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ARTICLE I.

THE UNDEVELOPED RESOURCES OF THE CHURCH.

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In the kingdom of Nature, of Providence and of Grace, we find every where the operation of the principle of gradual development. The seed that is cast into the earth has, bound up in it, the sturdy oak that will ere long defy the blast of the tempest. The infant, opening its eyes upon the light for the first time, has within itself the elements of a power that may, by and by, move the world. An event, that seems altogether trivial at the time of its occurrence, may prove the germ of some great national convulsion, or revolution, or reformation. The Christian Church, originally consisting of a few individuals, of an ordinary type of intellect, and of no worldly consideration, has been gradually extending itself for almost two thousand years, until it is now represented in almost every portion of the globe. And yet the glory of the Church has only begun to appear; it has within it resources which are yet to be developed in a state of greatly increased purity and effi-

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ciency, and in a progressive and finally universal extension. What then *are* the undeveloped resources of the Church?

In order to answer this question intelligently, we must understand definitely in what the *resources* of the Church consist. In one word, they consist of whatever is adapted to minister to the Church's prosperity or extension. We say to whatever is *adapted* to bring about this result; for many things are *over-ruled* for its accomplishment, which yet have no natural adaptedness to it. We know that God's purposes, and perfections, and promises are all pledged for the final complete triumph of the Church; and we know that he is always moving forward towards this grand issue, and that even the most hostile agencies, in which there seems a full embodiment of the spirit of evil, are, by his infinite wisdom and almighty power, rendered ultimately tributary to the advancement of his cause and the illustration of his glory. But this, surely, is not the divinely appointed instrumentality for doing God's work; for though *He* may render evil the minister of good, *our* only concern with evil is to avoid or resist it. He has prescribed the use of certain means for sustaining and carrying forward the interests of the Church, between which and the end at which they aim there is a natural and obvious connection. And these means constitute what we here intended by the *resources of the Church*. They are chiefly the following:

Talent, or good natural intellectual endowments. The slightest glance at mankind reveals to us the fact that there is great diversity in men's intellectual constitutions; and that this diversity has respect, not only to the proportions in which the different qualities are blended, but also to the general strength and completeness of the whole intellectual man. The multitude may be said to occupy, in this respect, about the same level; while here and there one towers far above the rest, and performs, for his every day work, what, to minds of an inferior order, seems well nigh miraculous. Now we are far from saying that intellects of only an ordinary capacity may not perform much good service for the Church—and that in various ways; but it is especially important that the *greater* lights should be put in requisition; that men of the largest comprehension, of the keenest discernment, of the greatest skill to encounter

difficulties, and the highest ability to control the popular mind, should be at the command of the Church, and ready to place their fine powers as a willing offering at her feet. While minds of a humbler mould are laboring diligently in the honorable sphere which Providence has marked out for them, (for there is no sphere of Christian duty that is not honorable,) the services of these more gifted minds are demanded on some wider or grander scale; perhaps to develop new plans, or to harmonize discordant influences, or to infuse fresh life and power into some languid and waning enterprise for good. Those who would know what the highest order of talent can accomplish in the pulpit, may read the sermons of Davies, and Dwight, and Mason, and a multitude of others; though even this will give but an inadequate idea of their power—and above all, let them read the history of Whitefield—his history rather than his sermons; for while he could sway a vast assembly, as no man of his day, or perhaps any other, ever could, the moment he put pen to paper, strangely enough, he dwindled into an ordinary man. And there is scarcely one of our great benevolent institutions, which has not had for its pillars great as well as good men; whose history could be written without revealing the workings of at least some one spirit that bore the stamp of true intellectual nobility.

As another of the resources of the Church, closely allied to the preceding, we may mention *learning*, or high intellectual acquisitions and accomplishments. There are two ways in which learning may be rendered subservient to the interests of the Church. This result may be accomplished indirectly, as the process, by which learning is acquired, is nothing more nor less than a process of intellectual culture, by means of which the faculties are developed and strengthened, and fitted to act with increased efficiency or to occupy a wider field. Or the influence may be direct; for while Christianity is the patroness of all sound learning, equally true is it that learning is one of the accredited auxiliaries of a pure Christianity. While all the various departments of knowledge may be rendered tributary, in some way, to the progress of human society, and ultimately to the well-being of the Church, there are certain branches that are indispensable to the proper elucidation of Scripture truth, and the legitimate workings of the Christian ministry. It is to a minute acquaintance with the languages, in which the Scriptures were originally written, as well

as with the whole science of Biblical interpretation, that we are indebted for the almost numberless auxiliaries to the study of the Bible, with which both the Church and her ministry are now favored; and as we believe that it is as true now as when the venerable Puritan Robinson recorded it, that "there is yet further light to break forth from God's word," so we cannot doubt that this is to be accomplished by the yet higher efforts of biblical and theological learning. Against the doctrine that learning is the natural ally of the pulpit it has sometimes been urged that those model preachers, the Apostles, were uneducated men; but the obvious answer to this is that while one of them at least actually *was* one of the most highly educated men of his time, they were all *inspired* men—they spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost—and this surely was far more than an off-set for the lack of human accomplishments. But herein was also manifested the wisdom of God; for their humble intellectual rank gave additional force to the wonderful success of their ministry, as a demonstration that they had received their commission from above. We admit, indeed, that learning may be, and often has been, perverted to render the ministrations of the pulpit powerless, by overtasking the ordinary intelligence, and dealing not in principles or results, but in the details by which they are reached—but is there any good thing that is not liable to be perverted? We admit, too, that there are some eminently gifted and pious men, who, without much mental acquisition, preach the Gospel with far greater effect than many others of a vastly higher order of intellectual culture—but this does not at all affect our general position in regard to the importance of a learned ministry. Learning, when rightly applied in the pulpit, simplifies, and illustrates, and removes obscurity instead of creating it. Few preachers have succeeded better in putting themselves into communion with the common mind, and we may add in enlightening and directing it, than *Archibald Alexander* and *Moses Stuart*; and yet the mind of each of them was, beyond almost any of their contemporaries, a vast treasury of biblical and theological knowledge.

Yet another of the Church's resources is to be found in her *pecuniary means*. The whole Christian enterprise, by which we mean the universal publication of the Gospel as preparatory to the universal triumph of the Church, necessarily involves vast expenditure. The men who preach

the Gospel must, according to the Apostle's doctrine, live by the Gospel; for if they devote themselves to their appropriate work, what shall sustain them if it be not the bounty of the Church? Then there are public churches, which, from a protracted suspension of the ordinances of the Gospel, seem almost on the point of extinction—these require to be helped, and cherished, and revived; and this cannot be done unless somebody contributes the means of doing it. There are extensive regions of our own country which are simply a spiritual desolation; where no churches have ever been established, and the Gospel has never been preached, unless at long intervals, by some passing missionary—here is another call for funds to sustain the heralds of salvation, who shall go thither, as the instruments, in God's hand, of making all things new. And, finally, there are the far-off dreary wastes of Paganism, and Mohammedanism, and Romanism, and other kindred systems of error, where Christianity has yet to plant her standard, and proclaim her heavenly truths, and perform her renovating work—but who does not see that a vast amount of silver and gold must be put in requisition before this mighty enterprise can be consummated? To sustain and keep in good working order the moral machinery of the Church that is in operation to-day, is a prodigiously expensive matter; and who will venture even to conjecture the amount that will be necessary to sustain her future benevolent operations, as they become gradually extended and intensified to compass the wants of the entire world? We say, then, money—however prolific of evil it be comes by perversion—is one of the divinely recognized means for spreading the Gospel through the world, and securing the Mediator's universal reign.

The last of the Church's resources that we shall notice, and that which constitutes the crown of all the rest, is *living, earnest piety*. You may blend all other means for advancing the interests of the Church in a common enterprise—you may put in requisition the finest intellects of the age, and as many of them as you can employ—you may command the most profound and critical and varied learning—you may draw without stint from the coffers of the rich—and yet, if, along with these various and necessary means, there be not a spirit of enlightened and active piety, a plentiful baptism of divine influence, the great work of extending and building up the Church can

never go on, and the reason is that this would be at best a mere self-righteous instrumentality, destitute of all vital energy, which God could neither approve nor bless. And you reach the same result if you look at this work in detail; for while nothing but the spirit of piety could be expected to bring into existence the various organizations on which the prosperity, not to say the existence, of the Church depends, nothing else could give them a right direction, nothing else could supply to them a living power. Suppose, for instance, the ministry of the Gospel to be exercised from mere worldly considerations, and without any recognition of dependence on Christ, even admitting the pure Gospel to be preached, what else could you expect than that that which never came from the heart would reach the heart, and that there would be at least as little faith in them who heard as in him who preached? What would a band of careless and worldly Sunday School teachers do towards guiding the youthful minds, committed to their care, in the ways of truth and holiness? What would become of the various benevolent institutions now in existence, and where would be the ground of hope that others would arise, accommodated to future exigencies, unless the former were to be sustained, and the latter originated, by a spirit of active piety? Without this, where would be that faith that brings Almighty Power to help our weakness? Where that vigorous, well-directed, persevering activity, that never falters in the presence of obstacles? Where that hearty co-operation in carrying forward good enterprises that has its origin in the fact that Christians are one in Christ? Where that hallowed inter-communion between earth and Heaven, through which the spirit of Heaven is conveyed to the Church on earth, by way of preparation for its immortal triumph? We repeat, the Church has no resources that are independent of a living piety. Other things are important, even indispensable, in connection with that; but without it they are as powerless to accomplish the desired result as an infant's breath would be to hush the tempest.

We have spoken of the resources of the Church—but on what ground, it may be asked, do they belong to her? Why, on the ground that they are committed to Christ as Mediator for her benefit, and He is pleased to employ them as the means of leading her on to her final triumph. She claims them then by the authority of her Head; and

there is no power on earth or in hell that can dispute her right to them, or that is adequate to wrest them from her.

But if such are her resources, what then are her *undeveloped* resources?

We answer, in the first place, they are those which, as yet *have no actual existence, though it is within our power, by God's blessing, to create them.* It does not, indeed, come within our province to bestow powers of intellect that have been withheld by the Creator; but we may be instrumental in cultivating, to an indefinite extent, those which the Creator has bestowed. There is to be found, even in the humblest walks of life, many a young man of naturally vigorous intellect, surrounded by influences, utterly adverse to anything like mental development, and perhaps there is nothing about him that betokens even an aspiration for learning; but let some benevolent individual, or the charity of the Church, take that youth in hand, and let him feel that there is a possibility of his being educated, and not improbably his whole soul will be fired with the ambition to become a scholar; and at no distant period he will have traversed the whole ground between an illiterate boy and a learned man—and why may not these acquisitions, by God's blessing, be appropriated for the benefit of the Church? A young man enters upon life deeply interested in the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and yet dependent upon his own efforts to earn his daily bread. But he will address himself industriously to the labors of some honest vocation, not merely that he may thereby provide for his temporal wants, but that he may be able to quicken the onward movements of the cause of truth and righteousness. He becomes possessed, perhaps, of what the world calls a large fortune—and this in respect to him is like a new creation. All around us, and whithersoever we go, there are persons who are strangers to the renewing power of the Holy Ghost, who, instead of being fellow-helpers together unto the kingdom of God, are mutual auxiliaries to each other's destruction—all these are susceptible of being born from above; of being moulded into the faithful servants of God, and the heirs of a heavenly life—and though a Divine agency is requisite to accomplish this result, yet it is the ordinance of God that, in all ordinary cases, a human instrumentality should be joined with it. In this last mentioned case, there is literally a new creation, requiring the

exercise of Divine power; and yet it is as legitimate a field for man to labor in, as if the work to be accomplished came within the range of his own unassisted ability.

We remark, again, the undeveloped resources of the Church are those *which exist without being recognized*. There are many men, especially young men, who are admirably qualified by nature, by grace, by training, to occupy important positions, perhaps in the Christian ministry, perhaps in the great field of evangelical benevolence, whose mature qualifications for these places have hitherto been overlooked, in consequence of which the measure of their usefulness has, to say the least, been greatly abridged. So, too, there is much wealth in the Church, that is now utterly useless as a means of its prosperity, that ought to be, that might be, rendered greatly tributary to its advancement. Hundreds of thousands of dollars, which every one knew might be consecrated to objects of Christian benevolence, without injustice to any body, would have remained as a ruinous legacy to children, but for the suggestion of some discreet friend, that the money would yield a better interest, if it were given directly to the Lord. Here again, the resources were in existence, but they had not till now been recognized in any such sense as to be rendered available.

We only add, under this article, that those resources of the Church *that exist and are recognized, but not applied*, may be said to be undeveloped. Every thing here is practical, and is to be judged entirely by the result which it accomplishes. Take, for instance, the case of a young man who has been educated, perhaps by the charity of the Church, for the Christian ministry—he becomes possessed of the requisite intellectual furniture, passes successfully through his appointed trials, and comes forth a regular accredited ambassador of God. But his mind becomes gradually drawn away from the duties of the ministry, and, at no distant period he has abandoned them altogether, and is in the vigorous prosecution of secular engagements. There are in that man's mind resources which are, to all intents and purposes, undeveloped, because unapplied. Take another case—a benevolent individual has made a bequest for some charitable object; but the sum bequeathed, instead of being judiciously applied in furtherance of that object, is suffered, from mistake, or oversight, or inattention, to remain utterly unproductive, when it might be, ought to be, as it was designed to be, employed as a benevolent minis-

istration. It cannot be considered as developed before it is applied to its legitimate purpose.

Our next general inquiry is, *How are the undeveloped resources of the Church to be developed?* The answer is, partly by a *human*, and partly by a *Divine* agency.

In illustration of the power, we may mention, first, *the Pulpit*, or the Divine ordinance of the preaching of the Gospel. This institution is designed to act upon two classes of persons, which, together, constitute the whole world, saints and sinners; and in either case its tendency is towards the result which we are now considering.

It accomplishes its legitimate effect upon the impenitent, the unforgiven, the unholy, by subduing their rebellion, and pacifying their consciences, and moulding them not only into the servants, but the children, of God. But in every case in which this effect is produced, there is a new instance of the development of a principle of piety, which, of necessity, converts its possessor into a pledged auxiliary to the great interests of the kingdom of Christ. The individual supposed may have his lot cast in a more public or a more private sphere, he may become a minister of the Gospel, or he may be called to preside over some department of benevolent action, or he may move in the humblest circle, and never even be heard of beyond the limits of his own neighborhood, but in each case he has his own field of active usefulness, and there is that within him that will ensure his occupancy of it.

And if such be the action of this Divine ordinance upon an ungodly world, gathering lively stones for the Heavenly Temple out of the wastes of spiritual death, what influence, in the way of developing the Church's resources does it exert upon those who have already enlisted under Christ's banner? In general it advances the work of their sanctification, purifying their spiritual discernment for the better understanding of their duty, and strengthening them with all might in the inner man for the more vigorous and faithful discharge of it. But more than this; it exhibits to them their duty in detail; in connection with their various relations, and in view of the diversity of circumstances in which Providence may place them; and it enforces the claims of duty alike upon all classes. It makes prominent the great truth that all our faculties, all our possessions, come from God, and are to be consecrated, in some way, to his service.

It illustrates the obligations of the rich to contribute of their abundance, and of all to give according as the Lord hath prospered them, in aid of the great work of evangelizing the world. It encourages the young to form habits of Christian activity, to seek positions of Christian usefulness, especially to make their influence felt in connection with the Sunday School, and if Providence opens the way into some wider and more prominent field of benevolent labor, to hold themselves ready to occupy that also. And to crown all, the teachings of the Pulpit are invested with a Divine authority—they are nothing less than God's own teachings—they come to us, claiming, by a Divine right, our attention and regard—and hence the power which they are fitted to exert, actually do exert, in revealing and bringing into active service, the resources which God has committed to the Church for her own extension.

Another part of man's agency in the accomplishment of this object is by the *Press*. The art of printing does for the eye what the ordinance of preaching does for the ear; except that mind acts upon mind with far greater power through the utterances of the living voice than through the medium of insensible types. Still the tract, the volume, above all, the Book of Books, may and often does find its way where the ministry of the Gospel has never been established; and it is quite supposable that it should convey the good seed into some mind where it would otherwise never have been lodged. But the Press and the Pulpit, instead of being regarded, each as an independent agency, should be looked upon as mutual auxiliaries of the same great cause, the Pulpit possessing the greater power, the Press taking the wider sweep. To say nothing here of the almost innumerable works which the Press is constantly pouring forth, designed to arouse the attention of the careless, or to illustrate Christian obligation, or purify and invigorate the inner life, we will advert only to the prodigious influence of the religious periodical press, especially as we witness its operation in our own country. Like all other good things it is, indeed, liable to perversion,—sometimes actually is perverted, to purposes of great evil; but still it is mighty to move the heart of the Church for good—it diffuses an enlightening, quickening, elevating influence far and wide. A single number of a well-conducted religious newspaper, who can estimate the amount of rich and varied blessing, of which it may prove the medium? It may

contain some appeal, condensed into a single sentence, that shall turn the conscience of the sinner into a minister of wrath, and urge him away to the Cross of Christ to get it sprinkled with atoning blood; or that shall fall with a mountain's weight upon the heart of some backslider Christian, and send him off to his closet to pray and weep. Or it may contain some suggestion that shall give to the heart of a young man, anxious to know his duty, a direction towards the Christian ministry, and be the means, ultimately, of bringing to that blessed work one who shall be the instrument of turning many to righteousness. Or it may contain some information in respect to the wants or woes of the world, or in respect to what has already been done to meet them, that shall set some Christian, whose eye rests upon it, to devising liberal things, in the train of which shall come light and blessing to some dark portion of the earth. Or it may contain some record of a revival of religion, that shall touch, as a fire from Heaven, some half-discouraged Christian, and thus not only mark a bright epoch in his own personal experience, but perhaps also make him the instrument of reproducing the same blessed state of things in his own neighborhood. The religious press is a power, mighty in developing the Church's resources.

So also much may be done to the same purpose by both the *individual and associate influence of members of the Church*. If individuals sometimes over-rate their personal influence, giving themselves credit for a measure of power over other minds that does not belong to them, it is not less true that they often under-rate it, and, in the strength of this false estimate, most unnecessarily circumscribe their own usefulness. It is not easy to fix a limit to what may be accomplished by one well-directed mind that is always upon the look out for opportunities of doing good. Yonder is a Christian missionary, in whose bosom is reproduced the spirit of David Brainerd or Henry Martyn; whose labors are fast changing the wilderness into a garden; and whose whole life is the testimony that he would shrink from no sacrifice, by means of which he might help forward the cause to which he is devoted—if you find out the history of that man, it will be something like this—a living, earnest, self-sacrificing Christian was attracted to him first by some exhibition of superior intellect; and then, by God's grace, he succeeded in changing the purpose of his life, and giving his affections an upward tendency; and then he bid him

quit the farm or the workshop, and, with a generous hand, dealt out to him the means of becoming trained for the sacred office—and in due time he was invested with it; and he chose his field of labor in the wilderness; and already many a wandering savage has been enlightened and saved through his instrumentality, and waits to shine forth as a gem, not only in *his* crown, but in the crown of his benefactor also. Yonder is a well-endowed and well conducted institution for training young men for the Christian ministry—hundreds, and it may be thousands, have passed through its prescribed course, and are scattered all over the land, all over the world, fulfilling their duties as the heralds of salvation—but that institution had its origin in the suggestion of a single mind; and though the influence of that mind was immediately seconded by that of other minds, and may perhaps speedily have been lost in the combined influence of a multitude, yet it will always remain true that it was the germ of the enterprize that gave to the Church one of its noblest institutions. Yonder is an Education Society, gathering the Church's bounty for the training of her sons; or a Missionary Society, taking them in charge, when they are trained, to do the Lord's work in heathen lands; or a Bible Society, whose business it is to dispense the written word to the wretched and destitute—but, here again, there is, or there has been, somewhere upon the earth, a mind in which this noble conception existed in solitary grandeur; and though no one now may be able to point to the individual, and say "Thou art the man," yet the day of revelation and retribution will at once show who he was, and measure out to him a glorious reward.

But if a member of the Church may do so much to develop its resources, in an individual capacity, what may not be expected from a well organized and well sustained effort on the part of many? Each of those combinations for purposes of good, to which we have just referred, as illustrative, in their origin, of the power of individual influence, becomes a fixed, and enduring, and mighty agency, for testing and developing the powers of the Church. And when united, and especially when considered in connection with the whole sisterhood of benevolent associations which the Church now embosoms, must not this agency possess an energy that transcends all human comprehension? Under its benign workings, talent finds its way out of its original obscurity; learning offers itself as the hand-maid of truth;

wealth shows a large heart, and opens a liberal hand; and piety, full of life, and love, and power, divides her time between the closet where she supplicates God's gracious help, and the world where she scatters her benefactions. Indeed we may consider the whole Church as one grand community engaged in revealing and applying her own resources; and the more united, and earnest, and faithful she is, the larger will be the treasures that she will reveal for the advancement of her prosperity.

But there is a *Divine* as well as human agency employed here—and it is two-fold,—the agency of *Providence* and of *Grace*.

God's *providence* is to be acknowledged in the ordering of our lot, no matter how much it may seem to be the result of our own devising. That youth just now referred to, as having been raised from obscurity, perhaps positive degradation, by the hand of Christian charity, and conducted by the same hand into a field of honorable usefulness, was all the time under the direction and care of God's gracious providence—it may have seemed an accident that he came under the eye of his earthly benefactor; but it was no accident—it was in perfect accordance with an arrangement made by Him, who guides the winged arrow, and directs the sparrow's fall. Not unfrequently affliction becomes, in this way, the minister of good—the darkest cloud discharges itself in a shower of the richest blessing. That man who is now doing valiant service for Christ, would never have entered on the Christian life, much less on the ministry of the Gospel, but for some fearful casualty that put his life in jeopardy, and brought him to serious reflection. That man who is now giving his hundreds of thousands in aid of the cause of Christ, received his first benevolent impulse on what he believed at the time was his death-bed, where he saw all his worldly treasures weighed in the balance and found wanting. The profligate sale of indulgences by Tetzal was necessary to enlighten the conscience and fire the heart, and nerve the arm of the great Luther, at whose bidding the accumulated darkness of centuries rolled back, and a light shone, revealing God's outstretched arm for the deliverance and purification of his Church. And who can doubt that, when the thick cloud that now rests upon the bosom of our own beloved country shall be lifted away, those terrible scenes in which nothing appears to human view but man fighting against man, the citizen in rebellion against his

government, the sword refusing to return to its scabbard because the whole land is not yet deluged with blood,—who can doubt, that this fearful procedure, in which the friends of darkness seem to be holding a jubilee, will be found to have had in it the elements of a grand purification; will be introductory to a brighter day for the Church than she has ever seen yet? And thus it is always—

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.”

His providence is always developing new resources for the Church, and just as certainly in the darkness and the storm as in the sunshine.

And He accomplishes this end by His *Spirit* no less than by his providence. In all those cases of moral renovation which we have already referred to a human instrumentality, God's Spirit is to be recognized in an infinitely higher sense—for in that alone dwells the power that turns the heart of stone into flesh. If you will behold the operations of this Divine Agent, in developing the resources of the Church, on a grand scale, contemplate an extensive revival of religion. First of all, you see new helpers in the great work of carrying up God's spiritual temple, multiplying around you; for each one upon whom God enstamps his image, becomes, in consequence of that act, a pledged laborer in the cause of human salvation. And besides, such a scene always brings with it a fresh baptism of spiritual influence to those who were previously enlisted in the good work, invigorating the weak and the weary, swelling the tide of Christian charity, and making all more vigilant to observe, and more diligent to improve, the opportunities for doing good. Wherever God's Spirit is copiously poured out, and religion extensively revived, there you may set it down as a fixed fact that the facilities for promoting religion will be greatly increased, and every movement in favor of truth and right will receive a higher and stronger impulse. Such then is the agency of man, and such the agency of God, by which the process of developing the resources of the Church has been, and is yet to be, sustained.

It only remains now to *illustrate the obligation of the Church to see to it that this object is attained*; that her resources are not only rendered available, but are actually applied to their legitimate purposes.

And our first remark here is, that this is necessary to *the accomplishment of her own sublime mission*. This is the specific work which God has committed to her; which He has not only required her to perform, but has rendered it certain, by his own ordination, that she will perform. He has placed in her keeping what may be regarded as the germ of her own final and eternal exaltation; and that germ is to unfold under her own watchful and fostering care. She has her part to perform in bringing into exercise all the appointed means of fulfilling the divine purposes, and thus educating herself for immortality, just as truly as if the providence and grace of God had nothing to do with the enterprise. To suppose that she should fail in this were to suppose nothing less than that she were recreant to her adorable Head; that she were a traitor to the great Captain of salvation; that she had abjured, at once her confidence in his wisdom and power, and her allegiance to his authority. She must and she will keep on in the truly loyal work of developing her own resources, and applying them to their legitimate ends, until her mission upon the earth is fully accomplished.

The Church is bound to this also from a regard to *the perfection of her own character*. It is a law which, so far as we know, pervades the whole intelligent creation, that improvement is consequent upon exercise; that the faculties, while they are working out noble results, are themselves strengthened and exalted by the very effort by which those results are attained. The mind of the philosopher, which has been struggling for years to solve some great problem of life, or to fix definitely some one of the creation's laws, has, on reaching a successful termination of its efforts, accomplished a double purpose—not only has it solved the problem or ascertained the law, but the very exercise by which it has done this, has re-acted as an invigorating influence upon its own powers. And this remark applies to the moral and spiritual as truly as the intellectual—let the will and affections be brought into exercise in favor of some good object,—for instance, the relief of some sufferer or the reclaiming of some wanderer, and besides the accomplishment of a worthy object, the very spirit of the man will acquire a fresh impulse towards all that is good. And thus it is with the whole Church—in developing her own resources, she brings into exercise her own energies, both intellectual and moral; and these energies rise and expand

and brighten in proportion as they are exerted; and thus her own character is always advancing from glory to glory.

Moreover, it is necessary to *the attainment of her allotted destiny* that the Church should develop her resources. The Israelites, on their march through the wilderness, and in their arrival in Canaan, strikingly typified the Church in her scene of labor and trial, and in her final entering into rest. God had ordained that his poor suffering people in Egypt should have a safe home at last in the fertile and beautiful land of Canaan; but they had much to do before this could be attained—they had to encounter the perils of a protracted journey through the wilderness; and though God provided them with the means of doing this, they were necessitated to keep their own faculties in constant exercise in obedience to the divine will. In like manner God has provided a glorious resting-place for his own ransomed Church; a place where the inhabitants shall no more say they are sick; where the light of the sun and the moon is not needed because the Lamb is the light thereof; and this is secured to her by the decree, the promise, the oath, of Jehovah. Still, she has her preparatory work to perform; and that work is nothing less than the development and application of her own resources in preparing her for the glorious destiny that awaits her in Heaven. Here on earth the Church sees through a glass darkly; she is oppressed by a sense of her own weakness and impurity; she is conscious of her unfitness to breathe a perfectly holy atmosphere, and mingle with perfectly holy beings in perfectly holy employments; but in the development of her own resources, she undergoes a baptism of suffering and of love, that qualifies her for her appointed destiny,—that of engaging in an everlasting ministration of praise around the throne.

And last of all, and above all, let the Church be faithful in this service we are contemplating, in view of the fact that *it is essential to the Mediator's final triumph*. The grand mediatorial undertaking,—that of gathering a Church from the ruins of the apostacy, of redeeming it by an infinite sacrifice, and presenting it without spot before the throne, to be an everlasting monument of the wisdom and power and grace of God,—this mighty enterprize, was committed to the Lord Jesus Christ. It has placed Him, from the beginning, in an antagonism with all the powers of evil; and between Him and them there has always been, and still is, a contest going forward, which sometimes vibrates to the

innermost heart both of the Church and of the world. But while He is the grand agent, the Church is the instrument which He employs in conducting this contest; and she performs her part in the use of those resources which He has placed at her command; and she cannot be neglectful in respect to these resources without not only trifling with her own best interests, but retarding his full triumph. Let the Church, then, as she loves and adores her gracious Redeemer, and as she would behold the mediatorial crown resting upon his head in full-orbed glory, labor with fresh zeal at her appropriate work of using all the means which He has placed within her reach or has given her the power to create, for consummating his purpose of redemption in respect to our world. And when the ransomed shall all be gathered in, how will thanksgivings flow from their lips to Him who hath redeemed them; and how will benedictions pour forth upon them from his throne, in consideration of the poor service which they will have been privileged and honored by his grace to render as preparatory to his complete mediatorial exaltation!

We shall not have gained our purpose in this train of remark, unless the effect of it shall be to quicken the sense of individual responsibility in reference to the great duty we have been urging. If we mistake not, the fact that almost every object, connected with the progress of Christ's kingdom, has some association pledged for its furtherance, including of course the creation, or the discovery, or the bringing into exercise, of all possible means of promoting its interests, renders it more than possible that those who are not connected with these societies, will imagine that there is nothing for them to do, while this vast associate agency is at work; and more than that,—there may be danger that even those, who constitute these societies, will relax individual effort, under the false idea that there is some mysterious power in combination that supersedes the necessity of it. It is, indeed, one of the brightest signs of the times that the Church has her representative associations in almost every department of the field of Christian benevolence; but it is not true that this fact neutralizes or lessens the obligations of any member to exert himself individually for the advancement of Christ's cause up to the full measure of his ability. Be it so that the Church looks first to her ministry for the development of her resources; but she can

do something in the person of every member,—for even he who has no access to the world, may still have access to God, and thus faith may move the hand that moves the planets. Let the ministry be more watchful, more earnest, more resolute, to reveal and appropriate all the resources which God has put within their reach. Let every private Christian look about him, and see at what point, or by what instrumentality, he can labor to the same end most successfully. Suppose you rescue from obscurity some brilliant or powerful mind, and put him in the way of being educated for the service of the Church, and the history of his life should turn out to be a history of well-nigh apostolic usefulness; or suppose you should touch some hitherto undiscovered spring of Christian charity, the effect of which should be, that fresh auxiliaries to the good cause should spring up, or some far off moral wilderness bud and blossom; or suppose you should put yourself into communion with some unregenerate and careless friend, and should be instrumental of leading him to Christ, and he, in turn, should be honored of God in originating and sustaining some great revival of religion, which should be the signal of a jubilee in Heaven as well as on earth—in either of these cases you will have accomplished a measure of good, and will have entitled yourself through grace to an amount of blessing, which exceeds the boldest powers of human comprehension. Again, we say, let every minister, let every Christian, not excepting even the obscurest and the weakest, come up fully, cheerfully, dependently, to this Heaven-appointed work. And let him, who has no heart to respond to this claim,—no matter how high a place in the Church he may occupy,—scrutinize afresh his own title to Heaven, lest what he thought was the signature of God's Spirit should prove to be the work of his own dreamy and deceiving imagination.

But we hear some one ask—What? Seek to develop the Church's resources at such a day as this, when every available energy that we can command is required to be put in exercise to save our bleeding country? We answer, Yes; for the force of the command of Zion's King does not depend upon circumstances; and no darkness can be so deep as to constitute the semblance of a ground for evading its obligation. Besides, are you quite sure that, in responding promptly, liberally, to the country's claims, you are not actually uncovering foundations of richest blessing to the Church; that

you are not doing that which it is absolutely necessary should be done before the American Church shall properly appreciate the varied sources of her power? But then comes another voice speaking in a tone of yet deeper discouragement, as if the terrible scenes of the hour were enough to weaken our confidence in respect to the future, so far at least as to throw into the distance events which we had hoped soon to realize. But what mean ye, O ye of little faith, by thus refusing to recognize God's hand in the stormy night as well as in the calm, bright day? At least be contented to hold your peace, while you are thus undergoing the baptism in the cloud; for the spirit which you evince is contagious, and wherever it exists, it is an element alike of weakness and of bitterness. Rise up, and gird yourselves with strength, all ye who profess to be the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The darkness, in which you walk now, conceals from you the movings of the almighty and all-gracious arm; but they are not the less real, and by and by they will be made manifest. And then you will bow before the throne with admiring gratitude, in view of those very events, which now task your bleeding hearts to the utmost for the exercise of submission.

ARTICLE II.

M. FLACIUS ILLYRICUS AND HIS TIMES.

By CHARLES F. SCHAEFFER, D. D., Gettysburg, Pa.

THE justice which history renders to eminent benefactors of mankind is sometimes tardy. When their lofty principles of honor and religion come in collision with the petty interests and selfish feelings of their contemporaries, the latter are prompted to employ in the struggle which succeeds, the weapons of falsehood and defamation. The noble aims of the former and their large views are, besides, often unintelligible to ordinary men of their age; these are, accordingly, even when uninfluenced by hostile motives, easily persuaded by designing or envious spirits to believe that there is evil in the purposes and acts of a man of towering intellectual