

ENCYCLOPÆDIA
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

INCLUDING THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN ASSEMBLIES.

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AND OTHER EMINENT MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH.

Including a Description of the Historic Decorations of the Pan Presbyterian Council of 1880,

By REV. HENRY C. McCOOK, D. D., LL. D.

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following—PSALM XLVIII, 12, 13.

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in 1770, and for the two following years he preached at Easton, Pa. In 1772 he was appointed by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia to visit Virginia and North Carolina. He spent seven months in this missionary work, and in 1774 was ordained and settled as pastor of Fishing Creek Church, South Carolina. In 1790 Mr. Simpson became pastor of Roberts and Good Hope congregations in Pendleton county, S. C. In 1802 his churches were visited with a most remarkable revival. Here he continued his labors until his death, in 1808.

Sin, is defined in our *Shorter Catechism* (Q. 14), to be "any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." In the original language of the New Testament the word for sin (*hamartia*) is derived from a word whose primitive signification is *to miss the mark*. This suggests as perfect and extensive an idea of sin as, perhaps, can be given. The law of God holds up to us a *mark* at which we are to aim, or a *rule or line* to which we are to conform. Everything which misses or falls short of this mark, or which deviates from this rule or line, is *sin* (Ps. iv, 4; 1 Thess. v, 22; 2 Cor. vi, 17; Ps. xcvii, 10; Prov. xiv, 9; Ps. cxix, 11).

By "want of conformity unto the law of God" is meant both an unsuitableness and disagreeableness to the law, and a non-observation and non-obedience to it. This want of conformity includes: (1) Original sin, and that natural enmity which exists in the heart against the law of God (Rom. viii, 7). (2) All sins of omission. The former is a want of conformity of heart, the latter a want of conformity of life, to God's law (Dent. vi, 5; John xvii, 3). As a sin of *omission* is a neglecting or forgetting to do that which the law commands (James iv, 17; Matt. xxv, 30), so a sin of "transgression," or *commission*, is doing what the law forbids, a *going beyond* the bounds of duty within which the law of God is to keep us (Eccl. x, 8; Gal. iii, 10; Ps. li, 4).

All sins are not equal in intensity. Some are more heinous than others. (1) From the person offending or offended. (2) From the means against which they are committed. (3) From the quality of the offence. (4) From the place in which they are committed. (5) From the time when they are committed. (6) From the manner in which they are committed.

The most heinous of all the sins in the world is the sin against the Holy Ghost (see Matt. xii, 31; Mark iii, 29; 1 John v, 16; Heb. vi, 4-8; x, 26, 29; Tit. iii, 10, 11). "This sin," says Ursinus, "is a denial of the acknowledged truth of God, and a willful opposition to it in connection with his will and works, concerning which the mind has been fully enlightened and convinced by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, all of which proceeds, not from fear or infirmity, but from a determined hatred to the truth and from a heart filled with bitter malice." "This sin shall not be forgiven—not because the blood

of Christ is not sufficient to wash it away, for his blood 'cleanseth from all sin,' but because those who are guilty of it willfully, maliciously and perseveringly reject the testimony of Christ speaking by the Holy Ghost in His Word."

Skinner, Rev. Thomas H., D.D., LL.D., was born in North Carolina, in 1791. He graduated at Princeton College, and was licensed to preach in 1812. He became co-pastor with Dr. Janeway in the Second Church, Philadelphia. This connection lasted till 1816, when Dr. Skinner, having espoused the views of the New School, and Dr. Janeway being decidedly in favor of the Old, Dr. Skinner quietly withdrew, with fifty of the parishioners, and organized the Arch Street Church, which, under his eloquent and efficient ministrations, speedily attained a high degree of prosperity. From this charge he was called to the Professorship of Sacred Rhetoric, in Andover. In 1835 he became pastor of Mercer Street Church, New York. After thirteen years of service there, he accepted the Professorship of Sacred Rhetoric, Pastoral Theology and Church Government in Union Theological Seminary, New York, which position he retained and adorned to the close of his life. He died, February 1st, 1871, in the eightieth year of his age.

Dr. Skinner, whilst highly esteemed as a man of literary culture and mental power, commanded in a peculiar degree the love of those with whom he came in contact. His artless simplicity, his courtesy, his piety and unworldliness, distinguished him even among good men, and strongly attracted the affections of those with whom he came in contact. He was a prominent leader of the New School party in the Church, but rejoiced in the reunion. As a preacher his style bore marks of culture and polish, not elaborate or artificial, but natural and easy. The sword of the Spirit was not so wrapt up in the flowers of rhetoric as to hide its point. On the contrary, his ministry was accompanied by numerous and powerful revivals. He was regarded as one of the best sermonizers in America. As a professor he was as much at home in the teacher's chair as he was in the pulpit. His students both respected and loved him.

Dr. Skinner's published works were "Preaching and Hearing," "Hints to Christians," "Translation of Vinet's Pastoral Theology," "Discussions in Theology," and numerous discourses.

Skinner, Thomas Harvey, D.D., was born in Philadelphia, Pa., October 6th, 1820; graduated at the University of New York, in 1840; was licensed to preach the gospel, in 1843, and ordained and installed pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Paterson, N. J., in 1843. In 1846 he accepted a call to the West Presbyterian Church, New York city, and in 1856 was transferred to the Church at Honesdale, Pa. In 1859 he took charge of the Reformed Dutch Church in Stapleton, Long Island, in which