorious rest. The ten tribes, however, soon became mingled with the heathen; they forsook their covenant God, and the Lord left them to a gradual declension, until their ecclesiastical visibility became entirely extinct. The Jews, upon the contrary, still held their covenant charter, often renewed their obligations, and although they sinned much, and suffered much, the Lord preserved them as his Church, a *a visible Covenant Society*, until the long-looked-for event, the appearance of the Son of God in the flesh, had been accomplished. The state of the Jewish Church, at the period of Christ's nativity, although they had still the external dispensation of grace made at Mount Sinai, and established by ecclesiastical covenant, was different in many important subordinate instances from what it had been upon their first settlement in the promised land. The state of society in general was much altered from what it had been fifteen centuries before that time. The more general diffusion of literature, and of the accompanying arts of civilized life, had produced a correspondent change upon the internal situation of the Church, as well as upon the face of the world. The solemn work of offering sacrifice, which, during the patriarchal dispensation, was competent to every pious man, or head of a family, was, by the Mosaic dispensation, committed exclusively into the hands of the authorized priesthood. And after the temple of the Lord had been erected in

Jerusalem, in that place alone were these solemnities of religion to be performed.

The principal part of social and practical religion was still to be performed in domestic society. Convenient places of worship were, however, established in every part of Judea. The *Proseucha* was the place of common resort for prayer and conference; and one of these, surrounded by a wall and a grove, without any roof or covering, was to be found in the different parts of the land of Israel.

Instruction, before the people learned to read, was conducted entirely by the conversation of the prophets, the priests, the Levites, and the heads of families. The progress of the Jews in literature was very slow. Eight hundred years after the writing of the law by Moses, it was rare to find a copy of the book in which it was contained. During the reign of the pious Josiah there was some difficulty in procuring a copy of it for the king's use. About one hundred and fifty years thereafter, however, the zeal and faithfulness of Ezra was rendered the instrument, in the hand of Providence, in turning the attention of the Church to the word of God, now much enlarged by the inspired writings of the prophets.

The *Proseucha* is then exchanged for the *Synagogue*, and the public reading and exposition of the law become a part of the ordinary worship of every Sabbath in every part of Judea. These Synagogues were the parish Churches of the Jews. They were

provided with a regular class of ecclesiastical officers, whose duty it was to explain the law, read the Scriptures, direct the public devotion, censure the scandalous, and take care of the poor. Wheresoever the Jews emigrated after the time of Ezra, they carried with them their Scriptures and their ministers; and they formed Synagogues in the different cities of the nations in which they resided. They never, after this regular organization, fell into gross idolatry. Unacquaintance with the doctrines of divine revelation is essential to the worship of idols. Such was the visible state of the Church when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a city of David. There indeed prevailed a general expectation at the time of his birth, that he should come; but very few appeared at that time to understand the real character of the promised Messiah, or the end of his mission. In the fulness of time our Lord was manifest in the flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, in order to fulfil the condition of that eternal covenant, which had already, under various dispensations, brought salvation to his seed, and preserved his visible Church as his covenant people upon earth, for the space of four thousand years. He came to fulfil all the types, to abolish, in his death, whatsoever referred to his incarnation and sufferings, and to introduce a new dispensation of the covenant of grace, which should last unaltered until the end of time. During his public ministry he pointed out the abuses which prevailed

in the Jewish Church, explained the law, and predicted both the dissolution of the visible dispensation which the Church now enjoyed, and the establishment of another and a better covenant. He gave the suitable instruction, and introduced rites and ordinances which were after his resurrection to become especial parts of the order of his Church. The covenant with Abraham did not alter the patriarchal dispensation of grace, but by admitting to particular privilege a certain part of the existing Church, that federal transaction prepared the way for the new order established in the covenant of Sinai. The ministry of Jesus did not immediately dissolve the ecclesiastical covenant established by the mediation of Moses, and often renewed by the Jews; but by the erection of a certain part of the existing Church into a special society, holding particular communion with himself, he prepared the way for the new dispensation of his grace, which, by destroying what was typical, would extend the benefits of the Abrahamic covenant to the Gentile world.

It had been long a custom in the Church to use certain baptisms or washings as a religious rite. It was practised by Jacob and by Moses; and in the later period of the Jewish Church, they were in the habit of washing all their proselytes immediately after their circumcision, and before they were admitted to further ecclesiastical privileges. It was also common, at the feast of the Passover, not only

to eat unleavened bread along with the flesh of the paschal lamb, but also to drink, after supper, a cup of wine. Divine Providence had rendered familiar to the visible Church those simple, but significant rites, which were afterwards, by a positive ordinance, to be rendered the visible seals of the covenant.

John Baptist was commissioned, in the spirit and power of Elias, to prepare the way of the Lord, preach the gospel of repentance, and administer baptism as a positive ordinance of God. This was necessary even under the Mosaic dispensation, which was not as yet dissolved, in order to prepare the way for the other, and for effectually preserving the unity of the Church when the forms of religion would be altered. The Redeemer himself instructed his immediate disciples to expect the total abolition of the Aaronic priesthood, of the temple, and the whole temple services. He habituated them to the forms of the Synagogue, and in these Churches he himself repeatedly ministered. He thus showed the perpetuity of such services in his Church; but he never undertook, as a priest of the temple, to offer sacrifices, except that one sacrifice of himself, whereby he perfected forever them that are sanctified, and in which he at once fulfilled the design of the priesthood, the temple, and the sacrifice. Immediately before his sufferings, after having participated of the last passover which should ever be observed with divine acceptance, he instituted the *substitute seal*, the Sacrament of the Lord's

Supper, as a positive ordinance to be observed by his Church forever. The Head of the Church thus providing for its external order, did, at the awful and appointed hour, fulfil the condition of the covenant of grace, and purchase our eternal redemption by his suffering unto the death; bearing our sins upon his own body on the accursed tree. Thus was the Sinai covenant dissolved, and a new covenant established.*

CHAPTER III.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH FROM THE DEATH OF CHRIST UNTIL THE RISE OF ANTICHRIST.

IN the death of Christ, all the types and ceremonies of the Old Testament have had their full accomplishment. The peculiar policy of the Jews is now no more. The veil of the Temple is rent in twain, and the Holy of Holies has lost its prerogative. The wall of partition which separated the seed of Jacob from the Gentiles is taken down, and into *one Church* the inhabitants of other nations are admitted with the children of Abraham, without

* In order to avoid mistakes, the reader must keep in mind that the word *Covenant* occurs in two distinct senses—the *Covenant of Grace*, and the *Ecclesiastical Covenant*, whereby the Covenant of Grace is externally dispensed. The Scriptures direct us to call the visible dispensation of the means of Grace a Covenant. Gen. xvii. 10. Jer. xxxi. 31-34.

distinction of privileges. After Christ's resurrection from the dead, he instructed his disciples more particularly in the doctrine and order of the New Testament Church; and, giving unto his eleven apostles a commission as ecclesiastical officers, he ascended to heaven as an exalted Mediator, to administer the government of the whole empire of created existence, in subserviency to the interest of his peculiar kingdom the Church. On the day of Pentecost he poured out his Holy Spirit in miraculous profusion upon his disciples, in order to qualify them for the extraordinary services to which he called them. The apostles commence their ministerial work, and the first fruits which these laborers reaped, afforded a glorious hope of the plenitude of the approaching harvest. The promise to Abraham, which was divinely restricted to his offspring according to the flesh, until the *seed* Christ came, was now delivered from that temporary restriction by the same divine authority, and offered, with all its increased advantages, to men, without distinction of nations or of ranks. All the families of the earth are now invited to covenant with God. The Covenant Society, ONE in every age, is now exhibited under a form of government adapted by divine wisdom to this last and most perfect dispensation of grace which the Redeemer makes on earth. Every member is directed to submit to it, and to support its whole order forever. The apostles, having equal power, are the only ministers and

rulers of the Church; and they are authorized to establish in Jerusalem the model upon which all Churches are to be formed in future, throughout the nations of the earth. In their own behavior towards one another, they set the example of ministerial parity; and, as extraordinary messengers, endowed with supernatural gifts, they exercised authority over all the Churches. This measure was necessary to place the kingdom of Messiah in an orderly state, that the constitution divinely provided for it might be put in full operation, and its future administration committed into the hands of the ordinary and permanent officers.

The apostles preached the gospel, explaining the whole economy of grace, and reduced into a Church state all who embraced the faith, together with their children. Their visible membership in God's Covenant Society was immediately sealed by baptism. As the rainbow, already in the heavens, became by divine appointment the seal of the covenant to Noah, and circumcision, practised among all the nations descended from Abraham, became the seal of the covenant of Sinai made with the seed of Jacob, so did baptism now for the first time become the seal of the new covenant, although for a long time before it had been a common rite of the Jews, and since the time of John the Baptist a positive institution of heaven. Baptism is a symbolical washing. It represents and seals the union of believers with Christ Jesus in the one body of

the invisible Church. It also signifies the solemn engagements of Christians to the faith and obedience of Christ their Lord, as members in covenant with him and with one another, to maintain in the strength of his grace the unity of the spirit, in the bonds of peace. It is administered by an authorized officer of the organized ecclesiastical society. The element is water; and as the washing is not designed to cleanse literally the body, such a quantity of water is to be applied as may be sufficient to answer the purposes of a symbol. This is all that is necessary. The application of water to the face of a recognized Church member by an ordained minister of the word, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, is the true mode of administering this initiating sacrament. No less than three thousand persons were, on the first day in which the apostles publicly preached in Jerusalem, formed into an organized Church, and baptized by the apostles.

Jerusalem was a large and populous city. It contained upwards of a million of inhabitants. The synagogues, the parish Churches of the Jews, in which, under the Mosaic dispensation, they met for their ordinary worship, amounted in this city to nearly five hundred. The apostles embraced every opportunity which offered of preaching in the Jewish synagogues, and they appeared daily at the temple, the most public place of resort, especially to the devout Jews. But although these places

afforded an opportunity of making converts to Christianity, they did not offer an equal opportunity for the peculiar acts of Christian worship. The disciples could not sanctify the first day of the week in a regular manner, in these promiscuous assemblies, which met in Solomon's porch, or in the Jewish synagogues. They therefore met in private houses, in such numbers as could conveniently associate for the sanctification of the Lord's day; and in these select assemblies or Churches, was the sacrament of the Lord's supper administered. This solemn institution, which is the New Testament passover, commemorates the death of Christ, is a mean of grace, a symbol of our union with the Church, a seal of our visible membership, a badge of our separation from the world, and a public social renovation of the baptismal oath to serve the Lord, and abide by his Church, according to all the ordinances of that ecclesiastical covenant into which God admits us under the New Testament.

Steadfastness in the apostles' doctrine, with a consistent course of obedience to the whole dispensation of the covenant of grace, in opposition to every contrary system, was then the only requisite for admission to Christian communion.

A profession of believing the Bible never did constitute the condition of Christian fellowship. In the first erection of the Church at Jerusalem, no part of the New Testament was committed to writing; and although the Jews believed the Old

Testament, they were not universally admitted into the Church.

The rule of admission into the Church is invariable. He who knowingly professes a belief and approbation of the covenant of grace, who engages to submit to the dispensation of that covenant in every part, and whose conduct is consistent with these declarations, is entitled to admission among the disciples of our Lord. Such were the members of the apostolic Churches. Whensoever the contrary appeared, whether by heresies, schisms, or immoralities, they became liable to censure. The first object of the apostolic ministry was to teach and persuade men to embrace Jesus Christ, and repent of all their sins. The next point to be gained was the organization of the converts into a regular Church state, and to settle the ministry and ordinances among them. The commission of the apostles instructed them to disciple the nations. When a Church was formed in Jerusalem, the apostles placed in every congregation presbyters of their own choice. Of these presbyters, or elders, one was a teacher authorized to administer the word and sacraments, and the others were his counsel and aid in government and discipline. To the consistory or session of elders the whole ecclesiastical power of the Church was committed. But these Churches were all connected in one body by representation; and although Jerusalem contained, in less than twenty years after the first Church

was organized in it, no less than twenty congregations, they are all *one Church*. By the representative system the unity of the empire is supported, however numerous its provinces. By presbytery, several distinct congregations are united in one Church.

Christianity was not long confined to Jerusalem. The efforts of persecutors were the means of extending the Church. Many of the ministers were obliged to fly from Jerusalem, and they went to different places, preaching the gospel and forming Churches, with great success. Wherever there were disciples, they associated according to the ancient practice of the pious Jews, for religious conference and prayer. Several societies of Christians, meeting for private social worship in convenient private houses, existed throughout Judea and the surrounding nations. As soon as convenient, however, these societies were organized into congregations, with a stated ministry and public ordinances. And as the congregations were formed, they were regularly presbyterated.

The rapidity with which the gospel spread during the apostolic age, and the prospect of spreading it still further, exposed all the apostles to great and unceasing danger and toil. They had the care of all the Churches; but they could not be present everywhere. The first converts were, in general, simple and pious; and the first ministers were faithful and zealous. The means of information

were, however, few. The canon of Scripture was not yet complete. Copies of the Scriptures were scarce. Pious books were not to be obtained. Few persons were able to read. The Jewish rites and the Heathen superstition were not easily banished from the esteem even of those who embraced Christianity. The Church required the regular and constant administration of ordinances, and the stated ministry stood in need of the superintendence of those who were supernaturally endowed with the gifts of miracles. The apostles found it expedient to employ EVANGELISTS, in visiting the different places in which the gospel had been planted, in the organization of new congregations, and in directing the ministry, where it was regularly established. These extraordinary ambassadors are, nevertheless, careful to exhibit to the Christian world the true model upon which all Churches are to be constituted. This is apparent from their uniform practice. None are recognized as disciples who do not profess the true religion, and submit to all its ordinances, without exception. There is not upon the records of the Church during the first century, an instance of any one being admitted to Church fellowship, who denied any doctrinal truth, or rejected any practical institution. If it happened that any disciple did, after his admission, embrace heresy, refuse submission to order, or practise any immorality, he was brought under suitable discipline. According to the nature and circumstances

of his scandal, he was admonished, rebuked, or excommunicated. Among the disciples there was no distinction of rights or spiritual privileges, until organized into an ecclesiastic body. The several members had then their places appointed by divine authority. In every organized congregation there was a distinct class of rulers, and all others are ruled and bound to submission in the Lord. To the rulers was committed exclusively the power of *the keys of the kingdom of heaven* — the right publicly to teach and to disciple. Church officers alone can exercise any part of discipline. They alone can admit into Church fellowship, can govern those who are admitted, and can exclude from the privileges of the Church those who are unruly. In no case, during the first century, did a congregation examine and admit a member, judicially try and censure the disorderly, or excommunicate the rebellious.

In every congregation there were ordained several elders. In no instance is an organized congregation under the care of one officer. These presbyters were ordained to office by other presbyters. There is not one case in the apostolic age, of a presbyter being ordained to office by any single individual, whether an ordinary or extraordinary minister. As the ordinations were uniformly conducted by a plurality of ordained officers, and never by one, so the imposition of hands is the significant rite by which the ministerial authority was com-

municated. No one offered to preach or administer the sacraments without regular ordination, except the first extraordinary Prophets and Ambassadors, who were endowed with miraculous gifts to attest their divine mission. Those Christians who met in private fellowship for mutual edification, never employed a preacher, or attempted to ordain an officer for themselves. They waited until the rulers of the Church visited them to administer ordinances, and ordain officers.

A self-organized society, would be a building of man; but in no sense *the house of God*—"the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

The primitive saints had a common cause, and they felt a common interest in the maintenance of the gospel. Their worldly income was cheerfully devoted to that end. Like the members of one family, they all, according to their several abilities, contributed of their property to pious purposes. Not one design ever failed of its accomplishment from want of pecuniary resources in that age while any Christian was in possession of property adequate to the purpose. The income of their estates, and the earnings of their labors, were deemed a common right, and employed for the common good. The rulers of the congregation disposed of its collections; and when paupers were so numerous as to require particular attention, distinct officers were appointed to inspect their state, and to distribute,

with the advice of the Presbyters, the adequate relief from the general fund. The officers who served the tables of the poor were called deacons, a word which signifies servants. They had no authority in ecclesiastical proceedings, any further than as they respected temporalities.

When the extraordinary officers had, under divine direction, settled the church, the ordinary ministry conducted its concerns agreeably to its *Presbyterian constitution*. Each Christian congregation had a pastor of their own choice, regularly ordained as their bishop by a judicatory of presbyters, by the laying on of hands. With this pastor, or angel of the Church, were associated, for the purposes of government, lay-elders chosen by their brethren, and ordained to office by a session or presbytery. The minister and elders, the authorized representation of the congregation, constituted the session. The sessions of several congregations formed one presbytery, and all the presbyteries were under the government of one common judicatory, formed upon the principle of representation, in its most pure and regular form.

This system, admirably calculated to preserve the purity of the Church, was fully exemplified before the death of the apostles, and universally prevailed in the first century. The kingdom of Christ, thus regularly governed, and subsisting in the midst of hostile nations as an independent empire under the protection of the Prince of the kings of the earth,

exhibited to the world the power of God, and the wisdom of God in the salvation of man. It did not, however, enjoy peace for a great length of time. No system, however perfect, can be perfectly administered by frail man. God was, nevertheless, glorified in his Son; the Church had her doctrine and constitution completed; the elect were savingly united to their Lord; and the world was left without excuse. These ends having been obtained, the Church soon began to decline. Heresies and schisms soon distracted her congregations, and called forth the faithfulness and talents of her sons, to defend her order and her doctrine. The Jewish converts endeavored to make the Church more similar to the temple; and the Pagan endeavored to bring it to bear some resemblance to the house of his idols. The philosopher endeavored to corrupt its doctrine, and the politician to model its form according to that of the Roman empire. As the godly were carried home to glory, and the number of the elect on earth diminishing, while the number of professors increased, the Church becomes more corrupt. The most conspicuous characters and places usually set the example of conformity to the world, while obscure corners shine with the light of gospel truth in its original purity. Before the latter end of the second century the appearance of the Christian Church, especially in the principal cities, had altered for the worse.

It is generally the case that the history of the

Church is considered subordinate to that of worldly empires. A historian of American affairs, even in the present day, would be very apt to overlook the most pious and orderly followers of Jesus; and if he wrote of the Church at all, he would bestow attention, not in proportion to the purity and faithfulness of ecclesiastical bodies, but in proportion to their wealth, their numbers, and their worldly influence. The few books which have escaped the destruction of literature in the dark ages cannot, therefore, be considered as exhibiting to view the most pure branches of the Church. They direct our attention to those most conspicuous in the world, though probably the least worthy of our notice. The view, notwithstanding, which they afford us, is that of a declining empire. Christianity, indeed, was extensively diffusing itself in name; but the purity of the Church had lost its lustre. Heresy and strife divided the professed followers of Jesus into factions. Human inventions encumbered divine worship; carnal views influenced discipline; and ambition changed the form of government in those Churches which occupied the most distinguished situations in the Roman empire. A faithful voice was raised against these deviations from apostolic purity. This voice is feeble, as it reaches our ears; but it must have been at first bold and energetic, seeing it has reached us at all, through so vast a wilderness, and over the innumerable interposing obstacles introduced by the Roman Antichrist. Be-

fore the end of the second century, some ambitious ministers began to abuse their influence, their leisure, their wealth, and their literature, as the means of usurping power over their brethren. The pious disciples who formed the Churches at the death of the apostles, were now admitted into the Church triumphant. They transmitted the name Christian to their successors; but man is naturally corrupt, and grace is not hereditary. Iniquity abounded, the love of many waxed cold, the means of information were scanty, books were accessible to very few, and thus the state of the Church offered an easy prey to the rapacity of the ambitious. To support themselves in their usurpation these time-serving pastors left no art untried. Like the Scribes and Pharisees, they pretended superior zeal and sanctity, and they endeavored to make void the law by their traditions. They represented the Jewish as the model of the Christian ministry, and taught their disciples that Aaron typified not the Redeemer, the high priest of our profession, but a prelate of the Church. The deacon, who at first ministered by order of session to the wants of the poor, began to employ servants under him, and in process of time the office was entirely changed, and rendered a spiritual ministry. The presbyter, however, long retained his rank, and contended for his rights. But after Christianity became the religion of the Roman empire, it was mingled with paganism; and the external form of the Church was also modified

according to the civil government. The bishop claimed a superior power over the presbyter, and, armed with the authority of the Roman emperor, he obtained his object. Patriarchs and metropolitans are higher branches of the hierarchy; and these dignitaries of the Church, forcing themselves upon our attention, hide from our view the more pious, faithful, and orderly congregations, which still retain the apostolic doctrine, and worship, and discipline. The word *Bishop*, began in the second century to be applied, in some places, to moderators of the presbyterial courts, and afterwards to those who pretended higher ministerial authority than ordinary ministers; but this application was by no means universal. The zeal of the apostles, and their contemporary ministers of the gospel, carried them through the different nations, and the subsequent persecutions drove many able ministers into every part of the known world.

Churches were settled in the different nations, and at a distance from the seat of the Roman empire these Churches enjoyed their primitive order and truth.

According to prophecy, however, the spirit of the world gradually prevailed over the exertions of piety, in the most conspicuous nations. The ecclesiastical courts were unable to check the growing apostasy. The Church increased, and regular representative assemblies were not permitted to meet by the persecutors. And even when the

magistracy of the empire of Rome professed Christianity, the ecclesiastical councils were influenced in a high degree by the civil power, and the corruption had already become too general to be now effectually prevented. Synods, composed partly of apostates, and the sword hanging over their heads, are not competent to produce reformation. These causes, together with the civil wars and final dismemberment of the empire of Rome, nourished prelatie ambition, and at last placed in the chair of Papal supremacy Boniface the Third. This event took place, in opposition to the will of the struggling Churches, in the year 606. It was effected by the agency of Phocas, that infamous tyrant, who waded to the imperial throne through blood. The Roman supremacy was not yet, however, generally recognized. Princes and Emperors, Churches, and even whole nations, testified against that deed, as a disgrace to the annals of history. The most pure and faithful parts of the Christian Church beheld with anguish the grand apostasy; but they still, though in a great measure unnoticed and unknown, retained the apostolic order. Their bishops were parish ministers. Their elders were representatives of the congregations, and their deacons were the trustees of the poor. The prelaty had, indeed, gradually paved the way for the Pope's usurpation. The nations of Europe in general, and some of the Asian and African governments, were now called Christian. God's visible Covenant Society became

extremely corrupt, and like the house of Israel had broken their covenant. Still, however, the Lord preserved his saints; and the saints struggled against the prevailing iniquity. In every nation there were numbers who did not acquiesce in the apostasy. It was a very small proportion of the Church which fully submitted to the supremacy of Antichrist.

CHAPTER IV.

THE STATE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH FROM THE
RISE OF ANTICHRIST UNTIL THE PRESENT DAY.

THE Redeemer instructed his inspired apostles to predict the rise of a peculiar adversary to his gospel. The universal prevalence of correct principle and regular ecclesiastic order he taught them to behold at a distance. By the splendid triumphs of the truth in the first ages, the power of religion was exemplified, the divinity of the Messiah demonstrated, and the vast number of God's elect children who were at that period on the earth, prepared for their everlasting inheritance. As soon as these purposes were accomplished, the faithful disciples began to realize the truth of the prophecy, that an awful apostasy should affect the world, and the true witnesses become reduced to sackcloth and poverty. One hundred and fifty years after Boniface assumed the title of universal bishop, and claimed spiritual

power over all the earth, his successor Pope Stephen was created a temporal prince, by the efforts of Pepin, the usurper of the French throne. This accession of power was highly acceptable to the pretended successor of Peter, and vicegerent of Jesus Christ. It enabled him to enforce his spiritual supremacy. It is not, however, the jurisdiction of the exarchate of Ravenna, or his possessing the government of some of the Italian states, that constitutes the Roman Antichrist. He who is the visible head of that system of superstition, which, under the Christian name, is the greatest enemy of the Christian religion which ever existed, is on that account alone the man of sin, and son of perdition. By virtue of his spiritual supremacy he ruled the nations of Europe; but they never submitted to his authority as a civil Emperor. The kings of the earth swore allegiance to him, not because he ruled the petty states of Italy, but because he was the Pope. His own civil power, like the magistracy of the nations under his spiritual domination, is one of those horns with which the monster of blasphemy shed the blood of the saints. The Papacy does not cease to be Antichrist, even when stripped of civil authority. The rise of Antichrist is to be dated in the sixth year of the seventh century.

The visible Church then beheld a usurper upon a spiritual throne, claiming the whole government of the kingdom of Christ upon earth. The Church of Rome acquiesced in the claim; but the great

body of Christians opposed his pretensions. The Christian ministry, among all the nations, were independent of the see of Rome during the seventh century, except those of Italy; and a great number, even of them refused submission to him. During the eighth century, when his power was greatly increased, the second council of Nice favored his superstition; but seven years thereafter Charlemagne held a council at Frankfort, consisting of three hundred clergymen from various countries, which condemned the council of Nice, and reversed its idolatrous acts. When the governments of those nations which had formerly been subject to Rome acknowledged the Pope's supremacy, their national Churches were constrained into the same measure. Even then all the Churches in the Popish nations did not recognize the Pontifical authority. It was not until the eleventh century that the Churches of Europe could be called ONE with the Church of Rome. Those persons, of course, who in the different parts of the world renounced the papal authority, were persecuted as heretics. The number and frequency of these persecutions are sufficient to show that vast numbers of congregations and ministers were, during the darkest ages, opposed to the Antichristian system. The Roman persecutors, thirsting for blood, discovered, in the twelfth century, a Christian people, entirely distinct from the Papal Church, enjoying the ordinances of the gospel in their primitive simplicity. The Waldenses,

dwelling in the south of France and the valleys of Piedmont, were a people not numbered among the nations. Providence had separated them as a Covenant Society, from the declining Churches of the nations, that they might exhibit to the world the primitive order, when Antichristian power should have arrived at its height. Reinerius, the Inquisitor-general, describes these newly discovered heretics about the middle of the twelfth century.

The Waldenses were in no connection with the Church of Rome or its clergy. They maintained a system of distinct ecclesiastical policy from the apostolic age. They had their friends scattered in many nations, diligently, but, without attracting much notice, diffusing their peculiar sentiments. This grand enemy, the inquisitor, in order to rouse the indignation of the papacy against these heretics, as he calls them, bestows upon them three characters, which now secure the admiration of Christians to these genuine disciples of our Lord. Their enemies being judges, they are the purest Church. 1. "This sect is the oldest. It endures, say some, from the time of the apostles. 2. It is the most general. There is scarce any country where it is not. 3. It hath a show of piety. They live justly before men, and believe all things rightly concerning God; only they blaspheme the Church of Rome and the clergy." The following character of this Church is drawn by the Centuricators of Magdeburgh, from an old Manuscript. "The Val-

lenses defined the Church of Christ, *That Society which heareth the sincere word of Christ, and useth the sacraments instituted by him, in whatever place it exist.* They consider the Scripture as the supreme standard of doctrine. The reading of the Holy Scriptures they represent as necessary unto all men. The decrees of councils are to be approved as they agree with the word of God. They own two sacraments only, baptism and the Lord's supper. They declare the Church of Rome to be the whore of Babylon, and will not own the pope or bishops. They call the dedication of Churches, the observance of holydays, and all human inventions in religious worship, diabolical inventions." Archbishop Usher has extracted from the History of Æneas Sylvius the following additional characteristics: "They deny the hierarchy, maintaining that there is no difference among the priests on account of dignity of office; but only of usefulness and purity of life. Ministers should be content with the contributions of the people. Every person should have access to the free preaching of the gospel. No sin ought to be tolerated. There is no day holy but the Lord's day. The Lord's supper is to be consecrated in the Church only, and by a minister; neither does its efficacy depend more on a good than a bad man, if he be a lawful minister. Both men and women, and little children, are to be baptized in the Church by the priest."

These eminently pious Churches, which so long

maintained the primitive order, while the whole world was wondering after the beast, were intermingled with persons of a very opposite description. The purest Churches have had tares growing up with the wheat; and wicked men have resided in the same place with the most virtuous. The popish writers attempted to confound all the inhabitants of the land with the Church; and to charge upon the visible Covenant Society the errors which heretics, apostates, and nominal professors may have propagated in that period. The Creed of the Church of the Waldenses, however, was truly evangelical; and the order of the Church, in their terms of communion, form of government, exercises of worship, and administration of discipline, was strictly Presbyterian. To the preservation of their ecclesiastical order they were bound by oath; nor was any considered as belonging to this Church who did not take the Covenant. God in his providence did, in these churches, not only preserve a seed to serve him, and prepare his children for glory; but he also provided a seminary for the instruction of ministers and saints, who should afterwards be instrumental in overturning the empire of the Papacy. The persecutions of these witnesses were frequent and bloody. They were scattered among the nations, and carried with them their knowledge, their piety, and their forms of religious worship. In the thirteenth century they spread and prevailed so far, that the Pope thought it necessary to exert his

utmost efforts to suppress them. They were found in Germany, Bohemia, Poland, France, and Britain. It is computed that in France alone one million of them suffered martyrdom. They were, however, remarkably preserved in some of those countries to which they had been banished; and, like the scattered Jews, before the coming of Christ in the flesh, were preparing the way of the Lord in the different parts of the world.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century, there were about eighty thousand of these Covenanters in Austria and the neighboring territories. They everywhere adhered to their covenant engagements, and pertinaciously opposed popery, and defended their own principles even unto death. They were considered as poor; and being aliens, in those different countries into which they were banished, they were despised; and the contempt was, by the Providence of God, a shield and protection to them. Many eminent men, in the various nations, however, were enlightened by their doctrines and examples; and these again, by their writings, diffused their sentiments, in some degree, throughout the various colleges and seminaries of literature. The progress of knowledge was slow, but it was certain. The celebrated Walter Lollard, who suffered martyrdom in the year 1322, spread through Germany the doctrines of the Waldenses, and the famous John Wickliff filled almost all Europe with the same principles. The scattered Waldenses, still despised,

and still holding fast their integrity, preserved among themselves the true order of the Christian Church; and contributed to instruct those in the established Churches of the nations, who had courage to think for themselves. In the fifteenth century, all Europe became sensible of the need of a reformation of the church of Rome. A council assembled at Constance, which declared the necessity of a reformation, but manifested also that it was not to be expected from the interested anti-Christian priesthood.

John Huss, a man of distinguished talents and erudition, professor of divinity at the celebrated university of Prague, had, together with his intimate friend Jerome, embraced many of the doctrines of the Waldenses. Although in the communion of the Roman Church, they recommended the works of Wickliff, and vainly supposed that their exertions might serve to reform the Church, and recall her from Babylon. They were, however, successful in exciting an uncommon interest for a reformation, and directing the Germans to a more favorable opinion of those old dissenters, the Waldenses, who lived among them. After the death of Huss, a number who had been influenced by his doctrines, actually joined the Church of the Waldenses, who were settled in Bohemia. They adopted one confession of faith. They also agreed upon one covenant, suited to the present state of the Church, which, according to the established usage of the

Waldenses, was subscribed by all the members of the society. Voetius, who had a good opportunity of knowing, assures us that both the Waldenses of Thoulouse and the Hussites of Bohemia, ratified their federal transactions with solemn oath. Thus, while the papal power was at its height, and the horns of the beast, the kingdoms of Europe who agreed to support popery, directed against the witnesses of Christ, Providence was preparing the nations for that remarkable event which took place in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The period of the Protestant reformation will be forever eminent in Church history. The anti-Christian empire was shaken to its centre, and never can recover its former ghastly dominion over the minds of men. The exertions of the Waldenses became successful. They had prepared, in a great measure, the public mind for a breach from the Church of Rome. God poured out his blessed Spirit. Select and suitable instruments for the reformation were found and employed. The state of the political world was made subservient to the kingdom of Christ. Knowledge, zeal, and unfeigned piety were promoted, and vast multitudes converted unto God. Zuiniglius, Luther, and Calvin, and many other eminent men, were employed in opposing the superstition, and they had the happiness of seeing the pleasure of the Lord prospering in their hands. Imbibing the doctrines, and animated by the example of the Valenses, these eminent men contended for the faith.

The reformers were ministers at first in the popish Church, and sought its reformation. They considered the papacy as distinct from the Catholic Church. This is a judicious distinction. The Catholic Church long existed without a pope. By the ambitious dexterity of the Roman pontiffs, the papacy was by degrees incorporated with the Church; but it was really as foreign to its genuine constitution, as a new citadel erected by a successful usurper, would be to an ancient city. The few virtuous ministers which had remained in the Church acted upon this distinction. They opposed the citadel, but still continued in the city. The city had been a long time unsafe, but it had not been absolutely deprived of its ancient liberties, until the council of Trent had completely established every part of anti-Christianism by ecclesiastical law. From that period Romanists are to be considered as excommunicated from the privileges of God's visible Covenant Society. They are preserved in this excommunicated state as barren branches, which are to be visibly burned.

The reformation met with opposition. It progressed, nevertheless, under the smiles of an approving Providence, and in different nations they who sought the Lord publicly covenanted. In the year 1530 the Lutherans performed this important duty. They framed the famous League of Smalkalde, which was solemnly renewed four years thereafter. On the 20th day of July, 1537, the

capital articles of the Christian religion and discipline were sworn publicly by the senate and people of Geneva. As soon as the reformation put on a regular appearance, and the reformers had erected a separate communion from the Roman Church, the Waldenses strengthened their hands, and joined in their churches. On the 11th of November, 1571, in a general assembly, they entered into a solemn bond of union. They all bind themselves, under the sanction of an oath, to maintain inviolably the ancient union between all the faithful of the evangelic religion and the Waldenses down to their own time. They promise to submit to the good external regulations and ecclesiastic discipline already established, and to this period maintained among them. The Churches in Switzerland, in France, and in Holland, of all the Churches of the continent of Europe, attained to the highest purity; and the Church of Scotland, between the years 1638 and 1649, appeared at the very zenith of the reformation. The Lutherans still retained the monstrous absurdity of Christ's bodily presence in the sacrament, and in framing the external order of their Churches, adhered too closely to the popish model. The Church of England, especially, preserved her resemblance to the Church of Rome. The scanty reformation which took place in that kingdom, although overruled by Divine Providence for good to the Christian cause in general, was very far from being under the immediate direction of Christian

principle. It was not conducted by an inquiring people and enlightened ministry. The Church really had little hand in it. It was a creature of state policy. The Eighth Henry, a truly irreligious man, produced the reformation of England, in order to gratify his lust, his avarice, and his ambition. He was a king of haughty passions, and of principles the most despotic. To be revenged of the Pope, Henry was willing that the Church of England should be altogether disconnected from the Roman; and in order to effect this, he consented that some deviations might be made from the doctrine and order of the papacy. The alterations were, however, very few. None were tolerated by the king, except such as were necessary to establish independency of Rome. He claimed to himself the authority of which he stripped His Holiness. The nation and the priesthood acquiesce in the claim, and the impious Henry the Eighth is proclaimed the head of the Church of England. The principal advantage which the nation obtained by the change was, that now they had their Pope not at Rome but in London. In Scotland the state of the nation was rendered, by Divine Providence, favorable to the propagation of religion. The Reformation commenced with the most learned and eminent ministers. It was gradually advanced, not as an engine of state power, but as an interest totally distinct from the policies of the present world. The crown was opposed to the Protestant interest, and

could not, therefore, under the mask of friendship, introduce anti-Christian corruption into the Reformation Church; and it was too weak to destroy the Protestant cause. The nobility overawed the monarchy, and shielded the commonalty from danger; while the faithful services of John Knox, and other able ministers, propagated the reformation among the people, until the mass of the nation being under its influence, they agreed to alter the civil government, and give it a direction contrary to popery. In Scotland the monarchy had not power to subdue religion into an engine of state policy; but Christianity influenced the national society to render its civil constitution subordinate to the kingdom of Christ. The Church is recognized as a *regular and independent empire*, of which Christ Jesus is alone the King and Head — as an empire possessing officers and courts, which have the exclusive right of regulating its concerns by the divine law. Civil government is considered as an ordinance of God, for the preservation of peace and order among men, and for regulating every worldly interest among Christians, in subordination to godliness and honesty. The doctrines of religion are briefly stated. The corruptions of popery are summed up and condemned. The worship is reduced to its primitive simplicity. The ministry relinquishes all imitations of the Roman hierarchy; and ecclesiastical discipline is exercised by the authorized officers of Christ's peculiar kingdom. The Scottish reformers, after

the example of the saints in other places, and in former times, repeatedly enter into covenant with God. They engage themselves, in the strength of promised grace, and with the solemnity of an oath, to maintain and promote, in their several places and stations, the interests of the true religion, according to the law of God. Christianity, thus regulating the individual and collective concerns of these excellent and godly men, appears as a system worthy of its divine Author, and wisely adapted to promote the temporal happiness of nations, and the everlasting felicity of men.

The time had not yet, however, arrived, which God had set for the destruction of Antichrist, and which he revealed by the prophets to the Church, as the wished-for period when the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. By the reformation, several very important ends were accomplished. 1. The human mind was roused from its lethargy, and all its natural energies excited to that variety of action, which is calculated to strengthen and improve the understanding, and contribute to the production of that high degree of civilization which is to prevail when the Church shall appear in her millennial splendor. 2. The elements of sacred truth were discovered, collected, and explained. The holy Scriptures were delivered from the bondage of the anti-Christian Church, translated into a variety of languages, and transmitted to every corner of the

world, in order to utter a voice more distinct, loud, and lasting than that of the Baptist in the wilderness of Judea — *Prepare ye the way of the Lord.*

3. Judgment was poured out upon the seat of the beast, which shook his throne, and smote the arm by which he extended his sceptre, with a debility, from the effects of which it can never completely recover. And lastly, The reformation proved the means of eternal life to a vast number of God's elect children then upon the earth, and left an example which animates the hope of the witnesses of truth, and is a sure pledge of the perfect fulfilment of the prophecies which exhibit the future grandeur of the visible Church.

The Protestant reformation, although an ever-memorable and glorious event, was far from exhibiting to the nations in which it prevailed a complete view of the Christian Church in all her beauty. One great and essential principle of Christ's kingdom, the UNITY of it, escaped the observation of a number of the reformers, and was almost universally violated. The Christian system, by its unalterable simplicity, is divinely adapted for universal prevalence. The Scripture model of the Church, if adopted, would render the Church ONE, not only in the subjective principles of religion, but also in its visible form among all the nations of the earth. The immediate danger of the first reformers, the difficulty of mutual consultation upon subjects of common concern, the selfish views of the civil

rulers who joined them, and screened them in some measure from papal persecution, and the influence of those who co-operated with them from bad motives in opposition to the papacy, prevented attention to this principle in the organization of the Churches of the reformation. Very few at first thought of extending uniformity any further than their own particular district. While the ministry of the Church was too inattentive to the unity of the Church, and its absolute independency of the civil governments of the nations, the civil rulers were endeavoring, in each of the Protestant countries, to render the Church, in its external form, a creature of the civil authority.

Another cause, also, contributed powerfully to the violation of this principle. Great revolutions give an unusual impulse to the human mind, and tend to encourage enthusiasm. Extravagance and disorder follow, of course, and Satan favors the delusion, and encourages every impiety. No sooner was the anti-Christian authority rejected in any nation, than sectaries of every description arose, ran to the most dreadful excesses, and thus distracted the attention of the faithful from the point of general and more remote investigations about Church unity, constraining them to consult present expediency, and hasten the adoption of some order which might compose the spirits of men. It became absolutely necessary for the civil authority to exert its power in suppressing these disorderly

combinations, which, under pretence of religion, violated all righteousness; and the transition was natural and easy, although very unjust, from giving law to enthusiastic sectaries who disturbed civil society, to legislating for the Church itself. Thus did the circumstances of the times prove the occasion of establishing evil by civil and ecclesiastical law. The great and good Protestant reformers thus sowed the seeds of lasting schisms and feuds in the reformation Church, by framing ecclesiastical constitutions, differing as widely from one another as did those constitutions of civil government under which they resided. These diversities, arising at first from principles of expediency, or from the necessities of the times, did not hinder a friendly intercourse between the pious people of that age. Soon, however, too soon, did party prejudice and pride, introduce bigotry into the Protestant Churches. Instead of prosecuting at their leisure a further reformation, and procuring a general uniformity, each adhered with zealous pertinacity to the forms already established, and thus were handed down to the present day all these dissensions and schisms, with the example still more mischievous, of rending the body of Christ at pleasure. The visible Church has consequently little unity in practice. Every city has its several congregations, not as the distinct members of one common family, but like the hostile tribes, which watch the opportunity of injuring one another, and which of course excite uneasy and constant jealousies and rivalships.

One great man among the first reformers anticipated these evils, and endeavored to prevent them.

John Calvin equalled his contemporaries in piety, accuracy, knowledge, and faithfulness. He surpassed them all in the grandeur of his conceptions. His capacious mind embraced the present and future interest of the Church; and his discernment pointed out the means of establishing the peace of Jerusalem. He proposed a plan which should embrace into *one Church*, all the friends of the reformation in every country; and which should direct the united strength of the Protestant nations, for its protection against the man of sin and all the kings which were devoted to the idolatries of Rome.

The Church of England frustrated this grand attempt. She could not act without her head, the *monarchy* — a head, on which is written the name of blasphemy.

England, practising upon her favorite maxim, no bishop, no king, and holding on the sixteenth century, as she has done until the nineteenth, the balance of power, refused to part with the *idol prebacy*, and thus rendered abortive the plan of comprehension.

The venerable reformer, although he lamented the disappointment, did not sink into despondency. With the assistance of his friends, and under the direction of his God, he had succeeded in establishing, in Geneva, an ecclesiastical policy, which should

be an example to the surrounding nations. The great doctrines of the Gospel are reduced into the form of a confession of faith. The Presbyterian order is delineated in a book of discipline. A Church is formed, and its members enter into solemn covenant, in conformity to the primitive pattern, and in agreeableness to the Holy Scriptures, and their own subordinate standards. The civil authority is persuaded to act as nursing fathers and nursing mothers; and the senate of Geneva, on the 20th of July, 1537, enter into covenant, ratified by an oath, to support this newly organized Church. Ecclesiastical covenanting rests upon an immovable basis. *The Church is a Covenant Society.* A national covenant is a very different thing. The covenanters of Geneva understood the difference, and they practised accordingly. They had no intention to intermingle Church and State. But they were fully persuaded that the civil polity should protect the Church against Antichrist. *Nations are bound to honor Messiah;* and upon this principle they covenant with God. A seminary of literature was also established under the direction of the Church, which proved of eminent service. The youth flocked to it from every nation, and returned to their respective homes ably qualified to serve in the Gospel their divine Lord and Master, in their native countries. By God's blessing, their ministry was successful; and in no place more so than in Scotland.

While the reformation was progressing toward

its perfection in that kingdom, the English monarchy, although the greatest barrier to the reformation of England itself, proved a shield to protect, from papal persecution, those who promoted its interest in the northern part of the island.

The ways of Providence are wonderful. He can raise up a protection to his saints from among their enemies. If nominal members of the Church, and the various sects of heretics, are a grievance to the pious disciple, they serve also to screen him from persecution. Unregenerate professors and the sects of heresy are providentially interposed between the real Church and the openly wicked world. Were it not for this hedge, it would require a constant miracle to prevent the wicked from murdering the saints. But the Lord had also much people in England. While the Church of Scotland was improving the Geneva model, by rendering the confession of faith more full and explicit, and the whole order of the Church more correct and definite, the same principles were rapidly progressing in England. Under the name of Puritans, the friends of primitive Christianity were known in that realm. Civil liberty accompanied religion in its progress, and it would have been a happiness to the world had she never forsaken or outrun her heavenly guide and companion. To the Puritans alone the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution. They stemmed the torrent of despotic power which threatened to overwhelm the nation. The spirit of the nation was at length roused, and produced an

invitation to reform the Church. An ordinance of Parliament called upon the most pious and learned men of the nation to meet at Westminster, on the 1st of July, 1643, to consult together, and advise the Parliament touching the concerns of religion. This assembly was composed of the most eminent divines and laymen of the age. It was not designed for a national synod or a representative body of the clergy, but only as a council to the Parliament. The civil authority demanded their advice in advancing the cause of truth and righteousness, and consequently called them, not as an ecclesiastical court, having jurisdiction over the Churches, but as a committee of arrangement to promote the interest of religion, and the further reformation of the Church. This assembly, with the assistance of commissioners from the Church of Scotland, drew up and exhibited to the world, in a confession of faith and catechisms, directory for worship, and a plan of Church government, the most definite, scriptural, and complete system which had ever been exhibited by any council or assembly. It was intended as a system of uniformity, which should unite in one Church the friends of religion in England, Ireland, and Scotland. Such a system became necessary, as these nations had entered into a solemn league and covenant for themselves and their posterity that all things might be done in God's house according to his own revealed will.

This covenant was drawn up by a committee of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland,

and commissioners from England. It passed both the assembly and the convention of estates at Edinburgh in one day, and being sent to England, it was ratified by the Assembly and the Parliament. Monday, the 25th of September, 1643, in the Church of St. Margaret's, Westminster, Mr. Nye read this covenant from the pulpit, article by article, each person standing uncovered, with his right hand lifted up bare to heaven, worshipping the great name of God, and swearing to the performance of it. It was afterwards subscribed by the House of Commons and by the Assembly. It was sworn by the House of Lords, on the 15th day of October. This covenant binds these nations to the preservation of the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland; it also binds to constant exertions to establish uniformity in religion over the three kingdoms, and to perpetual perseverance in the same cause against all opposition. Copies of these transactions were sent by the assembly of divines, accompanied with appropriate letters, to the Churches of Holland, France, and Switzerland.

All these Churches returned respectful answers, and the Netherland divines expressed not only an approbation of the covenant, but desired to join therein.

The Presbyterian system was never completely established in England, although it was for some time the most prevalent. And after several years of civil tumult and religious anarchy, the nation

again crouched under the burdens of both the monarchy and the prelacy. The restoration of the British monarchy was accompanied with national perjury. The prelacy and the throne were established in blood. The reformation was overturned, the covenant was broken, and upwards of twenty thousand Presbyterians died as martyrs to the covenanted reformation.

The Protestant Churches have, since the middle of the seventeenth century, been declining in purity.

A sceptical philosophy has corrupted the principles of a considerable proportion of the literary part of the community. Commerce has nurtured in its lap sensuality and avarice. Mistaken ideas of civil and religious liberty have rendered men impatient of the restraints of Christian discipline. And the politicians of the present world have prevailed too far to render the Protestant systems minister to their ambition. The visible Church, divided into factions, and encumbered with a mass of irreligious professors, presents in every place an appearance which fills the serious mind with pain.

America, colonized and settled by Europeans, has offered an asylum for Christians of every denomination from the effect of the penal statutes standing against them in different countries of the old world. In the United States particularly, the simple form of civil government affording equal protection to all ranks of men, we often find the various forms of religion practised in one city.

God has, in his Providence, presented the human family in this country with a new experiment. The Church, unheeded by the civil powers, is suffered to rise or fall by her own exertions. The truth is great, however, and by the blessing of God, and the faithfulness of the saints, it will yet triumph. Towards the beginning of the eighteenth century, the pious people in Europe direct an eye of unusual anxiety towards America. Twelve centuries have now elapsed since the rise of Antichrist. His fall is fast approaching. Dreadful judgments await all the parts of the Roman empire. The *heavens* and the *earth* of that system must be shaken and removed, and the witnesses be killed by the last efforts of the beast. Many exercise a hope that America will escape the dreadful carnage; and that the visible Covenant Society of God will here find a place of rest until Europe be drenched in the blood of the enemies of religion. Certainly Christians are now very much scattered over the face of the earth. Books replete with solid information abound. Let the anti-Christian empire be completely overturned; and when the Lord pours down his Holy Spirit, the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ. Then shall the Churches relinquish every carnal prejudice, and adopt the prophetic maxim — Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant. The Church shall then be one in all nations.

BOOK II.

AN HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN REFORMATION UNTIL THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT, 1643-1688.

THE Church in Scotland enjoyed advantages in prosecuting reformation which were unknown to the other Presbyterian Churches. The poverty of the nation laid a restraint upon the ambition of ecclesiastics, preserved a singular simplicity of manners, and rendered religious controversy what it always ought to be, a contest for principle, not for worldly interest. The insular situation of the inhabitants prevented foreigners from mingling with them; and the reformers, undisturbed in a great measure by the factions which distracted the Protestant interest upon the continent of Europe, were enabled to direct their faithful exertions to the establishment of regular order and discipline in their own Churches.

The power of England overawed the popish

party of Scotland; and while itself was but half reformed, served as a protection to their more faithful northern neighbors from the anti-Christian empire. The Scottish crown did not possess sufficient power, as in the other countries, to render the reformation an engine of state policy; and being restrained by the nobles, who formed a strong barrier between the king and the people, the Presbyterian ministers organized the Church upon its pure and primitive plan, establishing its doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, perfectly distinct from the civil authority, and independent of the power of the magistrate. God, by his Providence, directing the external affairs of the nation in subordination to religion, he animated his faithful servants by a remarkable degree of knowledge and holiness. The Presbyterians in Scotland learned from their Bibles that the system of grace is the chief of God's works; that the saints are the salt of the earth, and Jesus is King of kings, and Lord of lords. Having organized the Church as the peculiar kingdom of the Redeemer, upon principles which maintained the exclusive headship of Christ, they demanded that the crown of the nation should be laid at the feet of Messiah. They required that the Church should not only be tolerated to establish her distinct ecclesiastical organization, but that she should hereafter be supported by the civil power of the nation in the enjoyment of her established rights. These pious politicians argued upon Scrip-

ture principles. God preserves the world on account of his Church. Christ administers the government of the universe in subordination to the Church; angels and men are commanded to obey him; and all civil constitutions should be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the Church. They required, therefore, that the King of Scotland should no longer give his power to the anti-Christian beast; should no longer drink of the intoxicating cup of the mother of harlots; but bow before the Prince of the kings of the earth. The majority of the nation required that the government should be administered, not for the glory of man, but for the welfare of society, the good of the Church, and the glory of God. They were successful. The nation entered into these measures by solemn covenant; and their pious neighbors in England and in Ireland joined in a solemn league to preserve the established order of religion in Scotland, and to use their endeavors for the introduction of a similar order in these two nations. In consequence of this union the English Presbyterians in the Assembly at Westminster, with the assistance of commissioners from the Church of Scotland, completed those ecclesiastical standards which have been received as agreeable to the Scriptures, and as the bond of the covenanted uniformity between the Reformed Presbyterian Churches in the British empire.

This system was reduced into operation in Scotland, and constituted the finishing part of the second

reformation throughout that kingdom. The Church enjoyed these attainments in peace but a very short time.

The period appointed in God's purpose for the destruction of Antichrist, and for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, had not yet arrived. God's visible covenant society had not as yet finished the testimony which the witnesses were appointed to give. They must still appear in sackcloth, and seal by the blood of martyrdom the testimony which they held. Several causes contributed, under a holy Providence, to bring the Church into severe troubles and trials, which should prove the faithfulness of the saints.

The Presbyterians used power with moderation. They never proposed to render men pious by compulsion. They restrained open irregularities; they punished the profanation of the Sabbath, daring blasphemy, and public overt acts of idolatry. They procured acts of Parliament to exclude from civil office all those who, evidently disaffected to the reformed constitution, might be expected to make use of their power and influence to subvert the beautiful and venerable fabric. They were, however, unwilling unnecessarily to embroil the nation by a total dissolution of the monarchy. They even still retained some veneration for the principle of the hereditary succession of royalty. And when the English independent faction executed upon the

first Charles the demerit of his crimes, the Scottish Parliament, being then sitting at Edinburgh, did immediately order his son, Charles II., to be proclaimed king. They accompanied the proclamation, however, with a declaration, that before he be admitted to the exercise of the royal power, he shall give satisfactory evidence to the kingdom of his attachment to the constitution of government as now reformed, according to the covenant and solemn league.

This was rash and highly imprudent conduct. The friends of Scottish liberty, and even the most faithful friends of religion, were hurried into the measure by the dread of being overwhelmed with the anarchy which now began to prevail in England, under the influence of their present mock Parliament. They made a dangerous experiment; and they had afterwards abundant cause to repent their own rashness. Power should never be conferred on any whose previously tried and established reputation does not afford a prospect that he will use it in the cause of righteousness. No profession can bind a man without principle. To require a profession of virtue from an unprincipled man, is to tempt him to hypocrisy. Such was certainly the case in respect of the infamous and perjured tyrant who bore the name of Charles the Second. He was at the Hague, a town in Holland, when he was proclaimed king. Commissioners were immediately sent to treat with him, but he refused to

give the required satisfaction, and they returned to Scotland without him. Happy would it have been for the nation had they then placed the reins of government in the hands of some of their own able and virtuous citizens; but their connection with England would not admit of this measure. Next year commissioners were again despatched to treat with the exile king. They found him at Breda, a city of Dutch Brabant. He there pursued his wanton pleasures, and upon the Saturday before he left that city, after having agreed to the terms of the treaty, he returned from his revellings, and refused submission to the terms. Upon the following Sabbath, he, as an Episcopalian, took the sacrament kneeling, and thus sealed, by unworthy communicating, his opposition to Presbyterians, and to the God whom they adore. The Rev. Mr. Livingston, one of the commissioners, an eminently godly man disapproved of the whole procedure respecting his recall, and declared that, in Charles Stuart, they carried the plague of God to Scotland.

Upon the king's arrival in Scotland, he solemnly swore to maintain the covenanted reformation; and upon the 16th of August, 1650, published a declaration, in which he abjured Popery and Prelacy, lamented his father's tyranny and idolatry, promised that he should have in future no friends but the friends of the reformation, and no enemies but the enemies of the covenanted uniformity. He was publicly crowned at Scone, on the first of Jan-

uary, 1651, after an excellent sermon, preached by the Rev. Mr. Douglas, from 2 Kings xi. 12, 17. In the presence of the national representatives and the commissioners of the Church, he renewed the covenants, solemnly swearing, with his hand lifted up to God, to rule the kingdom in agreeableness to the established constitution. The people, by their representatives, then declared their choice of him to be their king. The Marquis of Argyle placed the crown upon his head, and then the nobles and commons took the oath of allegiance that they should be faithful to the king, according to their national and solemn vows in defence of religion and righteousness.

Never were king and people more strictly bound to God and to one another, than were this king and these people. But it soon appeared that the people had committed the guardianship of their rights to very treacherous hands. Cromwell, the English usurper, had invaded Scotland with a powerful army. In this kingdom there was a minority, who, on account of their attachment to prelacy and arbitrary power, did not acquiesce in the present established constitution. Vicious in morals, considering religion only as an engine of power, opposing the liberty and independence of the Church, and entirely devoted to prelacy and arbitrary government, they were by law excluded from places of power and trust in the state and in the army. They had served King Charles I. in his endeavors

to enslave the nation; and the commonwealth, having succeeded in throwing off the yoke, did not choose to intrust these men with power. They enjoyed unmolested their personal liberties and property under the law; but no policy could justify their promotion to official stations, without evidence of their having changed their sentiments. The principal men of this party, remarkable for their immorality, as well as their opposition to the reformation establishment, were called malignants. As they had long enjoyed the patronage of the tyrannical house of Stuart in the chief offices of state and army, some of them were experienced warriors and able politicians. Although now a very small minority, they were still formidable, and ought to have received a more effectual debasement than the generous and pious people who now possessed the power, were disposed to give even to their enemies.

Such was the state of parties in Scotland, when the army appointed to support the young king and his people, under the conduct of General Leslie, was defeated at Dunbar, by Oliver Cromwell. The king was pleased at this defeat. It afforded an argument for the admission of the *malignants*, who were known enemies to Cromwell, into the army which defended Scotland. By private intrigue, this impious monarch, and these malignants, formed plans for the overthrow of the constitution. They professed reformation; they were admitted to mili-

tary power ; they took the oaths of office, and were admitted into the councils of state. Their hypocrisy did not, however, deceive all the friends of the reformation interest. There were many faithful men who considered their penitence as mockery, their submission to church discipline for their immorality as hypocrisy, and their oath as perjury. The most faithful ministers and presbyteries opposed the admission of these malignants into communion, and the most virtuous politicians opposed their admission to civil office. Presbyterians were thus, by the impious cunning of their enemies, divided among themselves. Those who favored the malignants were called *Revolutioners*, and those who opposed them *Protestors*. This division produced the ruin of the civil constitution, and prepared the way for that persecution which soon destroyed the Church.

The English arms having prevailed over those of the king and the Scots, Charles escaped to France, and threw off the mask of Presbyterianism. Despairing of obtaining the crown of England by means of the Scottish reformers, he applied for assistance to the Popish powers of the continent, and embraced the Roman religion. He still, however, pretended to be a Protestant. Scotland, in the mean time, was reduced under the English usurper. This occasioned further dissensions among the Presbyterians. The reformers were in the habit of referring every part of their conduct to some gen-

eral principle, and if the principle was not correct, to condemn the practical application of it. They were sensible that morality could not otherwise be well understood or practised. It was of course a question of a very serious nature that now demanded their attention, — Was Oliver Cromwell to be considered as a usurper, or as a lawful ruler, to whom obedience is due for conscience' sake? The friends of the Protector, as Cromwell was called, were few, but they were formidable. The army was under their command. They required also conscientious submission to the power of the Protector. They reasoned thus: "The powers which he exercises are in themselves lawful, and he has acquired from God's Providence a *right* to exercise them. *The powers that be, are ordained of God.*" To these arguments it was replied, that although tyranny and usurpation were permitted by a Holy Providence, and overruled for the good of the Church, they had not the divine approbation, had no claim on the obedience of Christians, and might not only be lawfully resisted, but completely overthrown. That Cromwell was a usurper was manifest. He was never chosen by the nation to govern it; and the constitution, ratified by solemn oath, excluded him from power. To this constitution, the more faithful Presbyterians considered themselves bound by covenant to adhere.

The disputes between the Revolutioners and the Protestors were still agitated with a vehemence

which distracted the Church. The most faithful ministers were of the *protesting* party. They condemned the resolutions which admitted into Church communion, and into civil and military power, the malignants. They condemned these measures as ministers and as patriots, who sought the good of their country in subordination to Christ's kingdom. They maintained that none should be admitted to Church fellowship, or continued in it, unless they professed the true religion, and understood what they professed — unless they evidenced repentance of all their sins — led a holy and religious life — and promised submission to all the ordinances of the Gospel. They considered as no recommendation a hasty profession of repentance, and a promise of submission to ecclesiastical order, coming from persons who were uniformly remarkable for their impiety, and who now had a motive for hypocrisy, in the expectation of power and office. They declared it to be a prostitution of the privileges of the Church to confer them upon such characters. They urged it upon the public mind as an important maxim, that no enemy of the civil constitution should be intrusted with a share of its administration. They exposed the folly and the madness of bestowing military power upon the inveterate enemies of religion, liberty, and law. They fortified these declarations by judicious arguments from the Scripture. Two very judicious dissertations against associations with malignants were

published and circulated, the one by the famous Mr. Gillespie, and the other by Mr. Binning.

The faithfulness of the Protestors excited the *envy* of their brethren, the *Revolutionists*, and provoked the *enmity* of the *Malignants*, who now waited for an opportunity of vengeance.

The opportunity, alas! soon arrived. After nine years' exile, King Charles was restored, and monarchy was re-established in England, as well as in Scotland. General Monk was the principal agent in accomplishing this flattering, but fatal change. He was the second son of an ancient but decayed family. He betook himself in early youth to the profession of arms, and sought military experience in the Low Countries, the great school of war. When the quarrel between Charles the First and the Parliament broke out, he returned to England, and joined the standard of tyranny and royalty. After the overthrow of the English monarchy, this adventurer enlisted under the republican banner, and fought against King Charles II. in Scotland. When this kingdom was reduced under the English arms, Monk was left by Cromwell with the supreme command. He served Oliver, and his son Richard, until he was deposed; and to the Parliament afterwards, he gave entire submission. He protested, however, against the violence of the English army which invaded the Parliamentary privilege, and established military government in England. He was a man of much apparent moderation, and of

deep design. He perceived that the English were wearied of anarchy, and that the Scots longed for the re-establishment of their monarchical constitution, as limited and reformed, agreeably to their solemn covenants. He determined to take the advantage of these dispositions. He was covetous to the extreme, possessed a vicious mind, and could not be exceeded by any man in dissimulation.

The Rev. Mr. Douglas first proposed to General Monk the king's restoration; and he did himself travel through a great part of England and Scotland to engage the leading Presbyterians in his majesty's service.

Monk, in the mean time, marched to England, defeated the prevailing faction, restored the Parliament, and took the oath of allegiance to the commonwealth. The whole power of the nation being now in the hands of the Presbyterians, the covenants between the nation and the Scots, in defence of religion, are again publicly acknowledged as law.

The new Parliament was inclined to a limited monarchy. They beheld a covenanted Presbyterian king, ready to accept an invitation to the throne of his ancestors, and they proposed to enter into immediate stipulations with him.

At this critical juncture Monk acted the part of a traitor. He, with military power, overawed the Parliament, and the king was restored without conditions. Charles, too, again played the hypocrite.

A committee of Presbyterian ministers waited upon him at Breda, and he publicly thanked God that he was a covenanted king. Thus was the nation plunged into ruin.

Charles the Second was no sooner settled upon the throne, than he discovered a disposition to oppose to the utmost that covenanted reformation, to the support of which he had been repeatedly bound by oath. Having embraced Popery, he resolved to suppress Presbytery. He made the experiment first in Scotland. This nation had been reduced under England by the Parliamentary forces. As a conquered kingdom, Charles concluded that he might destroy with ease its remaining liberties. He immediately assumed unlimited power, both in ecclesiastical and civil things; re-established the prelacy, and caused himself to be acknowledged the head of the Church. The first blow fell upon the most valuable man in the nation, the pious Marquis of Argyle. The ungrateful monarch procured the murder of the nobleman who patronized him in his youth, and placed the crown upon his head. The Protestors were the persons most obnoxious to the king; but the whole reformed Presbyterian Church was devoted to destruction by this impious apostate. He had selected a suitable person as an accomplice in his crimes. Mr. Sharp was commissioned by the Presbyterians of Scotland to wait upon the king at his restoration, and negotiate with him in favor of the Church. He also, in the secret

with Monk, acted the traitor; was consecrated a bishop, and returned to Scotland as Archbishop of St. Andrews, and Primate of the kingdom.

The Episcopal Church now being fully established in England, Ireland, and Scotland, over the ruins of the reformation, Presbyterians were called to seal with their blood the testimony which they held. Upwards of two thousand godly ministers were banished from their congregations and their livings in one day, in the kingdom of England; and upwards of twenty thousand Presbyterians suffered martyrdom in Scotland during the reign of Charles the Second and his brother James. Several of the ministers fled to foreign countries; some were indulged in their parishes, upon renouncing their covenanted reformation; but those who continued faithful, were driven to the mountains, hunted, and butchered without mercy.

As faithful witnesses for the truth, these eminently godly men published many valuable testimonies against the prevailing evils; and while they were permitted to live, they exhibited in their own persecuted Churches the doctrine, worship, and discipline which had been appointed by Christ for the New Testament Church. They opposed with solid arguments the present constituted authorities in Church and in State. They even declared it rebellion against Heaven to be in allegiance with the house of Stuart. Their cruel persecutors sometimes attempted to reason with the martyrs, when they

were called before their courts. The arguments which the persecutors used were more plausible than substantial. "Christians are commanded to be subject to the higher powers. Ecclesiastical persons are not exempted. Ministers are bound to pray for all who are in authority. When God in his Providence exalts a man to power, all should submit to the exercise of such power as the ordinance of God. Even absolute tyranny is from the Lord. There is no power but of God. The apostle Paul required the Romans to obey the emperor Nero, a heathen, a persecutor, an infamous man, and an absolute tyrant. It is certainly more reasonable to submit to the authority of the present reigning family. Presbyterians, therefore, in disowning the king's authority, are worthy of death." Such were the arguments used by the perjured prelates, to ensnare the consciences of those who adhered to reformation principles. These infamous men sheltered their principles under perverted texts of Scripture, and called their murder of the pious Presbyterians by the name of justice.

To these arguments the persecuted saints, when permitted to speak, made a judicious reply:—

"Every immoral constitution is disapproved of God; and no man ought to swear allegiance to a power which God does not recognize. All kings are commanded to promote the welfare of the Church; and those who own allegiance to Christ, cannot consistently pray for the prosperity of the

Church's enemies, or for the establishment of thrones founded on iniquity.

“It is certainly the duty of Christians to be meek and peaceable members of civil society. If they are permitted to enjoy their lives, their property, and especially their religion, without being required to make any sinful compliances, it is right that they should behave peaceably, and not involve society in confusion, even although the power of the empire in which they reside be in evil hands. Every burden which God in his Providence brings upon them, they must cheerfully bear. But *never are Christians called upon by their God to own as his ordinance anything which is contrary to his law.* The civil powers, of which he approves, are a terror to them who do evil, and a praise to them who do well. Tyrants and persecutors, usurpers and despisers of religion, may be set up, in his holy and just Providence, to answer valuable purposes in his hand: but he himself declares in his word, that such kings are set up not by him. The Pagan Roman government is described, in Revelation, as the empire of the dragon, and all the kings who support Antichrist are said, in the same infallible word, to have received from Satan their authority. God has declared their overthrow and destruction, and no Protestant should recognize them as the ordinance of God, to which they must yield conscientious support. The present king, Charles II., has violated the constitution of Scotland; he has

broken the covenant which he made with God and man ; he hath claimed, as an essential part of royal prerogative, a blasphemous supremacy in the Church ; he has overturned our ecclesiastical order, banished the faithful ministry, and persecuted the most virtuous inhabitants of the land : such a perjured usurper and tyrant cannot be considered as a lawful magistrate by the reformed Presbyterian covenanters."

These arguments exhibit the good sense and courage which sincere piety infused in the Scottish martyrs. Power, however, was upon the side of the oppressor. Twenty years of persecution reduced the reformed Presbyterian Church to a small number of ministers. The courts of judicature had been prevented from meeting from the very beginning, and no regular processes for ecclesiastical discipline were attainable. It was necessary, however, to administer Church censure upon those who betrayed the cause of religion, and who gave themselves up to immorality. The king himself had been admitted a member of the Church, and many of his courtiers had formerly been professed disciples of Christ. Those who renounce the faith, however high in power, should never be admitted to escape, as fugitives from discipline. These correct sentiments about the discipline of the Church influenced one of the pious and most faithful ministers of the gospel then living, to pronounce the solemn sentence of excommunication upon the base apostates, who

had thrown aside even every pretension to religion.

The Rev. Daniel Cargill did, upon the 17th day of September, 1680, at Torwood, in Stirlingshire, excommunicate Charles II. and six others of the most noted persecutors, in the presence of a vast concourse of people. Sufficient documents were produced of their having been guilty of drunkenness, hypocrisy, perjury, heresy, bloodshed, and adultery; and although they were now publicly caressed as suitable members of the Episcopal Church, and one of them was the avowed head of that Church, they certainly deserved this awful and solemn sentence. The faithfulness of Mr. Cargill excited the persecutors to madness. They, in return for his casting them out of the Church of Christ, persecuted him unto the death, and thus hastened him to the kingdom of glory. He died in the full assurance of faith. After his death, the Church was left destitute of a regular ministry. Search was diligently made by the enemy for all the students of divinity that were inclined to Presbyterianism, and they also were executed.

The spirit of the covenanters was not, however, entirely broken. They established among themselves a general correspondence. The societies in each shire were connected by a particular correspondence of delegates, and these correspondences were again connected in a representative general meeting. This plan was highly expedient in their

situation, as they had no properly organized Church. It was a measure of expediency, dictated by the necessity of the times. The general meeting managed everything of common concern to the societies. They claimed neither civil nor ecclesiastical power. They exercised no part of Church discipline. They endeavored, however, to procure a faithful ministry. They commissioned the Laird of Earlston and Sir Robert Hamilton, two learned and godly men, to represent their case to the foreign Churches. And these commissioners opened a door, by the blessing of Providence, through which they received ministerial aid. The Rev. Richard Cameron, who valiantly contended for the faith delivered to the saints, and for the violated liberties of his much-injured country, and who fell at Airmoss in 1680, had been ordained in Rotterdam for the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Mr. James Renwick was now ordained by the Classis of Groningen. He was a man of remarkable piety, and recommended himself exceedingly to these godly divines of the Church of Holland by his unwavering faithfulness.

He explained to them his principles, and bore an explicit testimony against the remaining corruptions of the Belgic Church. He refused ordination at Embden, where it was first offered to him, because the ministry of that place had embraced the Cocceian errors.* Even at Groningen, he would on

* John Cocceius was a very learned divine of the Church of Holland, and professor of divinity in the university of Leyden. Men of genius

no account subscribe the constitution and catechism of the Dutch Church. Sensible of the justness of his animadversions, and impressed with the solemnity and integrity which appeared in whatever he said, these godly ministers declared it was the Lord's cause, and although all the powers on earth should resent it, they would ordain to the holy ministry this eminently pious youth.

He subscribed, in the presence of the Classis, the confession and standards agreed upon by the Assembly at Westminster, and he was ordained, with the imposition of hands, a minister of the gospel of Christ, for the Reformed Presbyterian Church, now suffering in Scotland. For this remarkable condescension in the Church of Holland, the Scottish covenanters are obliged to the pious exertions of Sir Robert Hamilton, as the instrument employed by God to assist Mr. Renwick in convincing these pious divines of the superior purity of the covenanted Church of Scotland. Professor Witsius, Professor Mark, and Mr. Brakel distinguished them-

are naturally disposed to be inventive. Originality, the idol to which all men are apt to bow, is the object to which great men direct their principal attention, unless they are restrained by Christian humility. Cocceius aimed at originality, and he succeeded. It is, indeed, much easier for a man of genius to invent an erroneous system, than to discover and illustrate truth.

The Cocceians consider the historical part of the Old Testament as typical of the new dispensation. The ceremonial law they view as a punishment inflicted on the Jews for their transgressions, particularly for having worshipped the golden calf. They deny the morality of the fourth commandment.

selves as the friends of the covenanters. Upon Mr. Renwick's return to his native country, his ministry was blessed, as the means of refreshing thousands, who waited upon it in the fields and mountains. The societies had no access to public ordinances, except those administered by Mr. Renwick and Mr. Alex. Shields, who had been licensed by Presbyterian ministers in England, and one or two more who occasionally came over from Ireland. As Mr. Renwick was the most faithful, he was the most exposed to danger. He was at last put to a decisive proof of his faithfulness. He continued unmoved in the hour of trial. He was condemned, and executed upon the 17th February, 1688, in the 26th year of his age, and sixth of his ministry. He is the last person who suffered death in Scotland on account of religion; the last martyr to the covenanted reformation.

To the remnant of the persecuted Church the gospel was preached, after Mr. Renwick's death, by Mr. Shields, the Rev. Thomas Linning, who had been ordained at Embden, and Mr. William Boyd, who had been licensed at Groningen. These gentlemen maintained the reformation testimony without molestation, until the revolution.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT IN BRITAIN UNTIL THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE revolution which placed the Prince of Orange upon the British throne, is intimately connected with the history of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. William was educated by John De Witt, who directed the affairs of Holland with ability and integrity. The pupil, in an early period of life, excelled his instructor as a warrior and politician. The Prince of Orange was grave, intrepid, intelligent, and deceitful. Made Stadtholder of Holland, and being the soul of the confederacy against the tyranny of Louis the Fourteenth of France, he commanded the respect of all Europe. The Protestants considered him as their principal support. He was married to the Princess Mary, heir apparent to the crown of England, until the birth of the Prince of Wales, James, the future Pretender. Those who in England retained any sense of religion and liberty, looked up to Prince William as their deliverer from the yoke of bondage under which Charles the Second had brought them, and which his brother and successor, James the Second, had rendered more severe. William, inured to dissimulation, published a declaration, enumerating the grievances of the British nation, and disclaiming any intention, upon

his own part, to assume any power but what was necessary to defend a free Parliament in settling a regular constitution. When he landed in England, his father-in-law James was seized with terror, abdicated the throne, and escaped to the continent. To the vacant throne King William was called, and he embraced the invitation. The crown of Scotland was also conferred on him.

The revolution of 1688 was conducted upon principles which should never be forgotten. The Scottish convention passed a decisive vote, that *King James, by his abuse of power, had forfeited all title to the crown, and that it be conferred on the Prince of Orange.* The English Parliament declared, *that King James the Second, having endeavored to subvert the constitution, by breaking the original contract between the king and the people, did abdicate the throne.*

Both kingdoms did, by these acts, establish two grand principles: That the abuse of power destroys the right to exercise it, and that a people may depose their rulers. Several thousand Presbyterian covenanters had been sacrificed by the house of Stuart for maintaining these sentiments, which are now universally admitted as the just maxims of civil policy.

The martyrs of the reformation had uniformly declared that no allegiance was due to those rulers who abuse their power, who violate the constitution, and subvert righteousness. They declared the lawfulness of bearing arms in the defence of religion

and liberty, and of deposing kings. They refused to recognize any authority which was founded upon a violation of the constitution, to which they had, by solemn covenant, declared their assent. They were, on this account, persecuted and destroyed by the abettors of royalty and episcopacy.

The doctrine of *passive obedience and non-resistance* was preached and published from the pulpits of the establishment, and it was asserted in the name of God, that no power, whether heathen, popish, or prælatic, could be lawfully disowned. The constant cry was a perverted Scripture passage: "The powers that be are ordained of God." Reason and Scripture, *and nature*, revolt at such maxims. Reason and Scripture are, nevertheless, perverted, as often as the perversion is supposed convenient. While submission to constituted authorities serves the ease, the inclination, and the interests of men, many will feel disposed to become its advocates. Abstract argument, however just, divine revelation, however clear, are but feeble barriers against the torrent of selfishness amidst the fallen family of man. Nature pleads a more forcible eloquence. When a man *feels* himself oppressed, he will believe that resistance is lawful. Whensoever the *powers that be* are hostile to a person's interest, inclination, and personal safety, he will believe it lawful to use means for overturning such power. The maxims of truth are uniformly consistent and capable of universal application, but the doctrine of passive

obedience to every kind of civil power, is necessarily inconsistent with itself. When it accords with interest, all parties are willing, in every country, to join in overturning constituted authorities.

This was remarkably the case at the period of the revolution. During the reign of Charles it was the interest of the prelacy to establish power over right, to support the infamous head of the Episcopal Church in his efforts to overturn the constitution which reformed Presbyterians had framed and ratified.

But when James was preparing to introduce Popery, and subvert the prelacy, it was thought virtue, even by the Episcopalians, to disown his authority. Then did they court the favor of the persecuted dissenters, and solicit their influence in calling over, for their mutual deliverance, the Prince of Orange, a Presbyterian of the Church of Holland. The university of Oxford exceeded, both in zeal for the doctrine of submission, and in the inconsistency of their practice with the doctrine, all their contemporaries. They gave the solemn sanction of their high authority to that maxim first inculcated by Mahomet, the grand impostor, — *Obedience is due to the authorities of a nation, whether they be constituted upon just or unjust principles.* The divines of the university drew up twenty-seven propositions, extracted from the writings of Buchanan, Baxter, Owen, Milton, Goodwin, and others, who had maintained that the people might

examine whether they who are in power have a right to rule, and that when kings forfeit their *right* to government, although they possess *power*, they may be resisted.

They passed a decree in full convocation, July 21, 1683, condemning these principles as damnable doctrines, as destructive to all human society, and declaring them to be impious, seditious, heretical, and blasphemous. Four years thereafter, however, they resisted the authority of the king; and refusing to *practise* that passive obedience which they themselves had *taught*, refusing to submit to the violation of their charter, the president and all the fellows, except two who had complied, were expelled the college. As soon, however, as the king invaded their property, these ecclesiastics invited the Prince of Orange to their rescue; they signed an association to support him; they offered to him their plate, and declared for him in a body, even while their sovereign, whom, upon their own principles, to resist was damnable, was still on the throne.

The revolution of 1688, which overturned the house of Stuart for having violated the civil compact, justified the conduct of those Presbyterian Covenanters who rejected the same authority upon the same principle, several years before this event. It also justified the conduct of the same people, in rejecting the settlement of King William, when he was invested with power, in direct violation of the national constitution, which was settled at the ref-

ormation, and which both kingdoms, according to the solemn league and covenant, were bound by oath to defend inviolate.

The remnant of the reformed Presbyterian Church did, consequently, disown the revolution settlement both in Church and State. An oath they considered as obligatory until the whole end of it be accomplished. They had solemnly sworn to defend the reformation in their several places and stations, to oppose by all lawful means Popery, Prelacy, and Erastianism, and to adhere to the doctrine and order of the Church of Scotland, as constituted between the years 1638 and 1649. The covenants they thought it their duty repeatedly to renew. The faithful testimonies of their martyrs they were not disposed to relinquish or condemn. Erastianism was interwoven with the constitution under William the Third. He apostatized from the principles of the Church of Holland, and became the visible head of the Church of England. He exercised supremacy over the Church of Scotland, and with unhallowed hands violated the right bestowed upon the ministry, by the Lord Jesus Christ, of calling and dissolving at pleasure the various courts of judicature. Presbyterian covenanters did not deny to the civil authority the right of calling an assembly of divines in extraordinary cases, in order to obtain advice. They knew it was the duty of the magistrate to preserve the peace as well as the liberty of Church courts, by suppressing disorders and restraining

violence. But they would not yield, as was now done, the *right* to the king's commissioner to call and dissolve, at pleasure, the General Assembly of the Church. The assembly could not now convene, except by the royal authority. When such powers, therefore, were rendered essential to the crown of Britain by the revolution settlement, the covenanters dissented from that settlement, refused an oath of allegiance to this Erastian system, and disowned all the constituted authorities. As the minority, they claimed the right of enjoying their sentiments, their lives, and their property unmolested, while they determined to behave as peaceable and regular members of society in every part of the land. By the new constitution they were indeed effectually excluded from the privileges of the national society. The oaths of allegiance to the government excluded the oath of the covenants which they had already solemnly sworn, and to which they had themselves bound. Being thus excluded from membership in the national society, the rulers in that society could by no means be recognized as their magistrates. They were united to them by no moral tie.

The Episcopal Church was established under the Prince of Orange, in England and in Ireland, as the *true religion* which the king was bound by oath to defend. Presbyterianism, as *most agreeable to the mind of the people*, was established in Scotland under the same form which obtained before the last refor-

mation. The Episcopal curates, who chose to conform to the Presbyterian form of government, the old Presbyterian ministers, who conformed to the preceding Episcopal establishment, the indulged ministers, who received appointments and orders from the two tyrannical kings which preceded the revolution, and a few of the banished ministers now returned to their native country, united in one body, composed the ministry of the Church of Scotland in the present settlement. Those who retained an attachment to their former attainments, hoped that their influence might hereafter obtain some reformation. And with these hopes they embraced a system which they were very far from approving. These hopes were frustrated. They were indeed ill founded. In Scotland there were then eight hundred and ninety parishes. A great number of these were now vacant. Apostate Presbyterians formed the majority of the ministry in those which were supplied. Four hundred parishes were supplied with so many Episcopal curates. These, sacrificing principle, and submitting, for the sake of their stipends, to the Presbyterian name, joined in the phalanx opposed to the former reformation. Composed of such materials, it was madness to expect from the revolution Church any reformation. Delivered, however, as it were, miraculously, from a dreadful persecution, and surprised to find themselves even in such a comfortable situation, although they contemplated with sorrow the general

defection of the Church covenanters, they entered into her communion. Even the very men who endured the persecution without dropping any part of their testimony, were allured out of the path of integrity by this change which took place in the state of affairs. Those who preached the gospel at the risk of their lives to the wandering societies amidst the mountains, were unable to withstand the torrent of popularity which accompanied all the actions and speeches of the present king. Heedless of consequences, Messrs. Linning and Boyd deserted the societies of the reformed Presbyterian Church, and persuaded even the author of the *Hind let loose* to relinquish the principles which he formerly so ably defended. Mr. Alexander Shields was prevailed upon by his two brethren to join in communion with the established Church. He repented of his compliance, but not in time to recover what he lost, his character. He embarked for the continent as chaplain to a regiment, which fought in league with the Pope. Having violated his covenant with God and his Church, by which he was bound to oppose the power of Antichrist, we soon find him in an army employed to defend the man of sin. He afterwards embarked in the expedition to Darien, and after having experienced the utmost distress, died unknown and neglected in Jamaica.*

* There was not found in any of the three kingdoms, any one minister who maintained the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, consistently, at that period, except the Rev. Mr. David Houston. He passed over to Ireland, and continued faithful unto the day of his death.

The covenanters were now again left destitute of a public ministry. This was a grievous dispensation to persons who loved, as they did, the ordinances appointed by Christ.

As true to the principles of Presbyterian order, they would not call to the exercise of a part of the ministerial office any whom they could not invite to the discharge of the whole of its duties. They would not call any one to preach the word to them, whom they could not admit to dispense the sacraments. Neither would they attend anywhere to the ministry of the word, except where they could conscientiously join in visible communion. As public teaching is, equally with the administration of the sacraments, exclusively the province of the ministry, they attended to the more private ordinances of the gospel, in hopes that God would visit them in time with faithful pastors. They lived as brethren; they worshipped socially in praying societies; they conversed freely about the whole salvation of Christ; they read many valuable authors, and were uniformly considered as more pious and intelligent than those who had an opportunity of hearing sermons every Sabbath. They seem now to have been cut off from the possibility of ever recovering a standing ministry. They would have considered it little short of blasphemy, to have ordained to office any one, however qualified, in any other method than that of Christ's appointment — the laying on of the hands of a presbytery.

Did they appoint a minister themselves, he must be the creature and servant of man; not the ambassador of our Redeemer. Their hearts trembling for the Ark, they would not give it a wrong touch. They preferred suffering to sin. Young men of education could not, therefore, obtain ordination among them. The judicatories of the established Church would ordain none, without he complied with their sinful terms of communion. The Churches of Holland, also, refused to act upon their former condescension. Sixteen years were passed after the defection of their ministers at the revolution, before the remaining friends of the covenanted reformation were supplied with a public ministry. In the year 1706, the Rev. John McMillan acceded to them from the judicatories of the established Church.

Mr. McMillan, and a few of his brethren in the ministry, had for some time entertained a hope of procuring a general reformation. But the proportion of the faithful to the lukewarm in church judicatories was too small to have any influence. Petitions for redress of grievances have been presented to the assembly, from time to time, from nearly two thousand respectable Christians, but without effect. The power of choosing their own ministers had been taken from the congregations, and patronage restored. Discipline was relaxed, immorality and heresy were tolerated in the Church, and the remembrance of the reformation was fast

declining. Those who defended the good order of the church against their apostatizing brethren, were sure of being censured by the majority. The faithfulness and zeal of Mr. McMillan provoked the indignation of those who were conscious of the badness of their own cause. They determined to banish him from a flock who sincerely loved him; and they consequently passed against him a sentence of deposition from the ministry. Against these cruel and unjust proceedings Mr. McMillan protested; and the ministry which he had received in a regular manner from his Lord, he refused to resign to the caprice and wickedness of men who had no crime to charge him with, except his faithfulness to the principles of the reformed Presbyterian Church. The societies called him to the ministry among them, and he was afterwards joined in that work by others. Those who had for a long time been deprived of the public ordinances, were now greatly refreshed by the preached gospel. They rejoiced that an organized visible Church was again to be found in the land, upon the footing of the once glorious reformation. This visible Covenant Society was indeed small and despised. They resolved, however, as witnesses, to maintain a faithful testimony, and like their brethren, the primitive disciples, to go forth to their Redeemer without the camp, bearing his reproach. They considered that the principles of the reformation were still as true and as valuable as they had been, when they were

embraced generally in the three kingdoms of the Isles of Britain and Ireland, and when they were admired by all the Protestant Churches of Europe. They sincerely lamented their own inability to introduce them advantageously to public notice; but they were resolved, in their humble sphere, to collect them faithfully; to bind them up in one testimony; and to seal them as the law of the house, among the disciples of our Lord. They took pleasure in the dust of Zion.

The reformed Presbytery in Scotland did, in the year 1761, publish an act, declaration, and testimony in behalf of the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. The object of this publication was to exhibit a correct statement of their own principles, and to defend them by just reasoning. They relate the various steps of reformation in Scotland; they express their approbation of the conduct of the faithful martyrs; they disapprove of the constituted authorities of Britain; and they declare their unity with the reformed Presbyterian Church, solemnly recognizing the full obligation of the covenants upon themselves and their posterity. This publication is considered as a bond of connection among themselves, and one of the terms upon which they join together in ministerial and Christian communion. It is a valuable document of the Church's faithfulness. It is an excellent mean of handing down to posterity, in every nation, a just account

and an able defence of the contendings of the witnesses against the man of sin.

This testimony, in connection with the ecclesiastical standards, compiled by the assembly of divines at Westminster, the national covenant of Scotland, and the solemn league of three kingdoms, England, Ireland, and Scotland, affords a scriptural defence and full exhibition of the reformation in its best state. The reformed presbytery have, since that period, published several testimonies and warnings against the evils and errors which from time to time prevailed around them. A presbytery of the same name and principles has also been erected in Ireland. The number of these witnesses of the reformation has been gradually increasing during the eighteenth century, and before the close of the year 1774 a court of judicature had been erected in America, with the design of preserving the spirit and practice of the covenanted reformation.

CHAPTER III.

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE STATE OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, UNTIL THE RATIFICATION OF THEIR TESTIMONY IN MAY, 1806.

THE reformed Presbytery was constituted in America for the first time, in the year 1774, by three ministers, the Rev. Messrs. John Cuthbert-

son, Matthew Lind, and Alexander Dobbin, with ruling elders. These ministers had been sent over from Europe, in order to organize the Church in America.

During the persecution, several members of the reformed Presbyterian Church left their native country to seek an asylum in the western world. These and their descendants were found collecting into praying societies, as they were wont to do in their own land, upon the footing of the reformation principles in the beginning of the eighteenth century. They kept themselves distinct from the other worshipping societies which they found formed or forming in the land in which they were come to sojourn, as judging them no way disposed to enter into the full spirit of the covenanted reformation. They considered themselves under obligations to walk by the rule of their former attainments, and even essayed to renew their covenant with God in a public, social manner. About the year 1743 the covenanters in the colony of Pennsylvania met for the renovation of their vows at Middle Octarara. This work was carried on with the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Craighead. Mr. Craighead was a minister in connection with a synod of Presbyterians, which, several years before this time, had been organized in America. This Presbyterian body was a new organization, perfectly distinct from the Presbyterian Churches in any part of Europe. The ministers who composed it were not commissioned by any

ecclesiastical judicatory to organize a subordinate judicatory in America. Some of them had emigrated from Scotland, some from Ireland and England, and providentially meeting in America, they erected a presbytery for the better regulation of the Churches which they were planting. Some Congregational ministers from New England having settled in the Middle States, chose the Presbyterian system, and uniting with the other Presbyterians, they after some time organized themselves into a synod. They adopted no fixed ecclesiastical standards. They only professed adherence to the Westminster confession of faith in its essential doctrines, and each person was to be judge in his own case of what was essential. In this constitution were laid those seeds of discordant principles and general debility which have since characterized the Presbyterian Church in this country, under the direction of a general assembly. Mr. Craighead, with apparent fervency, objected to the deficiency of the system upon which the Presbyterian synod was constituted, and with seeming sincerity, joined himself to the support of the languishing cause of the reformed Presbyterian Church.

He did not, however, possess stability. Overstrained zeal is seldom permanent. This man, after having co-operated with the covenanters, with an ardor which appeared to some of them enthusiastic, left his profession and vows, and turned to the flocks of his former companions.

The societies which he now had forsaken, were again left destitute of a fixed pastor. Eight years they continued in this distressed condition, until moved by their entreaties, Mr. Cuthbertson arrived in America, from the reformed Presbytery in Scotland, in the year 1752.

Twenty years did Mr. Cuthbertson serve alone the Church in America. He visited the different societies which were formed throughout the different colonies upon reformation principles. He animated them to perseverance. Exposed to danger almost constantly from the servants of the British crown, who were then endeavoring to confirm over the American colonies the doubly grievous yoke of tyranny and episcopacy, he endeavored to inspire his friends with confidence in the justice of their cause, and with hopes that God in his providence would, in his own time, deliver them from bondage. In 1773 Rev. Mr. Martin emigrated from Ireland to South Carolina, and in 1774 Messrs. Lind and Dobbin were sent to this country by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland. These with Mr. Cuthbertson constituted a Presbytery, and the reformed Presbyterian Church put on a regular appearance as an organized visible society in the colonies of America.

Soon after this event the American war commenced. The inhabitants of the colonies met in the city of Philadelphia, by their representatives, and declared themselves an independent nation on the fourth of July, 1776. When the revolutions of

nations are considered as a work of the Head of the Church, for the sake of his peculiar people, the era of American independence will be reviewed as important. The declaration of independence, and the subsequent state of the American republic, demand the serious attention of the Christian divine and the moral philosopher.

The visible Church in the United States, at the commencement of the revolution, was very much divided. All the national Churches of Europe, whether Popish or Protestant, appeared here in miniature, and all the sectaries arising from each of the European establishments were also to be found in the land. Those religious denominations which had in Europe labored under restrictions, finding themselves at liberty in America, acquired additional animation. Various other circumstances contributed to give an enterprising turn to the minds of men in this country. Emigration always produces enterprise. Necessity calls for invention. Success encourages further endeavors. A new country, settled from old kingdoms, in which poverty and oppression were the portion of the majority of the inhabitants, could not fail to excite the mental faculties, by rewarding industry with power and wealth. Men were thus prepared to act with less caution, and with more boldness, than formerly, in religious affairs. It is not at all surprising that we find instances of unsteadiness and enthusiasm very frequently among the inhabitants of the

United States. A deficiency in the system of education also fosters ignorance and enthusiasm. Seminaries of literature are as yet in their infancy. The plan of instruction is universally frivolous and unsubstantial. The youth are especially neglected as to religious education, and those who publicly officiate as the ministers of religion, are often altogether illiterate, and too generally superficial scholars. In this state of society, men mingling with one another daily in their callings, without respect to national or religious peculiarities, are likely, in the present degenerate state of our nature, to exchange bigotry to ancient systems for a specious liberality, participating of the nature of indifference to religion under every form. The acquisition of national independence, by cherishing enthusiasm for civil and religious liberty, did, by a very natural perversion, contribute to render the public mind impatient of the restrictions of a regular ecclesiastical system.

Many persons, notwithstanding, were sensible of the propriety of those principles which declare the visible church *One* body; and were determined to use exertions for uniting those Churches into one, which were already supposed to hold the Head Christ, and to embrace the leading doctrines of the gospel. Men cannot easily divest themselves of selfish principles. These were powerful motives to the ministers to seek a general union. Their support in the United States depended on the voluntary

contributions of those who waited on their ministry. The salary thus collected was often inadequate to supply ministers with the necessaries of life. The diversity of opinion among the people was, of course, a peculiar uneasiness to the ministers, while it was very injurious to the people themselves in depriving them of a regular ministration of the ordinances of religion. The descendants of the Church of Holland, of the English Puritans, and of the Presbyterians of Great Britain and Ireland, were numerous in the United States. It was thought proper to use means for uniting them.

The forms of national policy are very apt to warp the judgment of the best men. It is the effect of human wisdom; and even Christian ministers are prone to substitute the maxims of human prudence for the precepts of inspiration. In America there were now several independent states united under a general confederation, which exercised a general government over the whole in matters of common concern to all; and yet guaranteed to each its own independence of every other state in the Union. In conformity to this plan, it was expected Churches retaining their peculiar habits and prejudices, might be preserved distinct bodies, and yet united by certain general regulations which should be obligatory on all these denominations. This plan would have subverted the form of Church government established in divine revelation. The Church of Christ ought to be one visible society in

every nation under heaven ; and the subordinate parts regularly governed by the superior representative judicatories.

This plan has proved abortive. There is, however, a correspondence regularly maintained between the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the general association of the Congregational Churches. A union also was formed by the *Reformed* Presbytery and the *Associate* Presbyteries ; by which, instead of combining two denominations into one, a third one was formed by the junction of some parts of the other two, which continues under the name of the Associate Reformed Church. This new Church has adopted the name commemorative of its origin. From the Reformed Presbytery, the term Reformed is adopted ; and from the Associate Church, the former epithet.

The Associate Church is a secession from the revolution Church of Scotland. The present Erastian establishment of religion in Scotland opened a wide door for acts of mal-administration in the Church. Ministers were imposed upon congregations against their will, by the pernicious act of patronage. This evil required redress. The Rev. Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, a minister of the establishment, preached a discourse before one of the subordinate synods, in which he inveighed with bitterness against this infamous invasion of Christian privilege. This discourse gave great offence to the prevailing party in the ecclesiastical courts, both superior and sub-

ordinate. It gave rise to an altercation which ended in a rupture. Mr. Erskine and those who took part with him, protested against the decisions of the majority in the Church, and erected a new religious society, under the name of the Secession or Associate Church. This event took place in the year 1732. Some of the seceders were influenced to separate from the establishment, on account of radical defects in the constitution, together with the various acts of mal-administration which flowed from it. Others were influenced by the latter consideration alone. They testified not against the constitution, but the administration. In the year 1746 the secession body was rent into two, and have since been known under the designations of Burgher and Antiburgher Seceders. The division was occasioned by diversity of sentiments respecting the Burgher oath. In some towns in Scotland, those who were admitted to the privileges of citizens were obliged to take a certain oath, which implied an acknowledgment of the religion established by the laws of the land. Such of the seceders as considered the constitution of the Church of Scotland radically defective, condemned this oath as perjury to a seceding juror. They were called Antiburghers. Those, however, who separated from the Church merely upon the ground of the abuses in the administration, thought themselves at liberty to swear that they approved of the true religion as it was established by law. These

were called Burghers; and on account of their supposed heresy, were solemnly excommunicated from the fellowship of the visible Church by their Antiburgher brethren. Without submitting to this awful sentence, these Burghers erected themselves into an independent Church. Both branches of the secession professed an attachment to the covenanted reformation. They held themselves bound by these vows to covenant duties, and expressed their approbation of the constitution of both Church and state, as settled by the reformation between the years 1638 and 1650. They adopted as their ecclesiastical standards the attainments of that period.

The reformed Presbyterian Church beheld with joy the early rise and progress of the secession. They expected, that having left the tents of the apostate establishment, the seceders would have come forward to the ground upon which *they* had stood ever since that period, which, by the most solemn acknowledgment of seceders themselves, had been the most pure and regular. These new contenders for the faith were invited to join a virtuous minority, who, steadfastly adhering to their oaths and covenants, had continued a consistent testimony against the revolution settlement, in Church and state. Conferences were held for this purpose. Arguments were used to persuade the secession body to embrace the whole reformation settlement. They were, however, unavailing. Seceders did not find it convenient to proceed so

far. They condemned the constitution of the Church as Erastian, but they justified the state constitution which produced the evil. They considered it a duty to refuse submission to the administrations of the ministry of the Church, because the ministry had been corrupt; but a heinous sin to refuse submission to the civil administration, which corrupted the ministry. They deemed it criminal to incorporate with a religious society, whose supreme judicatory could not act independently of the king's commissioner; but they enforced allegiance to the king himself, although to be head of the Church of England is essential to his crown. They blamed the Church of Scotland for the evils of the revolution settlement, and prayed for its reformation, while they professed allegiance to the throne, which was founded upon the ruins of the covenanted reformation, and prayed for its establishment and prosperity.

Both the associate bodies have vehemently opposed the reformed presbytery, for dissenting from the constituted authorities of both Church and state. The practice of reformed Presbyterians was consistent with their principles. They lived peaceably, acted the part of good members of society in private life, and endeavored, as far as in them lay, to answer the end of civil government; living in all godliness and honesty. The constitution of Great Britain they considered to be immoral, and to an immoral establishment they could not

own allegiance. They adhered, as a small minority, to a civil constitution, to which the nation was bound by oath; and although overturned by perjury, they contended it was still the law of the land. They of course dissented from the resolutions of the majority. They also viewed the throne and the prelacy, inseparably connected in England, as stained with the blood of their martyred brethren, and as one of the pillars of anti-Christianism. They could not, therefore, wish for its establishment. They would not pray to God for prosperity to a system which they really desired to see removed, and which they knew must be overturned when the Redeemer should establish his kingdom upon the ruins of the man of sin. The difference between them and the seceders became daily greater. From false principles consistency must produce erroneous conclusions. Every effort to defend by argument the secession opposition to the principles of the reformed Presbyterian Church, led them on to multiply erroneous sentiments. The Associate Church maintained that Christians had nothing to do about the constitutions of civil government, but submit to whatever order men should establish, whether good or bad. They taught that the proper submission, even to immoral governments, did not consist merely in a peaceable behavior without tumult or disturbance, but in a conscientious allegiance and support to them, as the ordinance of God. They condemned all distinction between such rulers

as happened in Divine Providence to have the power of a nation upon unlawful principles, and such as ruled by the divine approbation. The only question which they would permit a Christian to ask, is in respect to the matter of fact—Is there any person actually in power? if so, he must be recognized as the ordinance of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. The Scottish seceders exceeded the university of Oxford itself in maintaining the doctrine of passive obedience, The controversial writers of the secession do indeed sometimes disclaim the doctrine of passive obedience, and admit that it is lawful to resist usurpers and tyrants. Sometimes they plead for no more allegiance to the national government than what is implied in resignation to God's Providence, while we are suffering for our correction. But in their arguments they uniformly, and indeed necessarily, contradict these maxims. They deny that there is any difference, as to lawfulness, between one government and another. "The fact of possessing power constitutes right. There is no distinction between submission for fear of wrath, to an unlawful ruler, and obedience, for conscience' sake, to legitimate authority. Nebuchadnezzar was the worst of tyrants. Nero was one of the most brutal and infamous men that ever possessed power. Both Nebuchadnezzar the tyrant, and Nero the bloody persecutor and monster of iniquity, were the ordinance of God. And even unto

them obedience was due, for conscience' sake, as unto legitimate authority. Every man who is in power, is commissioned as God's own deputy." Such are the arguments of the seceder disputants. In order to preserve consistency, they were led to maintain the following sentiments, and, as a Church, to embody them in their ecclesiastical standards:—

“Divine Revelation is not the rule by which men are to act in the formation of their civil constitutions and laws.

“Jesus Christ does not, as mediator, govern the world. His authority is confined to the Church.

“Nations, as such, are not bound to acknowledge Christ, or his religion. Magistrates have nothing to do with Christianity.

“The Redeemer has not purchased temporal benefits for the saints.

“The world stands, not merely on purpose to exhibit the system of grace, but in order to bring into being the children of Adam, that they might be punished by the curse of the covenant of works.

“The world would have stood, and all the generations of men would have appeared in it, even if there had been no redemption provided for sinners.”

These general principles, and the practical application of them, carried the secession Churches daily further away from the reformed Presbyterian standards. Happily, however, for human society,

experience shows that the doctrine of passive obedience to the powers that be is absurd. The British nation, not excepting even the Oxford professors, resisted the existing authorities, under the reign of King James, and established the Prince of Orange. The seceders, who were in America, also agreed to overturn the existing authorities, at the commencement of the revolution. The very persons who vehemently opposed the reformed Presbytery for disowning the British government in the year 1774, joined in its destruction in the years which immediately succeeded. The declaration of American independence is a national comment on that great principle for which covenanters uniformly contended: "we are not bound to own, as God's ordinance, every one without exception, who may providentially have power in his hands."

Great national revolutions produce a current of popular opinion, which it requires firmness of mind in any man to resist. The Covenanters in America perceived with joy the United States rising in a body, to resist the arm which had been uplifted for their oppression. Their expectations of immediate advantage to the Church, however, were too sanguine. Their love of liberty exceeded its due bounds. Many of them were carried away from their former principles; and, during the American war, the Reformed Presbytery was dissolved. The three ministers, already mentioned, joined with some ministers of the Associate Church in communion,

and formed that society which now bears the name of the Associate Reformed Church.

The union with the Reformed Presbytery was closed by the Associate Presbytery of New York, in the year 1780, upon the footing of ten articles, which had been agreed to by the Reformed Presbytery in the year 1779. The Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania acceded to this union, upon the basis of six articles, nearly of the same signification with the ten already referred to. The union was completed in the year 1782, after having been five years in agitation. A party of the seceders dissenting from this union, and appealing to the Associate Synod in Scotland, continued upon their former ground, retaining the name and the power of the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania. These articles of union contain many valuable concessions to the Reformed Presbytery, and, considered in connection with the present state of affairs in the United States, approached the Reformation Testimony.

The practice of seceders and the whole nation, during the contest for throwing off the British yoke, determined the point, that in *some cases* it is lawful to disown the constituted civil authorities. This was an explicit declaration that Christians are not under obligations to submit to *every* civil ruler who providentially possesses power; that in some cases the constituted authorities are not the ordinance of God. It was a full concession to the Reformed

Presbyterian Church of the great principle, in relation to a constitution of civil government, "*It is not the fact that it does exist, but its moral character, that determines whether it be the ordinance of God or not.*" The union seceders forsook the secession testimony in other very important principles. The *sixth* of the ten articles of union declares, that the administration of the kingdom of Providence is committed to the Mediator; and that the Church has the sanctified use of that and every common benefit, through the grace of Christ. The *seventh* declares, that divine revelation is the rule by which magistrates ought to be regulated. And the *eighth* admits that a people may, by their own voluntary deed, make a religious test essential to the very being of a magistrate among them. The *ninth* article pledges both parties, when united, to adhere to the standards, compiled by the Westminster assembly. In one of the six additional articles, *covenanting* is termed an important duty, and it is referred to the future deliberations of the whole body. These articles are certainly agreeable to the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and even they who disapproved of the union, were happy in hearing seceders make such declarations.

When Messrs. Cuthbertson, Lind, and Dobbin joined in the Associate Reformed connection, there remained in America but one minister, Mr. Martin, professing to teach the whole doctrine of the reformation. Mr. Martin had arrived in South Carolina,

from Ireland, in 1773. Although he professed the most cordial attachment to reformation principles, he did not, from some infirmity of character, long possess the confidence of those who were intimately acquainted with his conduct. He continued, nevertheless, for some time to administer ordinances. Several individuals and societies were scattered through the different States, like sheep without a shepherd, who refused to join with the seceders, and chose to wait upon God in the private ordinances of his grace, rather than recede from their covenanted testimony. They disapproved of the union, and considered their former ministers as guilty of apostasy. The Presbyterian system, they believed to be of divine appointment, and it was directly contrary to its spirit to leave a Church, without assigning any reason for it, and especially, without having a reason to assign. The ministers who embraced the union from the Reformed Presbytery, declared, that they still remained attached to reformation principles; that if they were still in Britain or Ireland, they would continue with their former connections. They broke off from a confessedly pure communion, without consulting their former brethren in the ministry, or conferring on the important subject with their sister judicatories in Europe. They had vowed to support the unity of the Church, and pursue no divisive courses; and yet, under pretence of repairing a breach which they had no hand in making, they, in spite of their

profession and their vows, made a new schism, by their own voluntary act. It was also believed by covenanters, that the parties who formed the union wanted unanimity. The seceders, notwithstanding their concessions to the Reformed Presbytery, in the articles of union, still courted the friendship of the secession Church, and even declared, however inconsistently, their approbation of *its* testimony. The ministers formerly belonging to the Reformed Presbytery still professed to approve of their own former testimony against that of the secession Church. It was expected that a union of such discordant materials would not prove beneficial to the Reformed Presbyterian cause.

A great part of the Church joined their ministers in the schism, from their former connection, to unite in a new body with seceders, who had also irregularly departed from their former ecclesiastical brethren. Those who did not join, turned their attention again towards Europe, and called for ministerial assistance. This could not be immediately obtained. The Reformed Presbyteries in Europe were not able to supply the demand for ministerial services at home, and did not find it convenient to send any missionaries to America.

The Church was in danger of becoming entirely extinct, in America, about four years after the defection took place, which contributed to the organization of the Associate Reformed body. The people are reduced to their private fellowship meetings.

They did not, however, despair, even at their lowest state. They expected, and received help. The Rev. James Reid was sent as a missionary, by the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, to examine the state of affairs in the United States; and, after having travelled from Carolina to New York, and remained several months in America, he returned to Europe in the summer, 1790. The Presbytery then determined to use means for reorganizing a Church in the States of America. Mr. McGarragh was ordained by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland for the Church in America, and arrived in South Carolina about the year 1791. The Rev. William King was commissioned with instructions to join Mr. McGarragh, and, as a *Committee* of the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, these gentlemen were empowered judicially to manage the concerns of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America. Mr. King arrived in the United States in the year 1792. After having remained some time in Pennsylvania, and visiting New York, where he had an interview with the Rev. James McKinney, a member of the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland, who emigrated to America in the year 1793, he returned to South Carolina. A committee of Presbytery was formed in the South, and under its care was taken Mr. Thomas Donnelly, a young man who had received in Glasgow a collegiate education, with a view to the ministry of the gospel. Mr. King was settled in a pastoral charge, and the

affairs of the Church began to wear a regular appearance in the South.

Mr. McKinney was not inactive in the Northern States. He possessed talents admirably adapted to the present situation of the Church. He possessed an intrepidity of character which could not be seduced by friendship, or overawed by opposition. An extensive acquaintance with men and with books furnished his mind with various and useful knowledge; and his inventive powers never left him at a loss for arguments to defend the system to which he was piously attached. Capable of enduring fatigue in an uncommon degree, active, inquisitive, and enterprising, he sought out, he discovered, and he visited, everywhere, the few covenanters who were scattered through the wilderness, and formed them into regular societies. The sublimity of his conceptions, the accuracy of his judgment, the fervor of his devotion, and the vehemence of his eloquence, qualified him to rouse into the most active exertions, for the good of Zion, those lonely societies, who had been so long unaccustomed to the public preaching of the gospel. By his instrumentality, the Church rapidly increased in the States of Pennsylvania and New York.

In May, 1793, he preached in Princetown, a few miles from the city of Schenectady, for several Sabbaths, and with much success. Although there were only two men in that place who had been Covenanters, the number soon increased to a congrega-

tion. The people of Princetown and Duanesburgh, uniting with the congregation of Galway, petitioned to the Presbytery of Ireland, praying that they would dissolve his connection with his present pastoral charge, and settle him among them. In the year 1797, Mr. McKinney accepted the invitation, and receiving his family from Ireland, settled as the pastor of the united congregations of Galway and Duanesburgh.

Mr. McLeod was among the first fruits of Mr. McKinney's ministry in Princetown. He had received in Scotland, which he had left about nine months before, the rudiments of an education for the ministry, in the established Church. The second sermon which Mr. McKinney preached in Princetown, was from the 4th verse of 27th Psalm, and determined Mr. McLeod to embrace the principles of the covenanted reformation. He also determined to pursue his studies, in order to qualify himself for the ministry in the Reformed Presbyterian Church. He obtained his collegiate education in Union College, Schenectady.

The troubles which prevailed in Ireland, during the insurrection of those who were united for the purpose of throwing off the British yoke, proved advantageous to the Church in America. In that country the Reformed Presbyterians were placed in a very critical situation. They had, for a long time, stood alone the advocates of civil liberty, and of the independency of the Church of the crown.

The insurgents considered them as the enemies of the present constitution of government, and the royalists viewed them in the same light. They were courted by the former and suspected by the latter. The principles of the united Irishmen were, however, very different from those of Presbyterian covenanters, and consequently they could not consistently make a common cause with them, although they sincerely desired the abolition of the prelacy, and the overthrow of the Erastian system, which despotism had established in Ireland; they had not much cause to commit with confidence their civil and religious privileges to the protection of the great body of the people of Ireland, acting under French influence in case of a revolution.

The expected revolution offered, at best, but a gloomy prospect to the witnesses against the man of sin. Three millions of Roman Catholics, in opposition to less than half a million of true Presbyterians, could not be supposed to erect a system of government which would prove favorable to the interests of Presbyterian covenanters. They could not, therefore, co-operate with freedom, in elevating into power these votaries of Antichrist.

The torrent of popular opinion, however, flows with too much rapidity to admit of deliberate reasoning. Some of the witnesses of the covenanted reformation were hurried away, by this torrent, from their former landmarks, before they had time to consider the consequences. They were all known

to be the determined foes of that monstrous system, in which the monarchy and the prelacy were combined. The tools of oppression might, therefore, at any time, mark any of them as their prey; and while martial law or arbitrary power prevailed, every one was in danger. These troubles brought an accession of strength, from distracted Ireland, to the American Church. The Rev. William Gibson was among the emigrants. He arrived in this country in the year 1797. He was accompanied by Messrs. Black and Wylie, who had completed a collegiate education in the university of Glasgow, and were now preparing for the work of the ministry. The arrival of these gentlemen encouraged the Churches now suffering for the want of a preached gospel, and confirmed to Mr. McKinney the propriety of adopting a plan whereby a more complete organization should be given to the Church than that which now existed. He considered it more advantageous to the interest of the reformation in the United States, that its affairs be conducted by a presbyterial judicatory, subsisting in a connection with its sister presbyteries in Scotland and Ireland, than that they should retain the form of a committee subordinate to one of the European courts. He always disapproved of the method of performing judicial transactions by a committee, at so great a distance from the parent judicatory. When he visited Carolina, although he acted as a corresponding member of the com-

mittee of presbytery, he would not be considered as fully approving that organization. He was there, however, informed that it was never intended by the presbytery in Scotland, that the committee should continue in its present state any longer than conveniency required. It was no more than a temporary expediency. All were sensible that a Presbyterian organization should be speedily given to the Church. After consultation with Mr. Gibson and the elders of the Church in Philadelphia, it was resolved to organize a Presbytery. This resolution was adopted, and carried into execution.

The committee of the Scottish Presbytery which acted in Carolina, was now providentially dissolved. Mr. King, standing alone, was invited to a conference at Alexandria with the northern ministers. They, seeing the intrinsic propriety of the measure, the dissolution of the committee, four young men as candidates for the ministry under their care, and seeing the Church requiring a speedy administration of discipline, did constitute the Reformed Presbytery of the United States of North America, in the city of Philadelphia, in the spring of the year 1798.

Mr. King did not live to meet his brethren in a Presbyterial capacity. He departed this life before the time appointed for the meeting. The Presbytery, however, increased in number. Messrs. Donnelly, Black, Wylie, and McLeod were licensed

to preach the gospel by the Reformed Presbytery, met at Coldenham, in June, 1799. The Church was in a very scattered condition when these young men entered upon her public service. Covenanters were thinly dispersed through the vast extent of the American empire, like ancient Israel, as dew among the nations. The preachers had to encounter toil and danger. Their elder brethren had, however, set them an example of sacrificing, without reluctance, bodily ease to the welfare of Zion, and this example they felt it their duty to follow. It was esteemed a light thing for each of them to travel upwards of a thousand miles in one season. Some of them have in less than a year performed journeys of upwards of two thousand miles in extent. They had the happiness, however, of seeing the saints refreshed, sinners turned unto the Lord, and the visible Church putting on gradually the appearance of a regular organization.

In the course of two years they were all ordained to the ministry, and had fixed pastoral charges committed to them. This measure increased rather than diminished their toils. To the care of the numerous vacancies which they were still bound to visit and supply with public ordinances, was added the care of a special charge, of which each had taken the oversight.

The Presbytery turned their attention to their fathers and brethren in the British empire for assistance. The Rev. Samuel B. Wylie was com-

missioned to the Presbyteries of Scotland and Ireland, in the year 1802, and sailed for Europe. He was instructed to inform these judicatories of the constitution of the Reformed Presbytery in America — to consult with them about some plan expedient to preserve an intimacy and unity among the sister Churches, until they could be united under one common judicatory — and to request ministerial assistance for the American Churches. Mr. Wylie returned in October, 1803.

The constitution of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States, was fully recognized by the ecclesiastical judicatories of the same Church in Scotland and in Ireland; a friendly correspondence was established between the three Presbyteries, and some encouragement afforded of receiving ministerial help at a future period. This help was now become more necessary. Mr. McKinney was removed from the State of New York, having accepted a call from a congregation in Carolina; and he there ended his life in August, 1803.

The members of the Reformed Presbytery are widely scattered over this extensive empire. For the more convenient exercise of ecclesiastical authority in the Churches under their care, it was necessary to separate themselves into distinct committees, authorized to exercise Church power within specified limits. The northern committee has received ecclesiastical jurisdiction over their Churches situated between the northern boundary of Pennsyl-

vania and the line which separates the United States from the British dominions in North America. The middle committee is empowered to regulate the ecclesiastical concerns of the Churches between the Pennsylvanian line and the northern boundary of North Carolina. The jurisdiction of the southern committee extends from the Carolina line to the southern limits of the United States. This arrangement rendered the exercise of discipline more convenient, and it prepared the way for the erection of distinct Presbyteries under the inspection of one synod, as soon as an increase of ministers should render such an organization eligible. The acts of these committees are, in the mean time, subject to the review of the Presbytery at its yearly meetings. The southern committee was very soon dissolved, by the death of the Rev. Mr. McKinney. Mr. Donnelly is now the only minister belonging to the Reformed Presbytery who resides within these limits. Whatever business occurs, which the session is incompetent to settle, is referred immediately to the Presbytery. The middle committee consists of the Rev. Messrs. Wylie and Black, and the ruling elders who act with them in judicature. Mr. Wylie is pastor of the Church in Philadelphia, and Mr. Black of the Church in Pittsburgh and its vicinity. The Rev. Mr. Gibson, pastor of the Church in Rye-gate, Vermont, and Mr. McLeod, of the Church in the city of New York, constitute, with ruling elders, the northern committee. Several candidates for

the ministry are, however, before the Church. Double their present number of ministers would not be sufficient to furnish their Churches with a regular and constant administration of ordinances.

Nevertheless, as an ecclesiastical judicatory, exercising authority in the name of Christ, the head of the Church, they deem it their duty to bind up the testimony, and seal the law among his disciples. After mature deliberation, the Presbytery resolved to exhibit their sentiments to the world in the most simple form. They were unanimous in opinion, that the Church should be one in every nation under heaven, and that the subordinate ecclesiastical standards should also be one. They were certain this could not be the case if anything local or peculiar to any one part of the world were admitted into these standards. Such an admission would necessarily prevent the unity of the Church. Truth is not local. Abstract principle is universally the same in every part of the world. The particular application of this one system, however, should be left to each part of the Church, and should be regulated by local circumstances. This application should be plain, pointed, and argumentative, adapted to convince, to persuade, and to confirm. The Presbytery expected that a period would come in which the Reformed Presbyterian Church would be found in the different nations of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. It was their intention, in exhibiting a testimony for truth, and against error,

to render it such as might be acceptable to Reformed Presbyterians in Italy and in Egypt, in India and in Tartary, as well as in Great Britain, or in the United States of America. They ordered a member of Presbytery to prepare a draught of such a system. They appointed a committee to examine it. By order of committee, copies of it were transmitted to the two sister Presbyteries in the British empire, and to each minister and Church session belonging to the Church in America. Those who received copies were, at the same time, requested to return them to the Presbytery, accompanied with such additions, alterations, and amendments, as they might deem it expedient to propose.

The Presbytery, while they were endeavoring to provide for such a testimony as would be universally applicable, were equally anxious to provide for a particular application of their principles. The members had several parts of this extensive work assigned them. They were severally appointed to examine the systems of other Churches, and the constituted civil authorities and laws, and to prepare particular testimonies applying the general principles of the ecclesiastical standards against the evils and errors of these systems, in a full and explicit manner. The Presbytery wished to go thoroughly into this business. They felt that it was a work of time, of labor and of importance. They chose rather to disappoint the earnest and honest

expectations and wishes of their people, than injure the declaration and testimony which they were about to make, in exhibition of their principles as a Church, by intermingling with it a review of other Churches, which must necessarily have been so short as to be feeble and unsatisfactory.

The Reformed Presbytery met in the city of New York, agreeably to appointment, upon the first Tuesday of May, in the year of our Lord 1806 ; but in consequence of the absence of several members, they adjourned until Wednesday evening, without proceeding to business. They continued in session for ten days. During this period they considered the *Draught of a Testimony*, which had been previously prepared. The Reformed Presbytery of Scotland had kindly favored them with their remarks upon that Draught, and a variety of animadversions from the different parts of the Church in America were also submitted to their consideration. Such additions and alterations were made as appeared proper to the Presbytery ; and with these, the Draught was unanimously adopted as the *Testimony* of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and committed to a committee for publication with all convenient speed.

In the conclusion of this chapter in the history of the Church in America, we have abundant reason to notice the great and unmerited kindness of Almighty God. We owe it as a testimony to his goodness, to say that he hath done great things for

us. At the time that the first edition of this testimony was presented to the world, scarcely eighteen years ago, the Reformed Church had but five ordained ministers in her whole connection in the United States. 'Now, on the publishing of a second edition, through the Divine blessing, she has no less than twenty-four, and an increasing demand for ministerial laborers.* Congregations are springing up in the desert, and the wilderness is becoming a fruitful field. *Let us fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all our heart, and consider how great things he hath done for us.*

Slavery, the principal practical evil in America, had long since been removed from the Church.

In the year 1800, Mr. McLeod had received a call to the congregation of Wallkill, and among the subscribers there were holders of slaves. He urged this fact as a motive for rejecting the call. The Presbytery, now having the subject regularly before them, resolved to purge the Church of this dreadful evil. They enacted that no slaveholder should be retained in their communion. This measure was greatly facilitated by the spirited and faithful exertions of the Rev. Messrs. James McKinney and Samuel B. Wylie, who had been appointed a committee to visit the Southern States, and regulate the concerns of the Church in that part of America. These gentlemen set out upon their mission in the

* There are now, in 1852, fifty ordained ministers in connection with General Synod.

month of November, 1800. They travelled through Pennsylvania, and from Pittsburgh sailed down the Ohio to Kentucky. They rode from thence to South Carolina, and having settled the affairs of the Church, and abolished the practice of holding slaves among Church members in the South, they returned in the spring to the State of New York. The Presbytery approved of the services of their committee, and required of their connections a general emancipation. No slaveholder is since admitted to their communion.

Thus have the Presbytery endeavored to settle the doctrine and the practice of the Church.

They have given a summary view of the TRUTHS which the martyrs have been sealing with their blood, from the beginning of the Christian dispensation until the present day. It has been their endeavor to reject nothing for which their predecessors have faithfully contended, and to embrace nothing but what is agreeable to the supreme standard of judgment — the Holy Scriptures.

They sincerely lament that the principles of their Testimony should prove so opposite to the practice of many churches, containing many of the saints of God; but they had no alternative; they must act thus, or renounce their faithfulness. They cheerfully appreciate the talents and piety of their acquaintances, and, as opportunity may offer, commune with them as friends and as Christians; but they cannot extend to any one the right hand of

fellowship in the visible Church upon any other principles than those contained in their Declaration and Testimony, nor can they consistently join, ecclesiastically, in the communion of other Churches, while they continue opposed to these declared sentiments.

They are fully sensible in thus *binding up the Testimony*, that the present generation will consider their zeal as extravagant. Of those who garnish the tombs of the martyrs, some may pity, and others reproach their honest exertions, to follow the steps which the martyrs have marked with their own blood.

They commit their character to the mercy of the all-seeing God, who knows their motives, and to the impartial judgment of the Church at that period, when “the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High.” *Arise, O God! Plead thine own Cause! O, let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name! Blessed be the Lord God: the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things: and let the whole earth be filled with his Glory! AMEN and AMEN.*

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE RATIFICATION OF THE TESTIMONY UNTIL
MAY, 1852.

IN the previous pages of this "Historical Review" we have had a recognition, with sufficient distinctness, of the great truth of the unity of the Church of God. In all ages this divine corporation has been really one. Amidst the confusion attendant upon partial schisms and disorderly defections, this important fact is in danger of being overlooked, if not of being altogether forgotten. The eye of faction is neither fitted nor disposed to survey a field of vision more extensive than that which is bounded by the narrow limits of the party to which it belongs. It is, however, characteristic of the true Church to have a PAST, with which the PRESENT is in intimate connection; while with a deeply interesting FUTURE both the Past and the Present are in important relationship. By the more enlightened, spiritually-minded, and generous-hearted children of Zion, a feeling of the peculiar value of these relations has always been cherished; a feeling which, in the good providence of God, has contributed its full share in giving steadfastness to their hallowed profession. Such will continue to be the case, until regardless and weary of the past, and not duly mindful of, nor wisely provident for, the future, a preference shall be given to that

which is of yesterday, and which is not destined to be recognized in a distant and better age.

To these considerations, the framers of the subordinate standards of our Church, both of an earlier and later period, were not inattentive. These standards embrace the unaltered Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, and general frame of Church government—the compositions of the venerable Westminster Assembly of the seventeenth century; with which, in 1806, were connected the volumes known under the title of “Reformation Principles exhibited.” These contain the material of the Church’s religious profession, and present together the form of her stated Testimony in favor of her Redeemer’s cause.

An attentive consideration of these documents, in connection with their historical relations, will furnish an answer to the inquiries not unfrequently made: Why was there a distinct Reformed Presbyterian organization ever made in America? And, Why is it continued? An answer to these inquiries, at the hazard of some repetition, will of necessity call up to view the Reformed Presbyterian cause, which will be found very far from a mere name. It embraces the whole system of Evangelical religion and moral law, with the sacred institutes by which that system has its development. It demands a full recognition of God’s claims, under the headship of Immanuel, the Lord Jesus Christ, upon man—the whole of man—in every relation

and pursuit of life, where the Bible revelation is possessed or made known. It solemnly prohibits the giving of any pledge of approbation or support to immorality, or to any principle of immorality. It affirms, that into no relation can the subject of God's moral government consistently or safely enter, whose constitution is in hostility against the kingdom of Christ, and whose tendency, in its constitution and constitutional administration, is not to promote the interests of knowledge, righteousness, and rational liberty. In her actual administrations, this Church holds herself obliged, in solemn covenant with God, by all moral means of which she is possessed, to bring the principles of her profession to bear upon the advancement of this cause.

The great declension of the Presbyterian Church in the British Isles, before any organization of the people of that Church was found in America, is matter of history. The elevated moral position of that Church, — though not complete, being only in progress towards a higher point, — in what is denominated the period of the second Reformation, is not unknown. Nor are we ignorant of her descent from that high position on which she stood when she, by solemn covenant, avouched the Lord Jesus Christ as the only head of his own Church, and of all things for the Church's sake, and which she left to take her stand under an Erastian monarchy, which profanely claimed, within its dominions, a headship beside — and in opposition to that of

Christ, over the Church, and over all things appertaining to her. The settlement of the political establishment of the British throne in the house of Nassau, and again in that of Hanover, was like that under the families of Tudor and of Stuart — a gross usurpation of dominion over the Church, and an invasion of the sovereign rights of the Son of God. By what is usually known as the Revolution Settlement, under William III., and Mary his wife, the Church was made a piece and parcel of the political state. The monarch, a secular power, was made head of the spiritual body, the Church. This was made essential to the constitution and existence of the government, and to this the approvers of that settlement gave their pledge. But a conscientious pledge to sustain such an establishment, the consistent and faithful Presbyterians could not give. To separate the political from the ecclesiastical part was impossible. The system was a unit, to the existence of which Erastianism was essential. The members of the general assembly of the revolution Church, however, were prepared to bow the neck to the yoke of an Erastian usurpation. Time had carried away the majority of the high-spirited *jure divino* Presbyterians. A twenty-eight years' persecution had broken the spirit of a less magnanimous, though well-disposed class. Then came the majority of the temporizers under the two previous reigns, and to them were added the hundreds of prelatial curates, who were the sworn advocates of

all the tyranny and oppression to which the friends of the Reformation had been subjected, and many of whom, in the previous persecutions, were intruders into the pulpits of the exiled Presbyterian ministry. These intruders, — the spies and the informers of a former merciless government, — their hands yet stained by the blood of martyrs, with their ruling elders, were recognized members of the revolution Church of Scotland; and such were the constituent members of this general assembly of that Church. A few good men, just returned from their exile, and a portion of those who had remained amidst sufferings at home, cherishing the vain hope of giving, through their agency and influence, a higher character to this establishment, went into its communion. But the controlling power was in the hands of a majority who had sold themselves to the invader of the Church's rights and the usurper of Messiah's throne. The struggles of a well-meaning minority in favor of the right, were overruled by a faithless majority; and the results were a progress of error in doctrine, a spirit of yielding to Erastian assumption, and a relaxation in morals and evangelical discipline, accompanied by a fierce exercise of ecclesiastical power against those who attempted a stand in behalf of the Church's rights.

A "high spirited" and faithful minority still stood aloof from the whole establishment. Into the fellowship of a Church so constituted, and threat-

ening such results, they could not enter; and to a crown that held a usurped power, beside and in hostility to the authority of Christ, and which, by its constitution, was impelled to put forth such a corrupting influence over and in the Church, they could yield no pledge of allegiance. Upon their consciences, they felt the obligations of their Redeemer's claims, and in their ears was still sounding the warning voice of the martyr's blood, admonishing them of the danger of an unworthy compromise of the consecrated principles of their profession. God's word, their solemn covenant bonds, and twenty-eight years of ruthless persecution, had taught them the religious value of the Church's independence of secular power.

Thus, in the British empire, Presbyterians were found in two parties, whose lines of demarcation were distinctly drawn. From each of these parties there were emigrations to the American Provinces. But over these Provinces, the Erastian constitution of England was likewise supreme. The revolution Church of Scotland, as well as that of the Prelacy of England and Ireland, had, in the colonies, the representatives of her constitutional principles. It was felt by the consistent friends of the Reformation, that the waters of the Atlantic had neither sanctified the Erastianism of the British establishment, nor, as to themselves, disannulled the authority of Messiah's claims; and whether in the mother country or in the Western colonies, to the

fellowship of those establishments there was no admission for the uncompromising friends of the Reformation cause. To enjoy fellowship with majority, an abandonment of some of the most fundamental principles of that cause was the price that must have been paid by the more faithful Presbyterians.

To them it was painful to witness, in the act partially adopting their confession of their Faith, that the American Presbyterians qualified that deed with the avowal, that in their creed there was nothing to be understood as hostile to the Erastian settlement of the English throne.* And this while that confession is distinguished by the following affirmations: "There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ." And again: "The Lord Jesus, as king and head of his Church, hath therein appointed a government, in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate." "The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven." † The above stated avowal was understood as an unworthy crouching to usurpation, and a cowardly yielding of the Church's faith to the claims of an immoral and impious power. And instead of a full and faithful assertion of their rights, in a style becoming Christian freemen, generally they sought nothing beyond what was doled out to them by the

* See index for authorities.

† See Confession of Faith, chaps. xxiii., xxv., xxx., xxxi.

toleration act, shackled as that toleration was by slavish and ensnaring oaths; and proceeding from an assumed authority to establish, persecute, or tolerate religion at pleasure; this tame yielding, accompanied, on the part of some, by the boast that in public ministrations so much as a minute had not been employed "in reasoning against the peculiarities of the established [the prelati] Church, nor so much as assigning the reasons of non-conformity." And when the sentiments of the old "high principled" advocates of the exclusive headship of Christ, who refused the pledge of fealty to the Erastian usurpation, which had corrupted and still continued to corrupt and oppress the Church, came before those accommodating men, their abhorrence of those "high principles" was expressed in no very measured terms; and of the uncompromising friends of Christ's crown, and of his people's rights and liberties, they spoke with "harshness" and "acrimony."

This course was in correspondence with the constitution, principles, and policy of the revolution Church of Scotland, with which, in principle and discipline, the American branch desired to be considered as identified. To the constitution of that mother Church a reference has been already made; and what she was in actual character, as developed at the time when this American branch claimed with her a near and tender relation, it may, in this connection, be proper to learn from her own histo-

rian. By her leading men, who guided her measures and gave character to herself, such as it was, — “*Unpresbyterian, unscriptural, unchristian principles* were promulgated, — lauded and followed, and regarded as the very standards of their policy.” “They did not scruple to subject every spiritual consideration to the arbitrary rules of secular policy.” The principle of this Church’s action, had it been followed to its legitimate conclusion, would have landed, says her historian, in “the hideous doctrine of entire slavish obedience to tyranny in the State, and popery in the Church — that is — to absolute despotism, civil and religious.” The practical illustration of all this is found in such cases as those of the fierce, unjust, and cruel acts of discipline towards the McMillans, the Erskines, the Fishers, and Gillespies, the best men of the Church, of the country, and of the age. This was the Church which the American department, claiming the relation of her “young daughter,” affectionately addressed as a “tender parent,” professing to be “united with her in the same faith, order, and discipline.” And against the Erastian establishment which corrupted the Church and oppressed the people, we find no voice of a manly, godlike, and faithful testimony; nor with that “tender parent,” — the corrupted revolution Church, — do we hear any pleadings of this affectionate daughter, because of her wayward course. Their uniform profession was that of affectionate fealty to both the corrupting government and the corrupted Church.

It is true, however, that those good men, — for good but bewildered men they generally were, — complained of the *penal* sufferings to which, notwithstanding their yielding spirit and loyal submission, they were subjected, because they were not prepared to go the whole length of the requisitions of the Erastian establishment. But their complaints were limited, chiefly, if not entirely, to the penal ills which they suffered without duly regarding the constitutional source of those ills. The root was cherished while complaint was made of the bitter fruits. This spirit of a prudent conservatism was, ecclesiastically, continued till the revolution rendered it no longer useful. Even while, by the order of George III., the American soil was drenched with patriot blood, upon the ground of *principle, duty, esteem, and reverence*, allegiance to the throne and the king was urged. From this unworthy profession of allegiance to the principles of that government, there was one recorded dissent; in that instance the honorable representative of *Presbyterianism*,* and of the great body of the Presbyterian people in their private capacity.

To a Church and State thus constituted, thus related, and thus administered, Reformed Presbyterians could make no professions of adherence or allegiance. Their refusal to do so exposed them to sufferings, and subjected them to the arrogance of numbers and of power. From the ordinary infirm-

* Rev. Mr. Halsey.

ities of frail humanity they put in no claim to exemption ; nor of all that they may have said and done is approval given. But to the principles of civil and religious liberty, the principles of the Church's spiritual independence of all secular power, and to that vital truth of such extensive practical bearing, — the alone universal headship of the Christ of God, — their adherence, as at other historical periods of deep interest, was unshrinking. For the principles and liberties of the American revolution, they were the uncompromising advocates long before a single ray of independence had illuminated our horizon. Those advocates of that moral order of society, which at once recognizes the claims of God and rights of man, rejoiced in the persuasion that in those Ecclesiastical Bodies which had unhappily gone down from the elevated platform of the second Reformation, there were not a few, both ministers and private members, who sympathized with the great principles of that Reformation, but who, for various reasons, saw proper to remain in their existing connections. To these and the sound principles still retained in their standards, they looked, under God (and we continue the expectation), as giving promise of a day of revival in favor of a more full and consistent profession ; assured that Presbyterianism, even under the more imperfect forms and unhappy modifications often given it, is possessed of elements that lead forward to a full assertion of truth and right. Those expecta-

tions have been at different times partially realized. The revolution of 1688, in Great Britain, spoke distinctly on the subject, and that of 1776, in America, in a still more emphatic voice. The latter, that of 1776, broke the charm of "the settlement of the illustrious house of Hanover" on the British throne, and forever separated the United States from all subjection to an Erastian and immoral crown. Correspondent indications have been found in the secessions from the present Scottish establishment, the rupture of 1843, and in America by the old school Presbyterian action of the years 1837 and 1838.

What then stands in the way of a complete coalescence of the whole Presbyterian family in the United States? This inquiry is often made, and it deserves attention, and in its proper place, an answer; though at this time, and in this place, nothing can be given beyond a mere reference to the materials of a reply.

He knows but little of a man who is not apprised of the extended influence of principle, whether of truth or error, upon the mind, habits, conduct, and character of those who have embraced it. Truth and error are antipodes, and the characters formed under their influence are not well fitted to coalesce. If the error be a fundamental one, it will extensively work its way, both directly and indirectly, in the production of evil. Its tendency is, in a special manner, to produce an obtuseness of the

spiritual sensibilities of the soul, for which no compensation is found in the mere secular or literary taste, sometimes substituted in its stead, and mistaken for it. This defect of sensibility is, to a lamentable extent, often found in good men, evincing itself in a non-perception of the value of spiritual truth, and the practical bearing of the principles of moral order. Of this we have testimony in the state of the doctrines, worship, and order of many sections of the Church. A willing relation of a Church to an Erastian throne, and a timid yielding to the encroachments of that power, for three generations, without deleterious results upon both the individual and the social mind, who could expect? — results unseen and unfelt by their subjects, and on points and in directions unsuspected by the careless spectator, but to which the enlightened advocate of a higher principle and a better course may be peculiarly sensible.

The Presbyterian records of the last one hundred and fifty years in America, will be found to give the most satisfactory reply to the inquiry before us. And passing by those of some smaller divisions of the Presbyterian family who, on some points, acted an unworthy part, the authentic memorials of the three existing General Assemblies in the United States, will shed light upon the whole subject. These assemblies are the descendants of the Scottish revolution Church, with its Irish branch, the synod of Ulster, — the Church which took her stand under

another head beside the Lord Christ. The seeds of the past and present evils of those assemblies were planted in the compromises with moral wrong which characterized the early organizations of their predecessors. The unhappy developments of the evils of those unbecoming compromises, the distinguished men of a worthy minority belonging to them could not prevent.

This brief reference to historical facts evinces that a steadfast adherence to the attainments of the Presbyterian Reformation, and not a secession from any other Protestant body,—for such secession they never made,—gave occasion to the designation of “Reformed Presbyterian,” by which this people, whose history is now written, are distinguished from other portions of the Presbyterian family. All these portions they regard with affection, though with them they cannot recede from their ancient ecclesiastical ground.

The doctrinal standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church having been settled in correspondence with her peculiar circumstances as now stated, presented the materials of her permanent profession and testimony. The application of the principles of this profession in the course of her administration, if just and wise, she saw must be modified by the condition of the objects about which they were conversant. In the principles of her creed there was a perfect coincidence of mind among her ministers and people; and in the pru-

dential measures for carrying them into effect, there was no difference of opinion to give disturbance. The active spirit of the time, and the transition condition of the social state, however, made it necessary, in her administration, to adopt some provisional regulations. These could not be of authority beyond the existence of the reasons of their enactment.

The cordial union, at this period, of the ministers of the Church in principle, and their mutual affection and confidence, were exemplary and remarkable: their zeal was enlightened and ardent, their labors were abundant, their self-denial unusual, and in their ministerial work, their success was such as to evince that their labor was not in vain in the Lord. Of the character of the age they were not unapprised, nor to the signs of the times were they inattentive. They were fully persuaded that *their* cause embraced in one harmonious system, according to the Bible revelation, the cause of both God and man, and was, in its principles, capable of being carried out in an extended application to every land. They believed that, in its results, it is destined to produce among every people an elevated intellectual, moral, and religious character, qualifying for the duty and happiness of that state, which the promise of God connected with the high moral order which his law prescribes; and, at the same time, they well knew that, for the actual attainment of these, "the time was not yet," and,

of course, they did not expect an immediate very extensive impression in favor of either themselves or the hallowed cause for which they were willing to labor. As long as the Church is in her wilderness state, so long her cause and her consistent children will not be extensively regarded with great favor, either by the men of the world, or by such of her own family as nearly confine on the world's domain. For the issues of Providence they were not unprepared. Their own historical relations with the past they understood; and with the future, by a living faith in the infallible truth of God's promise, and in the verity of the sure word of prophecy, their minds and hearts were connected. The principles which they had espoused they understood, the cause to which those principles gave vitality they loved; of its ultimate success in the establishment of righteousness and order in what has been, and still is, a very unrighteous and disorderly world, they entertained no doubt; and for its sake they had willingly engaged, without any unbecoming feeling towards others, in its self-denying labors.

The progress of the Reformed Presbyterian cause, if it did not exceed, at least equalled the most sanguine calculations of its early friends. With the increasing number of ministers, congregations demanding their ministrations multiplied beyond their power to meet their necessities. During many years, this state of affairs gave to the

ministry much of a missionary character, a character not alien to it still. According to their means, in their contributions the people were liberal. While efficient in action, the ministry endeavored to be discriminating in judgment, and for a long period peace reigned, with few and short-lived interruptions, in all our borders. Cases calling for marked discipline were rare, and when called for, while it was firm in its exercise, it was temperate in its spirit. While our ecclesiastical fellowship was distinct, yet the Christian intercourse of our ministers and people with those of other denominations, on the broad ground of the common Christianity, was courteous, frank, and generous. Such, indeed, as became the friends of truth in the enjoyment of an unhampered civil and religious liberty; ever ready to join and co-operate with them in every work for the public good, when no sacrifice of principle or of organical consistency was required to be made.

Fully persuaded of the necessity of a well-educated ministry, the attention of the Church was turned to the subject, and in A. D. 1807 arrangements were made for the establishment of a Theological Seminary, and the Rev. Dr. Samuel B. Wylie, of the city of Philadelphia, was appointed Professor. Early in 1808 the seminary was formally organized, the Rev. Alexander McLeod, D. D., and the Rev. Messrs. John Black and Gilbert McMaster being, by appointment, the superintendents. The important and responsible office of

Professor was held by Dr. Wylie, and its arduous duties discharged by him with distinguished ability and faithfulness, until May, 1851, when, finding it his duty to resign his chair, his resignation was, with much regret, reluctantly accepted by General Synod. For some years Dr. Wylie was aided in the labors of the seminary by his son, the Rev. Theodorus W. J. Wylie, as junior professor, and likewise for a shorter period by Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Crawford. In 1850 it was judged advisable by General Synod to appoint a Theological Institution in the West. Xenia, in the State of Ohio, was designated as its location, and the Rev. Gilbert McMaster, D. D., was appointed Professor of Theology. Upon the acceptance of the resignation of Dr. Wylie, and of that of the Rev. T. W. J. Wylie, in 1851, it was resolved by Synod to remove the Eastern seminary from the city of Philadelphia to that of New York; and, at the same time, the Rev. John N. McLeod, D. D., was appointed Professor of Theology. Both these institutions are still in operation. And thus for a period of forty-five years has this Church, in the United States, been endeavoring to provide for the regular training of an educated ministry, in conformity with the example of our fathers of an earlier day.

The sister co-ordinate judicatories of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in Scotland and Ireland, as was understood by a correspondence on the subject, contemplated an organic modification, by the con-

stitution of Synods in those countries, respectively.* To neither of those Synods, when constituted, without great inconvenience, uncompensated under the then existing circumstances by any corresponding advantage, could the American Department be in organized subjection. This fact, in connection with some other considerations, to prevent the appearance of an organic anomaly, led the way to the constitution of the American Synod. On May 24, 1809, all the ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States being present, did, with ruling Elders, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church, with prayer, constitute — The Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States of North America. Upon the constitution of Synod, the Rev. Gilbert McMaster was appointed Moderator, and the Rev. John Black, stated clerk. Synod adopted, as their own, the acts of the late Presbytery, and authorized and directed the formation of

* A regular correspondence between the Scottish, the Irish, and the American synods of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, has been, and is still maintained. Sometimes this has been by delegation as well as by letters. In 1830 the Rev. Dr. Alexander McLeod was a delegate to the Scottish and Irish synods, and Rev. Dr. Black in 1832. In 1831 the Rev. Dr. William Henry was a delegate to the American synod from that of Ireland. Delegates at other times were appointed by all the synods respectively; but, owing to unforeseen circumstances, failed in the fulfilment of their appointment. These several departments of the Church are in the most friendly relations with each other, as co-ordinate sister judicatories, in different countries. Whether a more close organical relationship among them shall be soon established, is not yet determined.

three Presbyteries to be designated, in accordance with the localities of the ministers and people, the Northern, Middle, and Southern Presbyteries. As the Church increased the boundaries of these Presbyteries were modified, and new ones were appointed.

In A. D. 1823 it was deemed advisable to give the supreme judicatory of the Church the form of a representative body, to meet biennially, composed of delegates, or commissioners, from the several Presbyteries in a specified proportion to the members of each; but without affecting the powers of Synod. These powers continued to be what they had been; under the previous organization. To meet the Presbyterial condition of things, in the intervals of the biennial meetings of General Synod, occasion was given in 1831 to authorize the organization of two Synods, to be known as the Eastern and Western Synods, subordinate to General Synod. A change of circumstances, to be noted in its place, induced a suspension of the operations of those Synods, which, at no very distant day, it may be found advisable to resume.

We turn, at this place, to notice an occurrence not unworthy of historical record. In 1825 a proposal of ecclesiastical correspondence with General Synod, was made by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States; and in August of that year, it was submitted to, and by Synod entertained, for consideration. In order to

prepare a plan of correspondence to be submitted to the Supreme Judicatories of the two bodies, respectively, a committee was appointed to meet that of the General Assembly. Those committees met and agreed upon a plan to be recommended to their courts for approval. The plan presented is embraced in the three following articles:—

ARTICLE I. The General Assembly, and the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, lamenting the existing separations between the members of the body of Christ, and believing that all the members of that body, being *many*, are *one* body, and trusting to the word of God, that these separations will not be perpetual, do AGREE to use all scriptural means, in the exercise of patience and prudence, to bring their several ecclesiastical connections to uniformity in doctrine, worship, and order, according to the word of God.

ARTICLE II. In order to bring about this desirable object on the basis of the proper *unity* of the visible Church, it is MUTUALLY COVENANTED, that the ministers, members, and judicatories of these churches, treating each other with Christian respect, shall always recognize the validity of each other's acts and ordinances consonant to the Scriptures; and yet, that any church judicatory belonging to either body, may examine persons, or review cases of discipline on points at present peculiar or distinctive to themselves.

ARTICLE III. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and the Synod of the Reformed

Presbyterian Church, shall severally appoint two Commissioners, with an alternate to each, to attend these judicatories respectively, who shall hold their offices till they are superseded by another choice ; and these Commissioners shall have the privilege of proposing measures important to the Church of Christ, and of delivering their opinions on any question under discussion ; but they shall have no vote in its decisions.

In 1826 these articles were accepted by the General Assembly ; and, in 1827, were brought before General Synod, by the Rev. Alexander McLeod, D.D., the chairman of their committee, who, in an address of unusual ability and eloquence, — subsequently given to the public through the press, — sustained the report of the committee, and recommended to Synod the adoption of the plan. The subject was fully discussed ; but by a small majority was, for the time, rejected. Further action in the matter was indefinitely postponed. Of the principle of the plan there was a general approbation ; but on the part of some there was an apprehension, that by a considerable portion of both bodies the subject was not well understood ; that, if then adopted, it would lead to abuses ; and others suspected that the elements, then in active operation in the Presbyterian Church, which in 1837 issued in the disruption of the General Assembly, as well as some latent causes of discord among ourselves, would, in both bodies, interfere with the advantages

to the parties which were anticipated by the friends of the plan of correspondence.

With the reasons for the rejection of this measure a strong minority were not satisfied ; but to the will of the majority they quietly gave way. The plan was not, as some alleged, one of Ecclesiastical union, though calculated, in order to their removal, to ascertain the true causes of existing divisions. It had no tendency either to justify or perpetuate unhallowed separations in the Church, neither did it open a door to a busy intermeddling with each other's distinct organization ; nor did it give any countenance to a breaking in upon the sacred conditions of sacramental fellowship, or any other properly organical Ecclesiastical ordinance, as distinguished from religious institutions simply Christian, and of a private character. Its object was a well-regulated intercourse of two Ecclesiastical bodies, which, from circumstances produced by neither of them, could not organically be one, yet had much in common, and mutually respected one another ; furnishing the opportunity for an enlightened and liberal discussion of subjects of general interest, and, without danger to sound principles, tending to set aside the bad influence of a mere party spirit, and thus contribute something towards a final pacification of the Church on earth. The failure of the plan produced between the parties no unpleasant feelings ; and the proposed measure was otherwise salutary, being a mutual recognition of

the two bodies as actual departments of the kingdom of Christ.

The year 1827 was marked, too, by the commencement of a correspondence with the Synod of the Associate Church; the leading facts of which, for the prevention of misapprehension in the matter, it may not, in this record, be out of place to notice. In their public profession, as regards the doctrine, worship, and order of the Church, Reformed Presbyterians, and the several Associate bodies, happily, to a great extent, occupy a common ground; and notwithstanding some difference of views on certain subjects, on some occasions discussed by each with sufficient ardor, yet between them, personally and ecclesiastically, it is believed there has always existed a respectful and affectionate regard. That, in the details of a protracted discussion of subjects, under some of their aspects complex, and under others somewhat abstract, extending through several generations and in different countries, there should, on both sides, be some misapprehensions of the matter in dispute, it is not difficult to suppose, nor very humbling to admit. Complaints to this amount, by each of those bodies, had been repeatedly made. That which now invited attention had respect to a statement in the "historical view" prefixed to the testimony of this Church, of certain positions supposed to be embraced in the profession of the Associate Church. Those positions, as stated in that narrative, were, in part, supposed to be justified by

express avowals, and, in part, to be legitimate deductions from their acknowledged principles. The positions, to give them distinction, but not intended to give the idea of literal quotations, were marked by inverted commas. Of this statement, in a letter of May, 1826, addressed to the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Associate Synod complained, as not being a fair representation of secession principles, on the specified subjects.

The letter of the Associate Synod, while in a tone of sufficient earnestness and temper, was not destitute of the spirit of courtesy and kindness. In it the Associate brethren, in reference to those of whom they complain, say, "It is pleasing to state that there is a general coincidence between your views of truth and duty and ours, and we trust it is our unfeigned desire that it should be extended to every part of our Christian profession." To this, in a similar spirit, the Reformed Presbyterian Synod responded. They declared, "We take no interest in putting any one in the wrong. It is possible, we admit, that controversies on very minute topics, carried on for several years, by many different writers, may have led to misunderstandings and misrepresentations, which an impartial reviewer might find it in his power to correct. Gladly shall we correct any misapprehensions into which we may have fallen respecting things in controversy between our fathers, and meet with open arms brethren who harmonize with us in the great moral

principles and pious practices of the Churches of the Reformation.”

The correspondence was for some time continued; but at length, having assumed a form which it was believed would be of no benefit to either of the bodies, the Reformed Presbyterian Synod dismissed the further consideration of the subject by the proposal, That should the Associate Synod furnish us with an authorized declaration of their views upon the several topics complained of, it would by us be inserted in the next edition of our “Historical View.” This proposal our brethren of the Associate Synod did not see proper to accept, further than by a general reference to the statements of their Church standards, the import of which we considered to be the subject of inquiry, and the matter in dispute. To us it would have been gratifying, could they have agreed upon it, to have had the views which they entertain upon those topics, stated in other language than that of their standards, by our brethren themselves. On both sides, it is not improbable, that a candid consideration of some unguarded, though established forms of expression, would bring them nearer to a oneness in their public testimony. For this event the parties wait in hope.

To the actual condition and tendencies of the times, at this period, as regarded the whole Church, the members of Synod were neither insensible nor inattentive, and the dangers threatening the Re-

formed Presbyterian cause, in all its localities, were not unforeseen. This will appear, among other proofs, by the following extracts from a synodical letter of 1827, to the Scottish Synod. In that letter are found the following remarks and proposals: "There are — from the moral state of civilized society over all the nations, dangers to the Reformation cause, common to us and to you. It is a time of excitement to the mind in all its faculties. Distinctions are disputed, walls of partition are tottering, establishments are undermined, — the ancient forests are yielding to the axe and to the fire, and we know not what kind of cultivation is first to succeed the burning. God reigneth. The seed of the Reformation corn is the best. Great is the truth, and it must prevail. But where shall our several Synods be found among the Churches of God in every land, when the fruit of the mountain corn shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth?"

"There is danger of our existence as a Church, if we imitate too far the habits of others. There is danger of our existing uselessly and ignobly, if we are not awakened thoroughly to love and good works. It appears to us that the time is come for definitely shaping our course of public policy, in regard to modern movements, in order that, on the one hand, we may not suffer any relaxation of our Testimony to take place, and on the other, that we preserve the liberties of the Church from destruc-

tion by the influence of mere popular opinions. Shall the Church be content to labor with the industry of the insect, in gathering the particles which compose its impenetrable shell in which itself expires? Or shall we unlock the repository of the martyr's flag, follow him whose vesture is dipped in blood, and venture out amongst the contending elements, with waving banners, to take part in the victory?

“We suggest to you, reverend and dear brethren, a plan of co-operation for all the Churches of the Reformation, in whatever land; and we request an expression of your opinion upon each of the articles.

“1. That a stated correspondence be established among the several Synods of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, each with the others, and keep each other advised of all public measures bearing upon their common interests.

2. “That measures be taken to provide a mutual league and covenant, which will apply equally to all the Churches of our connection in whatever land; and so form one bond of union and co-operation for the friends of the covenanted Reformation.

3. “That the several judicatories shall once in three years send a delegate or two to correspond, personally, with each of the forementioned judicatories.”

These measures, in substance, had repeatedly been proposed before this time by us, and especially

at the Synodical meeting of 1823, they were subjects of consideration. In 1830 the whole subject was brought before the Scottish Synod by the late Rev. Dr. Alexander McLeod, who, at that time, on a visit to Europe, was received as our delegate, and as a member of the committee appointed to that service, reported a draft of a league and covenant upon the principles above stated. It was adopted in overture, transmitted to the Synods of Ireland and the United States, and by them taken under consideration. It is a noble document, in its views comprehensive, in its principles liberal and sound, in its terms precise, remarkably calculated to give expression to the great cause of the Reformation, and without embarrassment from mere local or transient circumstances, to unite upon great principles and for a great object the members of the Church, in a sacred fellowship and in an efficient activity. Why it has been permitted so long to slumber in the form of overture is, perhaps, not well accounted for either by its supposed defects in some local provisions, or by certain inauspicious events which occurred among us in the years immediately following its reception for consideration. And to what extent its full and practical adoption, according to the original intentions of its friends, along with a well-regulated correspondence with other departments of the Christian commonwealth, might have prevented those events, it is not the province of this history to decide.

The cause of the Reformation in the hands of the Church advanced. Ministers, people, and congregations increased in number, and were spread over a vast region of country. New States rapidly arose out of the wilderness, distinguished by population, wealth, civilization, the arts of peace, and in the enjoyment of liberty, religious and civil, as unrestrained as man could wish. To the progress of our ecclesiastical movements and success in those movements, there were no impediments from the state of things without; none except what arose directly from the evils of the human heart. The peculiar principles of the Reformation, in their bearing upon the public morality of the social state, were imbuing the public mind, and the prospects of Reformed Presbyterianism were highly promising. To the Church, in times of outward prosperity, there is always danger, when her children, too much confiding in privilege, become correspondently unmindful of their dependence upon God. However this might be in our case, causes were found in operation with us, to some extent interfering with our peaceful and happy progress. Violent action is rarely the effect of its professed causes. Something unnamed, and which would not do to avow, could it be found, would generally be ascertained as the true spring of such action. In the case to which reference is now made, we shall not go in search of hidden motives, but shall content ourselves with a simple outline of leading and known facts.

The doctrinal standards of the Church, as has been stated, were settled, and, on the subject of political morality, were right. That no government to whose constitution immorality is essential can morally claim, as due to it, an oath of fealty obliging to its unconditional support; and that no state law, requiring the violation of the eternal rule of righteousness, the law of God, ought to be obeyed by the moral being, in the science of ethics, are settled points. In the laws of the States, and of the United States, evils had been found. The chief political wrong was that of African slavery. The African slave trade was protected by law; and at the period of which we treat, slavery existed, with a single exception, in every State of the Union. Every citizen was liable, in a given case, to be called upon, judicially, to pass between the master and the slave, and, legally, to recognize the right of the master to reduce the moral being from the rank of a free man, and to hold him and his posterity in perpetuity as his chattels. To meet this condition of things, ecclesiastical regulations were called for, and enactments were made prohibitory of a participation in the doing of this wrong. These enactments were of a precautionary and provisional character, and would be of authority no longer than the existence of the evils against which they were intended to guard the morals of the members of the Church. As the evil laws were modified or abrogated, so it behoved the Church

to adapt to the actual state of things her enactments ; it being in the nature of the case, as well as an express declaration of the supreme judicatory, — “that no connection with the laws, the officers, or order of the state, is forbidden by the Church, except what truly involves immorality.” And to adjudicate particular cases, under a general and well known principle, was left to the local ecclesiastical authorities.

Years, as they passed, produced their changes. The African slave trade was abolished, declared to be piracy, a capital crime, and the citizen engaged in it, when convicted, legally consigned to the gallows. In half of the old slave-holding States, slave laws and slavery were disannulled ; and new States, the place of residence of many of our people, were almost annually organized, and, as free commonwealths, constitutionally prohibited the existence of slavery within their bounds. On other subjects connected with sound morals, either in the course of legislation, or by the decision of courts settling on the side of righteousness what had been held as doubtful, other grounds of objection to the civil order of the state were taken out of the way of conscientious men. Discussions of the principles of constitutional law were of frequent occurrence, and shed a light upon the character of state and federal relations and institutions, giving a more comprehensive and discriminating understanding of their complex nature than was possible to be had

at an earlier period of their existence. Thus the political state of the country became modified; and in correspondence with those modifications, the relations of our people with reference to them were qualified.

Still, in different States, and in the same State at periods of no great distance from one another, the condition of things of the same nature was very different. This diversity arose from changes which often occurred in the constitutional or legal provisions of the several departments of the confederacy, which gave occasion, while Church members were agreed in principle and not really contradictory in practice, to some diversity of action, not well understood by the imperfectly informed, and perhaps misrepresented by the designing. The peculiar organization of the Federal government, too, gave occasion to misapprehensions and consequent objections. A distinct and limited sovereignty, in connection with reserved and sovereign rights of States with which the Federal power has no right to interfere, while in principle very simple, and capable in application of combining all the nations of the earth in one great confederacy, was, and in many localities still is, imperfectly understood. The idea of a central power of universal bearing, supposed to be necessary to every government, has given occasion to perplexity in reference to that of the United States.

It has escaped the eye of superficial observation, that the civil and political institutions of the United

States are not regardless of the interests of religion and morals, because that little of their guardianship or immediate superintendence has been committed to the hands of the occupants of the seats of Federal power. The people of the United States purposing to avoid, on this point, the abuses of the nations of the old world, delegated but a limited power to the agents of their general government, and that for a very limited time, reserving in their own hands the controlling power in public affairs. They presumed greatly upon the fact of a Christian civilization lying deeply at the foundation of their state, and confided much in the spirit of that civilization as giving life, a conservative life, to their institutions in actual administration. In this they did not miscalculate. The personal and domestic safety, the security of rights, the maintenance of social order, the advancement of knowledge, the multiplication of the institutions of Christian benevolence, and the progress of religion, throughout the far-spread domain of the confederacy, without a standing army, and almost without a police, furnish ample proof that they, in their principle, were not mistaken. The actual state of things in our country, while we have more than sufficient proof of human depravity, evinces the existence of an extended and profound sense of moral right and religious obligation, imbuing the public mind and giving vitality to our institutions, and safety to our social relations, pursuits, and intercourse, instead of the complicated

legal forms of other nations, armed with their penal sanctions, and guarded and executed by their military bands. The spirit of our social system, with its institutions, is neither that of paganism, anti-Christianism, nor infidelity. It is essentially Christian, though far from complete Christian development. Compare our social system with that of either pagan or anti-Christian states, and what is now asserted will fully appear. As to an infidel state, such could not long, if at all exist.

Under all these circumstances, ministers and people extensively became satisfied that, at least in many of the States, there might, with safety to every moral interest, be a nearer approximation, by Church members, to the government of the country than was once allowable. No criminal neglects were justified, nor immoral regulations sanctioned by them. And it was a standing declaration of the Church, that "no connection with the state, its officers and its laws, was prohibited, but such as really involved immorality." It was, however, still kept distinctly in mind, that though no positive immorality might be found in the Federal bond of Union, nor in many of the State constitutions, yet bad men, in places of power, might pervert to bad purposes an instrument in itself good and useful. It is God's own law, that "he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." Rulers must be morally qualified as well as the principles of constitutions of government sound.

The safety of the state demands both of these. Christian influence must never be prostituted in giving political eminence to the immoral man, the known enemy of true religion, and despiser of the law of God. Such is the standing and irrevocable law of the Church. Such were the views and judgments of the senior ministers and elders of our Church, by whom her testimony had been framed, and through whose ministry her cords had been lengthened, and her stakes made strong. In a nearer relation to the government of the country, they made no change in principle; and as to practice, no modification was allowed except what was imposed by changes in the public arrangements of the commonwealth. The state came to them, and it did not become them to leave their place. With special care it was endeavored to notice every public movement, and to make a true and consistent application of the principles of their faith, as indicated by the signs of the times, in the light of the Bible, was seen to be a duty; avoiding the dangers at home and abroad by which their cause was threatened. "A more definite shaping of our public policy" for the attainment of the ends of our organization, was felt to be called for.

Subsequent events, and their relation both to historical truth and to the interests of religion and morals, require that certain facts in reference to our civil relations be briefly stated in this connection. To guard the interests of political as well as of

personal morality, at an early period, we have adverted to precautionary measures and provisional enactments. Providential occurrences, as time advanced, rendered some of these a dead letter. Of this, the abolition of slavery and slave laws in so many States, in its bearing upon the office of jurors, is an instance. The approximation of State laws to the position of our Church modified our civil relations, and justified our recognition of those relations. This course was progressive. Affairs of state often give occasion to ecclesiastical developments. In no land can the Church and the State have existence, at the same time, without being in relationship either friendly or unfriendly. In the United States the Church, in her religious profession, has protection, and the Church puts forth her moral influence in the sustentation of social order.

The war of 1812, waged in defence of the sovereign rights of the United States against Great Britain, by whom those rights had been violated, tended to give development to our civil relations. In that war, as in that of the revolution, the United States had the cordial approval and support of the ministers and people of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Some of them, however, were of foreign birth; and though they had no sympathy with England, or with the unrighteous outrages and claims of the cabinet of St. James upon American rights, yet, in a state of war, they were liable, especially in the cities of the seaboard, to the inconveniences

of being treated as alien enemies. To meet this condition of things, in August, 1812, Synod had the subject before them; and in accordance with the well known principles of the Church, that it is the duty of states or nations where the Bible revelation is known, "formally to recognize the sovereignty of Messiah over all persons and things, and to constitute their systems of government upon principles which publicly recognize the authority of the law of God," they made the following declaration: "This Synod, in the name of its constituent members and of the whole Church which they represent, declare that they approve of the Republican form of the civil order of the United States, and the several States; that they prefer this nation and its government to any other nation and government; that they will support to the utmost the independence of the United States, and the several States, against all foreign aggressions and domestic factions, and disclaim all allegiance to any foreign jurisdiction whatsoever." And "that emigrants from foreign nations, lest they should be esteemed alien enemies, be instructed to give to the proper organ of this government the following assurance of their allegiance to this empire, each one for himself when required."

"I, A. B., do solemnly declare, in the name of the Most High God, the Searcher of hearts, that I abjure all foreign allegiance whatsoever, and hold that these States, and the United States, are, and

ought to be, sovereign and independent of all other nations and governments, and that I will promote the best interests of this empire, maintain its independence, preserve its peace, and support the integrity of the Union, to the best of my power.”

It may, in this place, be stated as a fact, not without bearing on our subsequent history, that this solemn pledge to the government of the United States, authorized by Synod, in 1812, embraced all the essential provisions of the oath of allegiance prescribed by Congress, and more emphatically than it does.* The conviction of this prevented the committee of Synod, appointed to bring the case before Congress, from troubling that body or themselves with the matter.

To assert, as some have done who know better, that this action of Synod was done in “secret session,” is to contradict matter of fact, and to falsify history. The assertion is not true. On August 12, 1812, the committee, composed of three of the oldest ministers of the Church, was appointed in open court to consider and report upon the subject. On August 14th, the committee, in open court, unanimously reported. The subject was discussed in open court, the report upon it amended, and unanimously adopted. About the business there was no secrecy. It may, however, be noticed that the known principles of Reformed Presbyterians,

* Such was the opinion of a late Attorney General of the United States, as distinguished as a jurist, as he is for moral worth.

though aliens, which some of them were, secured them against all suspicion of being inimical to the country or its government. The ground of this security was powerfully brought into view in a series of "Discourses on the War," by Rev. Dr. Alexander McLeod, one of the ministers of this church, in the city of New York, while that commercial emporium was blockaded by the fleet of the enemy.

That series of "Discourses," published at the time, treated the subject in the light of the principles of the law of nature, the law of nations, and that of the Bible, and was by far the ablest defence of the justice and necessity of that war which appeared from the press, whether in papers of state or in other forms. The effect of those Discourses upon the public mind was remarkably great. The consciences of the friends of their country, and they were not few, which had been disturbed by the representations, on the part of the opposers of their own government and the apologists of England, of Great Britain being the "bulwark of our holy religion," — "the headquarters of the Son of God," — and, "that to make war upon her was to be in hostility against heaven," — we say, the consciences of good men that had by such declarations been disturbed, were by these "Discourses on the War" set at rest. The accomplished, able, and patriotic author intended his discussions to be a vindication of the American cause against the ag-

gressions and unrighteous claims of England ; but at the same time he had higher aims, which the mere politician did not see, and for which he did not care. Historical justice to the distinguished author, and to the Church of which he was a minister, demands that of this, which he himself at the time avowed, a distinct record should be made.

With his defence of the great principles of national rights and laws Dr. McLeod incorporated the higher principle of political and religious morality. The state and its affairs he held up as connected with the throne of God. In the settling and rightly directing the public mind, he contemplated the extension of the knowledge and authority of the great moral truths of social order, imbued by the spirit of the gospel, and promotive of the interests of the Kingdom of Christ. To the development of these principles the war gave occasion ; the occasion he embraced, and in so doing was persuaded that, while pleading the cause and vindicating the interests of his country, he was serving his Master, Christ.

This war, which so greatly contributed to the interests, safety, and reputation of the country, gave occasion to bring the people of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the civil state into nearer contact. That state whose cause they pleaded, for which they appeared in arms on the high places of the field, which they, in the day of embarrassment, helped to sustain by their loans, and for whose

safety and prosperity they prayed at the throne of God, they could not lightly esteem, feeling as they did, that it was their own; where in person and property, and in rights, civil and religious, they had full protection. To the evils of their country, negative and positive, they were not blind, of none of her moral delinquencies did they approve, nor to any of them give a pledge of support.

The detail of facts, now given, evinces a modified character of the institutions of the country, which was met by us, not by a change of, or departure from, principle, but by a correspondent qualification of our relations to the modifications of the state. We have seen that the African slave trade was abolished, and legally declared to be piracy; slave laws were repealed and slavery abolished in the States where most of our people had their abode; new States were rapidly organized where slavery never existed, and was now constitutionally prohibited; thus taking away the principal reason against serving on juries in our courts of law. In several States, the highest courts had declared the Christian religion to be the religion of the State, and that to reproach it was a crime against public law, thus correcting the idea of the government being infidel in its character; in the mean time the nature of the Federal compact was more perfectly developed, and the character of the bond of union among the States better understood. For ourselves, as a Church, there was no civil or religious right

that could be demanded which we had not already in our possession, and fully guaranteed by public law. These movements and changes were noted by the fathers of the Church, and to meet them on their part by a correspondent administration was their purpose. Hence, instead of standing aloof from all civil relations and actions, we have the oath of allegiance of 1812, authorized by Synod; we have the defence from our pulpits and by the press, of the second war of independence; that war sustained by the services of our people in arms, by their loans to the government, and by their prayers. We have likewise the instruction of the Synod in reference to jurors — not a prohibition of serving, as such, but — an inquiry to be made as to the morality or immorality of the code of law that governed the courts, where they might be called to act; and that followed by the standing avowal that “no connection with the government is forbidden except that which really involves immorality.” Thus there was a progressive endeavor “to shape the public administrations” of the Church in accordance with her true position.

These modifications were cautiously — not rashly — recommended by the senior ministers of the Church, who had carefully observed the signs of the times, and, it was believed, knew what Israel ought to do. Of the course pursued, the majority of the ministers and people approved. Some of the junior brethren, however, — not suspected of a

profound acquaintance with the state of things,— professed to see no need of a modified “shaping of our public policy;” and upon them, in their particular localities, nothing of the kind was ever urged. Reflecting men, indeed, saw the extreme danger to character of a severance from any of the social institutions of God, as that of the civil state; but, upon the subject, they hoped that time and candid consideration would shed a satisfactory light. The younger brethren, just referred to, found motives in the case for an extremity of zeal. Diversity of opinion was found to exist, not indeed as to any principle of the Church’s profession, not as regarded any ordinance of religious worship, not as respected any recognized principle of morals or of social order,— for in these all professed to be agreed,— but in reference to the civil relations of Church members: What they were, what they ought to be, and what the progressive decisions of the Church authorized them to be. That no connection involving immorality should exist was a settled point, on which there was no dispute. In order to bring the minds of all to a state of harmony on the single point of the application of an admitted principle, by a clear apprehension of what Synod had already authorized, or might consistently yet authorize, the Synod of 1831, by a resolution, recommended what was denominated “Free discussions” of the matters in question, allowing their periodical—“The American Christian Expositor”—to be the medium of

publication to such as might see proper to make use of it for that end. Of this some took advantage, others did not. The measure has been greatly blamed by the dissatisfied party who subsequently left Synod, though it was their own proposal. In 1832, a pastoral address of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, to the people under their charge, was adopted and published. In the original draft of that address, there was an expression of an opinion of the comparative excellence of the civil institutions of the country, of which a majority of the members approved, though some of that majority, along with a minority, judged it to be *inexpedient* to give it a place in that paper or at that time; and so decided by their vote, making a majority, not against the sentiment of that part of the address, but against the expediency of its formal adoption by Synod at the time. A portion of those, however, who thus voted publicly, expressed a wish to see it published by private authority. It was so published, and, in reality, constituted a part of the "Free discussions" authorized by General Synod. For a time, by all, the publication was considered to be harmless. Months passed without any marked notice of the matter; but it appeared that ends not previously avowed were to be accomplished, and the publication of that excepted part of the Synodical address furnished a pretext for a course of action, perhaps unexampled in the ecclesiastical procedure of any Protestant body, for its injustice, violence, and disregard of order.

The subject, it will be remembered, had been one of familiar conversation for years, publicly spoken of on the floors of the supreme and subordinate judicatories of the Church, and for the public consideration of which General Synod had authorized "Free discussions," and the Synod's periodical as the medium of publication. It was not under the cognizance of any inferior judicatory, but was exclusively in the power of the supreme authority of the Church. But it seems the Church must be divided! The publication of that harmless paper, fully authorized by the natural and religious rights of freemen, as well as by the deed of General Synod already mentioned, was violently seized as a pretext for measures that would issue in that result. By a few misguided men, influenced by motives into which we, in this place, do not inquire, a *pro re nata* meeting of the Eastern Subordinate Synod was called. The time of meeting, in winter, was unseasonable; the members were scattered over four States of the Union, some of them hundreds of miles from the designated place of meeting, and there was no reasonable probability of a general attendance. By those, too, most competent to judge, the call was viewed as disorderly and vexatious. The late Rev. Dr. Alexander McLeod, having previously subscribed the protest against the meeting, with the other brethren, called upon the *pro re nata men* at the time of their assembling, not to sit with them as a member, but to admonish them of the disorder

of their course, and of its danger to the peace of the Church and the cause of true religion. Having declared that "their whole procedure rested on an anti-presbyterial innovation which he could not countenance," and having added, with emphasis, "If you proceed in this course you will divide the Church, and for such division, if it take place, I shall hold you responsible to God and posterity," he left the house. Bent upon their evil course, they pressed on. The stated clerk of Synod, because he refused to give up to this lawless assemblage the minutes of that body, it is said, by a violent and summary act, they declared to be suspended from the ministry; and, in a course of corresponding violence and disorder, they proceeded to form libels against their absent fathers and brethren, whom they supposed to have consented to the publication of that portion of the "original draft" already mentioned. We say — *supposed to have consented*, — for they proceeded upon presumption or conjecture in the matter, never having legal proof of the fact.

At a subsequent meeting, those men of the *pro re nata*, in the absence of their brethren, who without disgracing themselves could not meet and associate with them because of their violence and disorder, proceeded to adjudge and censure them, in pursuance of the libels they had framed. Upon some of the fathers on whom they passed their censures of suspension from the ministry, their libels had

never been served, and of the service of most of them upon the accused, as in the case before mentioned, they had no proof. They acted upon conjecture and in a summary manner, not inquiring into the particulars of the case. Their moderator, Rev. William Gibson, who, through infirmity of purpose and not from desire of heart, continued with them for a time, refused to act in the evil work of suspending his brethren. He “declared that the whole proceedings, in matter and in manner, were wrong;” that “in the evil deed he could have no hand;” and leaving the moderator’s chair, for the time, he left the house. Such was his own avowal, before witnesses, on the following day.

This lawless deed was universally condemned, the *pro re rata* men themselves excepted. When the report of it came before the Reformed Synod of Scotland, that venerable body expressed their disapproval of the proceeding, declaring it to be *rash, uncalled for, disorderly*, and such as they could not recognize or approve.*

It is remarkable that some of those men of the *pro re nata*, who were active in this persecution,

* This General Synod and the Scottish Synod are united in the profession of the great cause of the covenanted Reformation, as co-ordinate departments of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, recognizing as the basis of their union the same permanent standards, supreme and subordinate. The application of the principles of those standards, according to the peculiar circumstances of the Church in the localities of the several countries of Europe, America, or Asia, where the Church is found, is left to the Synods respectively, without any authoritative interference with each other, in actual administration.

agreed in principle with, and in practice upon that principle, went farther than those they so zealously prosecuted. Some of them who urged on to the violent acts never would themselves vote for them, but declared themselves, "in the main question," to be with those whom they thus followed with a lawless discipline. All this course of disorder was pursued within a few months of the meeting of General Synod, to whom cognizance of the whole matter entirely belonged. And, as will appear, when that judicatory did act upon it, the whole course of the *pro re nata* movement was condemned as disorderly and unjust, and the objects of its persecution justified in their conduct.

The approaching Synod was looked to by many as likely to harmonize the whole affair; and had all met, as far as the preservation of the Church from an unnatural and simple rupture was concerned, that would have been the result. But those men who were bent upon a separation had gone too far to retrace their steps. In their activity they were unceasing, and in their measures unscrupulous. By their long-continued *secret missals*, and their *willing agents*,—ministers without pastoral charges,—gross misrepresentations had gone abroad, by which the unsuspecting minds of good men at a distance were bewildered. To augment their numbers candidates for the ministry were hurried forward, and *sine titulo* ordained, and it is believed, some of them in violation of ecclesiastical order.

On August 7th, 1833, according to appointment, General Synod assembled in Eleventh Street Church, in the City of Philadelphia. When the Moderator of the last meeting, according to usual custom, arose to open the court, he was interrupted by one of the men of the *pro re nata* combination, announcing himself to be the Clerk of Synod, while the stated Clerk, the Rev. Dr. Black, against whom that combination had no charge, in possession of the books and papers of Synod, was in his place at the table; and another of them proclaimed himself to be the Moderator, while the regular Moderator was present, in his place, and, upon his feet, about to engage in the appointed service of the occasion. The *pro re nata* men then arose and left the house, in a disorderly manner, calling upon "all the faithful" to follow them to a designated place. Synod, in possession of their officers, — Moderator, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, and all the documents of the court, at the appointed place and hour, being assembled, proceeded in the usual order. Synod being constituted, the way was prepared for the transaction of business.

Those men who thus departed in a disorderly manner, on the 7th of August, were duly summoned to return to their place and duty. Upon their refusal to comply, the whole subject of the *pro re nata* doings was, by a report of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, brought before the Supreme Judicatory, and, after a very full discussion and

examination, was unanimously condemned. Those engaged in that evil work having left us, by their own act made the separation, and Synod declared them to be no longer in their connection, and ordered their names to be stricken from the roll of their members. Synod made no attempt of retaliating their violent doings upon them.

Thus needlessly and unexpectedly, in a spasmodic act of moral disorder, a schism was made in the Church. A rash combination of several of the younger men sought the expulsion, from the Church and her ministry, of the senior members of Synod who had laid upon them ordaining hands; those fathers, whose intelligence, zeal, and labors had given a reorganization to the Church, extended her boundaries, and given her character, must, with their orderly younger brethren, be degraded from their sacred office, expelled from their beloved labors, and be cast out from the communion of saints! And for what? What was their crime? What? Certainly there was no departure from any article of the Church's faith; no act of immorality with which to charge them; no charge of the violation of ecclesiastical order could be sustained against them? No neglect of Ministerial duty, as Pastors, to be alleged against them? What then? Simply this: It was supposed — and it was with those men a supposition only, — for of it they had no legal evidence — It was supposed that an article, in itself very brief and harmless, expressing a *com-*

paratively favorable opinion of the civil institutions of the United States, had been published by them, or with their approbation — an article, the subject of which Synod had authorized to be freely discussed, and the matter of which had the approbation of some of the *pro re nata* men themselves!

And what was, at the time of the departure of those men, the actual point of difference? Past doubt, no settled principle of our ecclesiastical profession. The then disputed question was simply this: Shall the lawless and disorderly acts of the *pro re nata* meeting be recognized as legal and valid? That was then really the dividing point. That out of the way, and all stood on the same platform of 1831. Of those lawless deeds, no such recognition could be given; and such recognition, we are well assured, General Synod would never have either required or approved.

Changes in the state of civil institutions, we have seen, gave occasion to modified views of the duties of Church members, in reference to those institutions. Synod, at sundry times and in different manners, in answer to inquiries, indicated what, in agreeableness with the principles of the Church, might be done, according to the circumstance of the case, but enjoined no deviation from the usual practice upon any. Those brethren had never been required to modify any usage, nor did any ever propose to justify an act not authorized by some enactment of Synod, to whom the entire disposal

of the whole matter pertained. By the surreptitious intermeddling with that which did not belong to them, the doings of those men were lawless; and because they apprehended that General Synod would not sanction their anomalous acts, they refused to meet with them. But we forbear to enter into the ungracious details of a course of conduct, for its violence and disorder, rarely, if ever, exemplified in the records of the Presbyterian administration. This would lead to a development of probable, if not certain, motives, that it may be as well to leave veiled from public view. These rash deeds divided the Church, separated brethren who loved each other, and who, but for grievous misrepresentations, could still have co-operated in carrying forward the common cause.

Since the departure of these individuals from us, there has no notice been publicly taken of them, or of their violent assaults upon us, by General Synod. We have contented ourselves in going forward, under divine guidance as is trusted, in the possession and profession of our excellent unchanged standards, which those men saw fit industriously to represent us as having abandoned. The hoped for aims of the *pro re natans* were not attained. The pastors whom they had chiefly assailed were adhered to by their congregations, the existing organizations not being seriously, and some of them not at all, affected by the departure of some dissatisfied members. To many, if not all, of those

congregations, the agitation was manifestly sanctified, as evinced in an increased seriousness of mind, advance in spirituality of character, and in the good works of practical religion. The Church in general, it is believed, in living religion, was brought nearer to her Redeemer, than in the immediately previous years. The reputation of the ministers who had been so unscrupulously assailed, suffered nothing in public estimation from the unfounded assaults made upon them. The Lord whom they humbly served extended over them the shield of his protection.

This breach we greatly lament. We have, by no act of ours, put any obstacle in the way of the healing of it. They went out from us. When they retrace their steps, meet us on the same platform where all stood in 1831, and give reasonable assurance that the disorderly scenes of 1832 and 1833 shall not again be re-enacted by them, we will readily open the door for their admission.

That there might be no misapprehension by friends abroad of the principles still held by the Church, on the subject of the late agitation, the following preamble and resolutions were reported by a committee appointed for the purpose, and adopted by General Synod, in 1835:—

“The doctrine of the Church, in reference to civil government, is stated in her standards with so much precision, brevity, and clearness, that any statement more satisfactory in a report, may be justly despaired of. It is felt, too, that in advertent to the writings of approved advocates of the Church’s

testimony, there is danger of intermingling the private opinion of individuals with the public authorized faith of the Church, and thereby giving occasion to perplexity in the minds of her members, rather than a clear perception of the articles of her creed. Past experience admonishes us of the danger on this quarter. The particular care and caution of the supreme judicatory, in repeated warnings, that neither the Church's narrative of her progress, nor even her own authorized argument in defence of her creed, should be incorporated with that creed, or be allowed a place in her terms of fellowship, have not, in times past, been so regarded as to save her, on that head, from distraction. To confound subjects so distinct must be productive of mischief. Apprised of this danger, and endeavoring to guard against it, in compliance with the appointment of Synod, the adoption of the following resolutions is respectfully recommended, as the result of our inquiry:—

“*Resolved*, I. That civil society, together with its order, has its foundation in the natural constitution of man, and his external relationships in life, being instituted by the Creator and Ruler of the world, immediately for the good of man, and ultimately for the divine glory; that the principles of God's moral law are the supreme standard according to which human society is obliged to regulate and conduct its affairs; and that, for this end, its members are under obligation to embrace the clearest discoveries of those principles to which they have access.

“II. That the principles of the moral law of nature, and those of the law revealed in the Scriptures of truth, are fundamentally the same; and that the moral qualifications of civil society and its order, required by the law of nature, are radically identical with those required in the Scripture revelation.

“III. That while care should be taken to guard Christians against rejecting legitimate authority, because not possessed of every desirable attribute or provision, equal care ought to be taken to guard society against resting in low attainments in

the moral character of its institutions; and that it is the bounden duty of civil society, according to the light furnished it by the Bible revelation, in a progressive course of moral and religious reformation upon Bible principles, to endeavor the improvement of its institutions, thereby fitting them to attain the ends of the social organization.

“IV. That when a state, in correspondence with its obligations, has formed its constitution according to principles of high moral and religious attainments, placing its frame of order in subordination to Jesus Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth, and by solemn oath and covenant engaged to maintain such constitution and frame of order, it cannot innocently recede from them; much less can it adopt in their place institutions founded upon contrary principles, without incurring the guilt of covenant-breaking and perjury.

“V. That in a land where peculiar religious characteristics have never been extensively introduced into civil deeds of constitution; where there is no apostasy from established and sworn-to reformation; where the constitutional evils complained of are simply omissions, not fundamental to the existence and essential operations of civil society; where no moral engagement is required, and no pledge either demanded or given, to approve of, or perpetuate defects; where fundamental principles of the social state, moral in their nature, are adopted; where a testimony against defects is admitted, and the way left open, constitutionally, to employ all moral means to obtain a remedying of defects, the same obstacles stand not in the way of the Christian's entrance into civil communion, as do in a land where such religious characteristics having been adopted, covenanted, and sworn to, but having been departed from, upon the ruins of a reformed system, one of an opposite character has been introduced. And further, that, under a testimony against defects, circumstanced as above stated, the Christian may consistently enter into the civil fellowship of the country where he resides, using his liberty upon a moral basis, to seek the improvement of the social state.

“VI. That the civil arrangements of any state, being in actual conformity with the principles of moral rectitude, an inquiry into the secret principles and motives of those engaged in the formation of those arrangements, should not be permitted to raise any obstacle in the way of the concurrence of Christians, to direct them to their proper ends.

“VII. That this Church has raised, and continues to direct, the voice of her testimony against all known moral defects and practical immoralities found in the institutions and administrations of the United States, at the same time warning her members against giving any pledge or countenance to public immorality.

“VIII. That the acts and legislation of this Church have, at all times, authorized all connection with the civil society and institutions of the United States, which does not involve immorality.

“IX. That the legislative provisions, and judicial institutions under them, in the several States of the Union, are both too numerous, and too variable, for the supreme judicatory of this Church ever too examine, and legislate upon them in detail; and that much, consequently, has been, and must be left to the discretion of local adjudication, according to the known principles of our standards, to be approved of or condemned, as the case may require.

“X. That as it is the duty of this Church, so it is the purpose of her ministers and members, to mark the modifications and changes of the institutions and administrations of the country, and, in their respective places, faithfully to adapt the application of their testimony to the actual state of society.

“XI. That though civil society and its governmental institutions be not founded in grace, yet it is the duty of Christians to endeavor to bring over civil states the influence of the grace of the gospel, and to persuade such states to put themselves in subordination to Immanuel, for the protection and furtherance of the interests of religion and liberty.

“XII. That civil society being a *voluntary association*,

though it may be both lawful and dutiful to enter fully into its fellowship, yet none can be warrantably compelled to do so.

“XIII. That the standing terms of fellowship, in this Church, are the sacred Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith and manners, the great principles of which are embraced in the attainments of the covenanted reformation, as embodied in the Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechisms, larger and shorter, Reformation Principles exhibited — the Testimony of the Church — together with the solemn covenant obligations of the Church to God and one another, to abide by and maintain the doctrine, worship, and order, unfolded in these documents; recognizing, as brethren, in every land, all those who continue to witness in behalf of those attainments of the reformation; to the exclusion, as terms of communion, of all historical details and arguments, private or public.”

Engaged in the cultivation of the domestic field, whose boundaries were extending over the wide-spread and fertile regions of our country, the Church was not regardless of the wilderness of the Pagan world. At an early period the subject of foreign missions had been before us, but nothing was definitely effected by Synod before 1835, when the Rev. James R. Campbell and Mrs. Campbell were sent as missionaries to Northern India. In the course of the two following years the Rev. Joseph Caldwell and Mr. James Craig, a ruling Elder, with their wives, joined Mr. and Mrs. Campbell at the mission station of Saharanpur. In pursuance of Synodical direction, a Presbytery in subordination to the Supreme Judicatory, was by those brethren constituted upon heathen ground. And in 1848 they were strengthened by the acces-

sion to their number of the Rev. John S. Woodside, a young gentleman of high promise, who, with Mrs. Woodside, had devoted himself to the cause of missions in a foreign land.

In the study of the native languages of India; in the making of translations of the Scriptures and other valuable works into those languages; in the preaching of the gospel and conducting of schools, which at an early period of their mission they opened, those brethren have been abundant in labors, and, through the Divine countenance, with a degree of success which has surpassed the expectations of the friends of the missionary enterprise. The evidence of that success is found in their Church organizations, in the number and character of their scholars, and in the efficiency and value of the native teachers educated by them, and employed in their schools. Through the instrumentality of those missionaries, natives of Hindostan have been brought into the fellowship of the House of God, and, it is hoped, constituted heirs of eternal life.

Under the influence of an Asiatic climate, in the midst of their great and well-directed labors, Mr. Craig and Mrs. Caldwell, at an early period, finished their course on earth. Their death was sensibly felt and deeply lamented by their survivors; but to Him whom they serve, whose they are, and with whom is the residue of the Spirit, they were taught by the sad event with greater

earnestness to look, and in His promise with a firmer faith to confide. Amidst many personal trials and domestic afflictions, they have been very graciously sustained. This mission, the history of which will be found in its proper place, is still in a flourishing condition; and in its intellectual, moral, and religious results, its friends have been more than compensated for the liberality of their contributions to its support. Those happy results have been experienced not only in Northern India, but likewise upon our own ecclesiastical and personal interests at home, in the awakening of an active and expansive religious zeal.

Our financial contributions for the support of this mission, by an arrangement between our Board of Missions and that of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, — O. S., — are, without expense to us, transmitted through the medium of the latter. This obliging accommodation of financial arrangement affects not the ecclesiastical relations of our missionaries. And, indeed, among the moral and spiritual desolations of Hindostan, for the mere partisan zeal of the Church in Europe and America, there is not, and will not soon be much place found. Acute and metaphysical as the educated Hindoo mind is, it must be long before it can take much interest in many of the forms of our party conflicts; and when the time comes in which a knowledge of their disputes would be understood by the Asiatic, it is hoped they will be found only in the records of history at home.

And here it is becoming to notice another department of Missionary labor in which the Church has engaged, and which is now in a condition of encouraging success. The Rev. Alexander Clarke, who originally came to the British Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as a Missionary of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Ireland, having labored for many years alone in that country, was at length received into the connection of the General Synod in the United States. Two additional Missionaries have been sent to his aid, and consent has been given to these brethren to form a Presbytery in connection with General Synod. To the senior Missionary, the pioneer of Presbyterianism in a large section of the Provinces, the past twenty years have been a season of uncommon labor, self-denial, and unflinching perseverance in the midst of difficulties. But the reward is seen already in the progress of Reformation principles, in flourishing churches, extensive influence for good on a large community, and many other evidences of the Master's approbation of the works of his servant. Even now "the sower and the reaper rejoice together."

This, perhaps, is the proper place to notice the proposal, made to Synod, of a correspondence with that venerable body, one of the strong and ancient pillars of the Reformation, the General Synod of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, in the United States. The proposal was made and agreed

to in 1837. The general principle of the plan was similar to that proposed in the case of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, ten years before; but somewhat less definite in its provisions. It was adopted by both bodies, and the correspondence pleasantly conducted till 1843, when it was suspended, but without any change in the mutual Christian regards of the parties. The suspension of the intercourse was some way connected with a misapprehension on the part of one of the delegates of that Synod, in reference to the practice of this Church in the matter of sacramental communion. According to our views of it, it is not a mere Christian ordinance, like prayer, praise, and other private institutes; but has likewise an ecclesiastical character, and thus belongs to Church members who are under responsibility to the authorities of the body, in accordance with the organical law of the Church. We view sacramental communion as an *ecclesiastical* as well as a Christian privilege. In the plan of this correspondence there was no provision to meet the case, supposing, on our part, that the thing was well understood.

In the several departments of the Church of the Reformation there is a remarkable coincidence in the fundamental articles of their religious faith; and among those of the Presbyterian family, generally, a very extensive agreement in the forms of their worship and order. Papal Rome boasts of

her unity ; but in expansion, compact firmness, and spiritual oneness, the platform on which stand the several portions of the Reformed Church, is infinitely superior. But to the accommodating policy of a worldly sanctuary, which gives a marked character to the papal system, the Church of the Reformation is to a great extent a stranger. The prominence given and the importance attached by many of her members to truth, under the several aspects of its relations and applications, in the present imperfect state of man, seem to interfere with the visibility of her real union, and, at least apparently, to interfere with the harmony of her counsels and the efficiency of her administrations. The evils arising out of this state of the affairs of Zion have long been sensibly felt, and hence the well-meant but vain attempts, during the past three hundred years, to effect their removal. In this matter Calixtus and Melancthon, in their disappointments, stand not alone.

The attempt lately made, by some Ecclesiastical bodies, to effect a union through means of conventions, has a claim upon our notice, as well because of our connection, for a time, with the movement, as to guard the future historian against misapprehensions and consequent misstatements, arising from a defective acquaintance with the facts of the case. The parties in this movement were a portion of the Associate Reformed brethren, the Associate Church, the Reformed Presbyterian

Church, and the Dissenting Presbytery. The following are the leading facts of the transaction.

Under date of July 29, 1833, a worthy minister, and very excellent man, of the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, addressed a member of the General Reformed Presbyterian Synod upon the subject of union between the two bodies. The worthy writer of the letter says,—"I was appointed at the last Synod of the Associate Reformed Church, a part of a committee of three, to correspond privately with some of the ministers of the Reformed — [Presbyterian] — Church, on the subject of forming a union, or some kind of public correspondence." He then proceeds to suggest some of his own views upon the subject, which it is not requisite in this place to repeat. Not long after the other two members of the committee referred to by this gentleman, addressed a similar communication to another minister of our Church, upon the same subject. By both of these members * of our Synod the general proposal was favorably entertained, and separate answers, but of like import, to the respective letters of the members of the Associate Reformed Committee, were given. In those replies, while approving of the general object, the improbability of the success of the plan suggested in one of the letters, was respectfully but distinctly stated.

* Both were members of a committee appointed by General Synod to correspond with other departments of the Church.

Though still a subject of private consideration, yet as far as public action was concerned, the matter rested till 1835. In the General Synod of that year, the subject of ecclesiastical union, or approximation to such union, upon a larger scale, was brought forward, and incipient steps were taken to have a convention, by delegation, of the several departments of the Church, which in doctrine, worship, and order most nearly approximated to one another. In pursuance of what was then proposed, in the course of the sessions of the General Synod of 1837, measures of a more definite character were adopted. By private intercourse, the disposition of several ecclesiastical bodies was understood to be favorable to the proposal. Delegates were appointed to meet in convention those of other bodies, should the measure meet their approbation. To several evangelical denominations the arrangement was submitted, and at once, by some of them, was favorably received.

Following out these previous steps, in October, 1838, in the city of Pittsburgh, three of those bodies, by their delegates, met in convention. Those thus represented were the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, and the Associate Reformed Synod of New York. The convention was organized, positions adopted by the principles of which the convention should be regulated, and for consideration appropriate subjects were stated. The arrangements were such

as the occasion required, and well calculated to guard against misapprehensions, to prevent rash actings, and ill-advised conclusions.

At later periods, the conventions of these Churches were joined by delegates from the Associate Synod, and from the Dissenting Presbytery, a body which originated in 1799, by a separation from the Associate Reformed Synod. The intercourse of those delegates, year after year, was courteous, pleasant, and conducted in a spirit of respectful kindness. Various projects of accommodation were brought before them, as platforms of union, but none of them, as a satisfactory basis, met the minds of any of the Churches represented in the conventions. Hopes of a speedy union, founded on courtesy of manners, general expressions of kindness, and earnest desires of a favorable result, rather than on well understood and firmly settled ecclesiastical principles, were frequently entertained. In the progress of discussion, however, it was found that the peculiarities which had given occasion to the distinct organizations of the several bodies, were adhered to with the pertinacity of former times. By repeated declarations made in various forms, Reformed Presbyterians were made to understand that, without an alteration in their ecclesiastical standards, no union could be effected. On the subjects of civil government, of public social covenanting of the Church and of states, as a divine institution, and of a distinct and stated testimony

in favor of truth and in opposition to error, together with some other points, different views were taken by the delegates of the Churches in convention, and deemed by them all to be important under the aspects and in the relations in which they were presented.

To abandon in profession, or to change any article of her creed, this Church was not disposed; and while attaching no undue importance to mere phraseology, the import of the language of her venerable confession being settled and well understood, as it was unnecessary, so it was judged to be unadvisable, in that language, to make any change. The faith of this Church is historically connected with that of the Presbyterian confessors and martyrs of the xvith and xviith centuries, and the habits and feelings of her children are identified with the scriptural principles, usages, and forms of expression of the Reformation.

No facts in our history are more indisputable than the following, viz.: That "the whole doctrine" of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, as received by the Reformed Church of Scotland, has been at all times unhesitatingly acknowledged by us, and that all secular authority over, or in, the Church has been repudiated by us at great expense of suffering, is known matter of record. Christ Jesus, the Divine Mediator, is the Church's only head, and the spiritual, ecclesiastical officers of his appointment the only legitimate

ministry of the Church. To repel the insinuation of the contrary, or of any inconsistency between our subordinate standards and our actual faith, a "Declaration" of the continued uniformity of our creed was made by General Synod, in 1843, and ordered to be prefixed to the document generally known under the name of "Terms of Communion." From this ground we were not prepared, or any way disposed, as a Church, to recede.

At the first intimation that no union could be effected except at the expense of the integrity of our creed, General Synod was in no haste to break off from the consultations of the conventions, but waited to have certainty of the amount of the avowals made. Years passed by before it was fully understood by all, that not a modified phraseology only, but a change of substance likewise was intended. After the ascertainment of this, to have continued our delegation to the conventions longer, to beg that we might, on easier terms, be admitted to the embrace of the proposed union, would, as to ourselves, have been dishonorable ; and, as regarded others, to continue pertinaciously to urge upon men of sense and conscience, for our accommodation, the abandonment of their own convictions and avowals, would have been indelicate. Cherishing sentiments of good will and respect for those with whom we had been in conference, but who could not enter into our views, nor we into theirs, we, for the time, retired from the pursuit of the proposed object in

that form of negotiation. To have acted otherwise, as matters stood, would have been as humiliating to ourselves as to others it would have been disgusting. In this case, a sense of propriety dictated the course pursued by this Synod.

Upon our part, this result was in accordance with the first rules, or regulating position, adopted by the convention of 1838, in these words: "There shall be no abandonment by this convention of any principle sanctioned by the word of God, or recognized in the scriptural attainments of the Reformation, whether in doctrine, worship, or order." Of what would be such an abandonment each party, for itself, was left to decide. This Church was not apprised of any principle in her standards that had not the sanction of sacred Scripture, and which was not recognized in the attainments of the Reformation. The profession, sometimes made, of modifying phraseology only, was not, in our opinion, well sustained, as, upon examination, it was found that the proposed change would impinge upon something deeper and of more importance than mere verbiage. The principles of our creed, in all their fulness, are in our profession intended to be set forth in unambiguous language, and as the Church cannot expunge any of those principles from her faith, so neither can she willingly permit the rendering of any of them uncertain by a doubtful form of expression. The union of the Church of God, which all good men so confidently expect,

can neither be sustained by a sandy foundation, nor be cemented by untempered mortar.

Our delegates to the convention of September, 1846, were instructed by the Synod to make it known — “That no alteration in our Confession of Faith, setting aside or changing any *principle* of that Document, shall be admitted.” And accordingly those delegates, in convention, dissented from the proposal of any such change, and to vote on the question of an alteration.

That convention, by a majority, adopted the following proposition, to be laid before the several Synods, for their approval, as a basis of union: “To alter the Westminster Confession of Faith, by adopting the alterations already made in the constitution of the Associate Reformed Church.” This proposal of a majority of the convention was submitted to the General Synod of 1847; and, after a very full discussion of the subject, was rejected. This proposal was simply that of going into, and becoming one with, the Associate Reformed Church. To make this proposition the right of the brethren of that body is not denied, nor will the right of others to refuse it be doubted. For this result the other Churches were no way prepared, and towards it by no means disposed. While expressing an earnest desire for the organical union of the whole Church of God, upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, and cherishing the cordial hope of its ultimate attainment, seeing all prospect of its being

promoted, under existing circumstances, by their taking any active part in these conventional meetings and discussions, as out of the question, our Synod declined to appoint delegates to the next convention.

Upon our active ecclesiastical progress, in some localities, the influence of the movements of those conventions was not propitious. Few of the ministers and people of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, would have united upon any of the projected platforms or bases of union. Many seemed in a state of hesitancy as to the issue, and more were directly opposed to the proposed plans. The very large accessions to sacramental communion in so many of our Churches, immediately following our withdrawal from the conventions, speak on the subject in a language not to be misunderstood. That measure gave assurance that there was no danger of a departure from the principles of the Church, and that there was no purpose of impairing, by mutilation or mutation, the vigor of her venerable creed. Directly following a previous state of paralysis there was, if not a resurrection from the dead, at least an awakening from a sickly slumber.

But why not adopt, as a basis of union, the altered Confession of Faith, as found in "the constitution of the Associate Reformed Church," and thus diminish the number of parties in the Christian commonwealth, by becoming one with that people who furnish—as is said—a fine example of a

“Union Church”? That either misapprehensions or ungenerous imputations may be prevented, it may be worth while for a moment to attend to this inquiry. To Reformed Presbyterians the subject was not novel; to them the constitution of the Associate Reformed body had not been unknown, and to the alleged “fine example” of ecclesiastical *unity* which it afforded, they were not strangers. They had seen its rise, and to its progress they were not inattentive. The origin of this new Church,—almost the youngest in the Presbyterian family—has already been noticed.* Of its organization Reformed Presbyterians never approved. However well-intended by its projectors, it was never confided in as likely to effect its proposed end. Instead of healing breaches it only increased the evil of schism, and to the number of parties, already more than sufficient, it added another, which, by division, soon multiplied into more. Coming from different bodies, the fathers of this community, worthy and some of them distinguished men, were obliged to deal in compromises of doubtful character. To Reformed Presbyterians we have seen that several important concessions were made; and had the practical interpretation of their early constitution been to the amount of what its language would have authorized, in favor of Reformation principles, it may be questioned whether the friends of those principles would, for any great length of time, have

* Book ii. chap. iii.

sought their promotion under any other organization. But in the language of the compromise there was an ambiguity, which on different sides might be turned to different purposes. Hence Reformed Presbyterians, who continued upon their own ground, kept aloof from this recent organization. And under the influence of disappointed hopes, several of the most distinguished of those who entered into the coalescence soon either left it,* or ceased to give attendance at meetings of its Superior Judicatory.†

The calls made upon the body, by many of its own members, for the redemption of constitutional pledges, gave occasion to discussions, disputes, and unpleasant feelings. The records of the first seventeen years of its existence exhibit no great amount of the spirit of a really united Church. In 1799 a rupture was effected by the breaking off from that body of the first members of the "Dissenting Presbytery." After this time, discussions upon the subjects of public covenanting, a stated testimony, &c., no longer disturbed their peace; but those of *Psalmody*, *occasional* or *unecclesiastical communion* with strangers, and *slavery*, convulsed the community. Synod after Synod retired from their connection with the general body, and in about twenty years after the first rupture, in 1799, upon an attempt at union with the General Assembly of the Pres-

* As Messrs. Henderson and Smith.

† As Messrs. Cuthbertson and Logan.

byterian Church, the Associate Reformed General Synod had ceased to exist. The fragments of the body were now to be sought and found in four separate communions, under as many different organizations,—three of them bearing the same name, but refusing to be organically one. This approximation to Independency has, by some, been looked upon as a realization of the Reformed Presbyterian anticipations of the tendency and results of their constitution. And however highly the ministry and people of that body, otherwise, may be esteemed, the excellence of their model of a “Union Church” is not so easy to perceive.

All the Churches of the land have, or have had, their agitations and their schisms, our own among the others. The fact is humbling, and loudly calls upon each for great searchings of heart. The personal worth of individuals we can with pleasure appreciate, their talents and Christian character it is gratifying to recognize, and in the amount of sound doctrine and practical religion found among them we sincerely rejoice. It is not doubted that, in the several departments of the Church, there are ministers and people who in faith and good works would be ornaments to any portion of the city of our God, as they actually are in those sections to which they respectively belong. These, in the several localities where they reside, are, in the present condition of things needed, and their separation from existing connections would not be well.

They form valuable links in the social chain, and by a real, though somewhat invisible bond, constitute a practical — an invaluable — union in the extended household of Faith; while, often unknown to themselves, they put forth a sacred influence in preparing the way for that ultimate organic harmony which will be UNION not in name and form only, but likewise in the verity of truth.

As regards our ceasing to meet with others in the conventions referred to, a word will be sufficient. The allegation of inconsistency in being the first to make overtures for union, and in being the first to withdraw from the conferences, is not sustained by the facts of the case. It will be remembered that two years before the subject was spoken of in our General Synód, and four years before any definite action was taken upon it, the proposal of taking some step towards a union between them and us was made by the Associate Reformed brethren of the West. Our action was no more than a respectful reciprocation of theirs. In the proposal, with whomsoever it originated, there was nothing to reproach; and when found unattainable by fair and honorable means, to retire from its pursuit was not disreputable. In such withdrawal there was no inconsistency with previous action.

Existing circumstances at the time, besides the nature of the case itself, will account for the readiness with which this Church went into the proposed measure: one of these circumstances was found

in the recovering state of the Associate Reformed Church. A floating, but confidently expressed, report had gone abroad, that the Western Synod of that body were about to return to the principles of their original constitution, which in several points approximated to ours, but which had been by them laid aside; and the statements made of their refusing ecclesiastical communion to their former connections of the East and of the South, along with the letters of their committee already mentioned, had, in the minds of some among us, awakened the hope that the morning of a brighter day had dawned. It, too, should not be forgotten that, in their personal intercourse, the ministers and people of those several Churches cherished, as they still do, for each other a sincere and Christian regard, and treated one another with more than the mere courtesy of civility. As different objects of thought, they could distinguish social organization from personal or individual character. They felt that they were children of the same family, to some extent unhappily broken up, but still the features of family kindred were recognized, and the spirit of family kindness was extensively in operation. It was under these circumstances, in the reciprocity of good will, that the proposition of conference in the form of convention was made and accepted. Where the facts of the case are fully known, the course of our General Synod, and their final action in the matter, will be found to be fair, consistent, and

honorable. From the beginning, as to the immediate success of the project, the expectations of all were not equally sanguine, and, of course, to some the disappointment in the issue was less than it was to others. The organical unity of the whole Church is an event most desirable, and one that shall be realized; but the actual condition of things in her several sections, and the state of mind among a large number of her children, unite with the decree of God in assuring us, that "the time is not yet." Still that very condition of things, that state of mind, and that decree of God, revealed in his word of promise, at the same time, under another aspect, leave no place for doubt as to its full attainment in its appointed season, and for it the Church is obliged to be actively engaged in the preparing of the way.

In 1848, General Synod, after a slight revision, adopted her Book of Discipline, which had been substantially prepared twenty-five years before, but not formally enjoined to be observed; and in 1850, Directories for the worship of God, secret, private, and public, prepared at the same time with the Book of Discipline, were likewise adopted by Synod, together with Rules of judicative proceedings, and Forms of order; and directed to be published and observed. Now, in 1852, she publishes her history continued, and shows to the world that she still stands on her ancient platform.

Joys and sorrows are characteristic conditions of

human life. While our history presents causes of gladness, it likewise recalls its events of mourning. The fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? On February 17, 1833, the Rev. Alexander McLeod, D. D., of the city of New York, departed this life, in peace with God, and with all the friends of God. With great ability, fidelity, and labor, he served his generation by the will of God; and when the work assigned him to do by the Church's head was done, he was taken from the evils of an evil world, and from the imperfections of an imperfect Church, to a higher state of being and of enjoyment. His record will be found in the Church of God, militant and triumphant—the Church which he ardently loved, and in the valuable productions of his pen—works on which he impressed the seal of his powerful, cultivated, discriminating, and pious mind.

At a later day, the Church was again called upon, while feeling her loss, to weep over the decease of another of her revered and aged ministers. On October 23, 1849, the Rev. John Black, D. D., was called from his labors in the Church on earth, to the services and felicities of the General Assembly and Church of the first-born in heaven. Dr. Black had been in the public service of the Church for more than fifty years, having entered upon that service in company, and on the same day, with the late Dr. McLeod, whose decease has just been noticed. Those distinguished men were remarkably

united in a mutual affection, in harmony of counsel, and in active co-operation in the promotion of the same sacred cause. The services of Dr. Black, as they were long continued, so they were able and faithful. His loss by the senior ministers, the associates of his early as well as later days, was tenderly felt, and to it none of his younger brethren were insensible.

We have glanced at a few of the occurrences of the last forty-six years, which more directly related to the movements of this department of the Church. Abroad those years have been marked by great events, — events, the effects of causes which had their origin in previous ages, and which, in turn, are themselves destined to be the precursors of results of ineffable import. By those that are past, we have not been unaffected. We have had our agitations, our trials, and our reverses; but through the good hand of our God upon us, in the number of our ministers, congregations, and Presbyteries, we far exceed what we ever were, at any former period, in this land. Under our General Synod there are six Presbyteries, one of them in Asia; and in all of them the prospect of rapid increase is every way of high promise. But — what is more — we are in the full possession of our ancient faith, scriptural institutes of worship, and forms of order; and, as far as known, we are in our profession harmonious, and in activity diligent, endeavoring to bear in mind that, “though Paul may plant, and

Apollos water, it is God only that can give the increase.”

Not having seen any good reason for abandoning any part of the Reformation standards, the Reformed Presbyterian portion of the great Christian family stands organically distinct, but not fundamentally or essentially separated from the rest. Our attitude is not that of hostility to any department of the household of faith. As far as common ground is occupied by all, and of that ground the length and breadth are not limited by narrow bounds, we are fellow-laborers with them, in the same field and for the same great results, which shall appear in the final adjustments of righteousness and harmonies of peace that will bless our race.

To the events of the period under consideration, it behooves the Church not to be inattentive. The great missionary movement, in its various forms and results, along with the translations of the Sacred Scriptures, and their extensive circulation, are of deep interest. The religious press, in the hands of individuals, of voluntary associations, and of ecclesiastical bodies, presents an aspect of both good and evil to the interests of true religion and sound morality, demanding the discriminating vigilance and activity of the Church. The position of our own country, in extended territory, an active population, extended and extending commerce, frame and spirit of government, and in influence second to no power on earth, has a powerful claim upon

Zion's regard. The opening of a great and effectual door to enter upon the dark continent of Africa for its salvation, through the Republic of Liberia, a really great moral wonder of the age, loudly addresses the friends of God and humanity. The progress of science and of the arts, the opening up of the channels of intercourse, in so many forms, among the nations, all speak to the Church in a language which ought to be heard and understood. "Thy Kingdom come."

