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I. THE PENTATEUCHAL STORY OF CREATION.

IN the opening portion of the Book of Genesis we have a history of creation which claims to be a direct revelation from God. Geology aims to give us a history of creation gathered from a careful study of the structure of the earth itself, especially the study of its fossils—those “medals of creation,” as they have been aptly termed—in which many things respecting the order of creation are written for our learning.

These two histories ought to be in perfect harmony the one with the other. The books of revelation and of nature, where they cover the same ground, ought to agree. And yet, as a matter of fact, and as these two records are often interpreted, so great is their apparent discrepancy as to lead Prof. Huxley to write:

“My belief is, and long has been, that the Pentateuchal story of creation is simply a myth. I suppose it to be a hypothesis respecting the origin of the universe which some ancient thinker found himself able to reconcile with his knowledge of the nature of things, and therefore assumed to be true. As such I hold it to be not only an interesting, but a venerable monument of a stage in the mental progress of mankind, . . . and to possess neither more nor less scientific importance than the cosmogonies of the Egyptians and Babylonians.”—*Order of Creation*, page 147.

Such discrepancies as are alleged in this case are, I believe, apparent, not real, and may be owing either to a misinterpretation of the Pentateuchal story of creation, or to a misreading of the

V. THE NON-SECULAR CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH.

THE recent agitation of certain questions in the church has compelled the more particular consideration of the non-secular character of the kingdom of Christ. The Confession of Faith distinctly prohibits the courts of the church from handling or concluding anything but that which is ecclesiastical, and from intermeddling with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth. All the bodies which accept this Confession stand pledged to this general principle, the purely spiritual character of the church. Yet the course of events in one or two of the leading organizations which accept the Westminster Standards has proved that *the construction* of the principle is so widely divergent as really to amount to a difference of principle itself. The Southern Presbyterian Church contends for a strict construction of the principle. The Northern Presbyterian Church contends for a construction of it, to say the very least, which creates a material difference of conviction with the Southern Church. The difference is so great it not only amounts to a difference of principle, but produces a widely divergent policy in practice. This has proved one of the serious obstacles to the movement towards a union of the churches. It is an offence to integrity as well as to good sense to assert an identity of principle, when the construction given to it warrants action on one side which the other seriously disapproves. Adhesion to the same form of words does not reveal identity of principle, when they are construed in wide variations of sense. The Northern Presbyterian Church has taken action which, in its own judgment, was entirely warranted by the Standards; while, in the judgment of the Southern Church, that action was in open violation of them. To vindicate either of these varying judgments, it has become important to understand more fully and intelligently than seems to be done on either side the real nature and scope of the spiritual character of the church. The principle seems to lie in a vague form in the mind of both parties; the distinctions in its application appear in large masses, indicating the difference in bulk rather than in outline, and now and then appa-

rently overlapping the supposed boundary between them. The consequence is more or less perplexity in many individual minds; a fear to impeach what is nevertheless vaguely apprehended as error; a timidity in asserting firmly what is nevertheless felt to be probable truth. Resistance or consent to organic union is thus more or less paralyzed, and matters are left to drift helplessly towards an undirected conclusion. It is the aim of this article to try and help forward a more definite conception of the spiritual or non-secular character of the church. The question is broad and full of difficulty, and the writer has no such presumptuous hope as that he can do more than lift a torch in the darkness. In attempting to find a way through the primeval forest he is entitled to a generous construction and to all the help which can be given him. Even his mistakes may promote the discovery of the truth, and he will welcome any fair exposure of any important error. If he fails altogether, he will have done what he could.

This is no new question springing up in the emergencies of the modern church. It animated the long conflict of the Gallican and Ultramontane parties in the Roman Catholic Church. It has been more or less involved in the disputes about the relations of the church to the state in more than one country in Europe. It was implicated in the Erastian struggles in Scotland. It still asserts itself in the theories of modern Romanism and in the progress of the Protestant Church. It assumes various forms; now involving the relations of the church to the civil government; now to secular societies of various kinds within the wide bounds of the civil sphere. In the study of a question so broad and complicated, if it should prove difficult to throw an unimpeachable light on many of its parts, we can only hope for an appreciation of the effort, if not an endorsement of its success.

1. Christ fixes the non-secular character of his kingdom in the declaration, "My kingdom is not of this world," which is negative in form, and in the maxim, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," which is positive in form. These words clearly imply, first, that there are *different spheres of duty* under bounds which are prohibitory of any trespass of any one of these spheres upon another;

and second, that there is a radical distinction between a secular and a spiritual kingdom. In reference to the first of these implied ideas, it is universally recognized in the grand generalizations of collective duties called the state, the family, and the church. Man is recognized not only as bound by the law of God under each of these categories, but as having his own highest interests involved in discharging the duties of each free from all control of the others. The state has no right to dictate how the duties of the sacred sphere of the church or the family are to be discharged, nor to accept dictation from either or both of them. To allow this interference of one is to allow it of all, and to allow it of all is to obliterate the healthful distinction between them altogether. Any duty clearly traceable to any one of these spheres is thereby excluded from the others, and it is tyranny for them to interfere with it. The state has no right to determine the uses of ecclesiastical power, nor the church to interfere in the domestic government of the family. To do it is tyranny and usurpation. All the great spheres of human duty are guarded from trespass by each other by the full force of the authority of the law which prescribes them, that is, the authority of God.

The second of the implied ideas in the maxim of our Lord is that there is a radical and unalterable distinction between a secular and a spiritual institute, between a kingdom of this world and a kingdom not of this world. The chief distinction is in these points: A secular kingdom is a corporate power ordained to secure life, property and personal rights in this world. Its whole *aim* is limited by the present life; hence its name, secular. It is wholly an affair of time. Its *scope* as well as its period is confined to matters of this life and under definite national bounds. Its *ends* as well as its scope of action are of this life; it aims to secure human well-being under the specific limits and denomination of civil and political interests. Its *means* are compulsory within its legitimate sphere. Those means are: First, the enactment of laws; second, provision for the judicial administration of them; third, for the execution of them—all of these legislative, judicial, and executive functions colored to their characteristic complexion by the underlying notion of *compulsory force*. A secular

kingdom rests upon force as its radical idea, and is lawfully empowered to appoint the officers and provide the physical power without which all its functions would be paralyzed. It may fill all this grand and all-important sphere, but cannot lawfully go beyond it or intrude within the boundaries of any coördinate sphere of collective duty.

A kingdom defined as spiritual in positive form is described by Christ in a negative form: it is not a kingdom of this world. It is just the opposite of such a kingdom as we have just described. Its *aims* are not confined to this world. Its *scope* is not bounded by any certain geographical lines. Its *ends* are not physical or temporal well-being under the limits of civil and political rights. Its means are *not compulsory* within its legitimate sphere. Its power to make laws, its power of judicial and executive administration, which do exist because it is a kingdom and not a sham, are nevertheless colored in no extent and to no degree by any underlying notion of compulsion in the hands of the kingdom. As a secular kingdom rests upon force as its radical idea, and is empowered to organize that force in the hands of officers lawfully appointed for the purpose, a spiritual kingdom *does not* rest upon force, and it is *not* empowered to provide coercive energy in the hands of men, either directly or indirectly. If it does, all its true functions are paralyzed. So much for the development of the character of a spiritual kingdom as contained in the negative definition of our Lord.

Let us now reverse the process of the analysis, and retracing along the same divinely suggested lines see what appears on the *positive* side of this spiritual character. As negatively its aims are not confined to this world, its aims are positively directed to another world. As negatively its scope of influence and exerted power is not limited to matters of this life, nor confined by definite national limits, its scope is positively extended over matters concerning the world to come, and reach beyond all national bounds, and embrace the whole world. As its ends are negatively defined as not the physical or temporal well-being of mankind, they are positively defined as the moral and spiritual well-being of the human race, the control of those elements of their nature which

relate their well-being to the conditions of that other world, which is the grand scope of a spiritual institute. As its power is negatively defined as not compulsory, it is positively defined as convincing and persuasive only. A spiritual kingdom may fill all this great sphere, but cannot lawfully go beyond it or intrude into the bounds of any coördinate but independent sphere. The general conclusion, then, is clear enough, that neither of these two species of kingdom, the temporal and the spiritual, can seek the ends or employ the means which have been assigned to the other.

Before we pursue the lines of inference from this distinction in the two spheres of power, there are two circumstances which require a brief notice to avoid complication, and prevent a too narrow application of the principle. The first refers to those "circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church common to human actions and societies," which are recognized in the Confession of Faith as equally necessary in both the temporal and spiritual spheres, essential to carrying out the legitimate granted power of both, and as such usable by each without the imputation of trespass upon the other. The other circumstance is that the distinction of the temporal sphere embraces not only civil government proper, but a variety of things belonging to the social, domestic and personal rights and interests of mankind, societies and combinations for various secular but valuable purposes within the shadow of the civil government, but not under its control, and equally under the shadow of the spiritual kingdom, but not under its control. So far as those "circumstances common to human actions and societies" are concerned, though they are secular in their nature, they are competently used in the discharge of ecclesiastical functions just because they are essential to the discharge of them, and this use of them implies no departure from the sphere of the church. The building of houses for public worship, the rules of business in the organization and working of ecclesiastical courts, though secular in themselves, are properly employed in the work of the church, and imply no violation of its spiritual character. In these things there are *independent common rights of action* between the temporal and the spiritual spheres, rights of usage in the same things which are assertable by each

without trespass upon the territory of the other. A *right in common* precludes the notion of usurpation or trespass, and is perfectly consistent with the obligatory general line of distinction in spheres. No such common right can be construed as obliterating this line of distinction, or as in any way justifying the imputation of a trespass by one on the sphere of the other. The principle which limits the church in the use of these secular things is *incidency* to its own business; that alone justifies it, and that alone fixes the limit upon the use of these things by the church. The church can engage in nothing secular, except it is incidental and necessary to the discharge of some of its own functions. This principle of limitation is far-reaching and effective. Discounting, then, this admitted lawful implication of the spiritual sphere in secular things, we are able to raise into a more compact form the question touching those interferences with secular affairs which imply a real departure in the church from its true bounds.

As this discrimination was necessary to prevent the issue from going too far and embracing too much, it is equally necessary to recognize the implication of other things besides civil government proper, in the temporal sphere, from which the church is equally precluded. This is necessary to prevent the question from growing too narrow. The multiplication of all sorts of secular organizations, societies for reform or charitable purposes, combinations for personal or social advantage, has become a marked feature of modern society. The relation of the church to these societies has been necessarily the result of their existence, and the question how far the church may lend its aid to them is a part of this broad question touching the spiritual character of the church. These associations lie clearly within the secular sphere, and that fact alone carries the determination of the proper relation of the church to them. We are now prepared to come closer to the question or questions properly involved in the inquiry.

2. As we have already seen, the kingdom of Christ is sharply distinguished from a kingdom of this world. They differ in aim, in period, in scope, and in means to carry out their ends. The antagonism is so complete that the assignment of anything to the one is its exclusion from the other. The only point in which this antago-

nism does not exert this exclusive force is in those rights in common necessary to the discharge of essential function by each. Neither can seek the ends or employ the means of the other. The detailed illustration of this principle will go far to explain the mutual relations of the two species of kingdom. Let us take up the sphere of the church and analyze it in order to develop these relations as far as needful.

3. The kingdom of Christ, though a spiritual, is nevertheless a *real kingdom*. It is designed to govern men; but the nature and purpose of its government, the scope, extent, and limitation of its governing powers, are clearly defined in its great charter. It is possessed of a certain species of legislative, executive and judicial powers, all of which are colored by the nature of the *power* which is characteristic of the government. There are two modes of governing mankind: one by compulsion, the other by persuasion. The instrument of the one is force; the instrument of the other is conviction. The means of the one is physical power; the means of the other is truth. The rightful employment of the one marks the sphere of a kingdom of this world; the rightful employment of the other marks the sphere of the kingdom of Christ. When Pilate inquired of Jesus whether he claimed to be a king, Jesus answered that he did. The suspicions of the Roman magistrate, which were probably roused by this avowal, were instantly allayed when Jesus added: "For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Pilate was too dull to understand promptly how truth could be an instrument of rule or what truth could be rationally so employed. He could only vaguely inquire, "What is truth?" But he saw plainly that the claim of the Nazarene involved no interference whatever with the civil sphere and the supremacy of the Roman empire. He saw that a government by truth and a government by force involved no incompatible elements, and might readily co-exist without mutual disturbance. This radical idea, government by persuasion, controls the whole frame of a spiritual kingdom. As the legislative, judicial and executive functions of a kingdom of this world are colored by the underlying notion of compulsory force, so the legislative, judicial and executive func-

tions of a kingdom not of this world are colored by the underlying notion of the persuasive force which is peculiar to such an institute. *Truth* is the grand implement of persuasion, and is *therefore the only lawful weapon of a spiritual kingdom.*

4. Truth being the great and only lawful instrument of the christian kingdom, it follows that *teaching* is the great function of that kingdom. Her commission is defined in the words, "Go, teach all nations whatsoever I have commanded you." To ascertain the scope of this teaching function of the kingdom is to ascertain the true nature and work of the kingdom itself. The commission of the church defines the field of her instruction to be all the nations of the world. It defines her teaching officers as the first in importance of all her agents. It involves instruction, both in public and from house to house. It settles that all her public proclamations, her private lessons, her hortatory and persuasive appeals, must be based upon *instruction*; and just so far as her teachers seek to entertain or excite apart from clear unfolding of truth, they are defective in the discharge of the ministerial commission. It determines also the kind of truth which it is commissioned to teach. While truth is to be the sole instrument by which she is to govern, not any or all kinds of truth are committed to her charge, or made either obligatory or subject to her discretion. The limitations of her sphere as spiritual run a sharp line of discrimination round her range of instruction. She is commanded by the King to teach "whatsoever I have commanded you." She is ordered to "preach the word." Her field of truth is defined by the revelation which God has given, and confined to the truth there revealed and those necessary inferences which are compelled out of this truth by the laws of thought which have been established by the same divine hand and become thus the media for the expression of his will. This same principle—truth, the only instrument of government—determines the organic frame and functions of the government of the church in its specific form. It colors the administration of the legislative, executive and judicial functions. Her whole government is to be administered more or less directly by the influence of the truth, defining obedience and furnishing its motives. Obedience is to be secured by

conviction, not by compulsion in any form. The church is to legislate, judge, and execute in obedience to truth in the form of law, and its decrees are to be enforced and obedience secured solely by the weight of motives created by the truth. It is not to be coerced by power, by civil or physical disabilities. The "power of the keys" is simply power to admit to the privileges of the kingdom and to exclude from them. The fundamental law, the essential nature of a spiritual institute, runs through all its governing as well as its teaching functions. Any attempt, direct or indirect, to enforce ecclesiastical laws by civil or political penalties is a gross violation of this fundamental law of the kingdom. Any *indirect* attempt of this sort is a base and fraudulent effort to usurp, by evasion, powers which are admitted to be directly withheld from the church. It is a wicked attempt to confound the two spheres of a temporal and spiritual kingdom which have been plainly and positively severed by the authoritative dictum of the King himself.

5. Following up the lessons of the Scriptures touching the teaching function of the church, we are soon brought face to face with two great leading errors in relation to it. The first is the doctrine of a positive union between the church and the state; and the second is the ultramontane theory in the Roman Catholic Church. Touching the first of these questions, we have no call to go at length into the terrible history of spiritual disaster which has sprung from the embodiment of this theory in practice; we only wish to show the violence done by the theory to the fundamental character of a spiritual institute. The positive separation of the kingdom of Christ from the secular sphere not only prohibits the church from all interference with the functions of the state, but prohibits the state from all interference with the functions of the church. The line of distinction runs equally between both, and the force of the prohibition applies equally to both. The church is solely endowed with jurisdiction over all her officers. They are answerable to her alone for what they teach under her commission and responsibility. It is obviously just that they should be so. It is equally obvious that to guard herself from corrupt teachers the control of the revenues for their support should be in the hands of

the church, in the hands of her congregations who are to supply these revenues. If now an alliance is formed with the state, under whose terms the revenues of the ministry are in the hands of the state and altogether beyond the control of the church, it is obvious that the control of the church over the teaching of her officers is broken down; her discipline is ruined; her guarantees of sound doctrine are destroyed; her autonomy is abolished, and all her spiritual functions are suspended. The conclusion is irresistible that the spiritual character of the church absolutely prohibits a union between the church and the state. Such a policy annihilates the authoritative separation of the spheres ordained by Christ. No wonder mischief always follows in the course of such dangerous disregard of divine legislation.

The same principle prohibits all attempts of the church to control the administration of the state. It cuts the root of all the ultramontane usurpations of the Roman See. It sweeps away the foundation of all attempts of the church to control human action in the civil sphere—to prescribe policy to government, or the use of civil and political franchises to the private citizen. It is claimed in the broadest terms by the ultramontane party in the Roman Church that the church has been empowered to teach *authoritatively* and *infallibly* what is the law as well as the gospel of God; to define absolutely the *duties* of men in every relation of life; to prescribe the line of conduct in the personal, domestic, civil and political spheres of human society. This is the principle by which the tremendous despotism of Popery has been established. The right to determine authoritatively the law of God brings under the control of the determining body all that is covered by the claims of that law. But the law of God extends over every possible action of every individual human being, in all the relations of human life, at every moment of existence. The ultramontane claim then subjects the whole human race forever to the orders of the church, and an universal despotism is established in her hands. There are certain modifications of this right in the church to teach the law which have a certain currency among Protestants. As sometimes stated, it cannot be distinguished from the Romanist doctrine, though it is qualified into something distinguishably different

when pressed with the consequences. As asserted, it defines the right of the church to follow up the moral distinction wherever it is found, and to handle and legislate on all subjects in which it is found. In both of these theories there is an element of truth. The church has the right to teach the whole law of God; but the error in the Protestant abuse of it is in the conception that the right to teach the moral distinction carries with it the right of discretionary dealing with every subject in which it inheres. It is obvious that the rule of incidency to ecclesiastical matter would fix a safe limit to the handling of such subjects; but without such a recognized rule it is obvious that the teaching of the moral distinction would warrant the teaching of any and all subjects whatever in the pulpits of the christian church. The Romanist abuse of the right of the church to teach the law is a more serious and dangerous departure from the truth.

This error is, not in the right of the church to teach, but first in the claim that the church, in her strictly official capacity, is *the sole judge* of moral distinctions; and secondly, in the claim that her dictum is absolutely authoritative and binding in the sense of a positive obligation upon all other parties whatever. The Protestant sense of an authoritative decision by the church on any point of doctrine or duty is very different. Such a decision is only an official determination as to what the views of the church are, but carries no claim to coerce belief beyond the force of the evidence she presents. The ultramontane conception of an authoritative decision carries the notion of a compulsory bond to accept it, repudiating all right to question or examine, much less to refuse to accept it, and involving instant implication in guilt and responsibility if prompt adhesion to the decision of the church is refused. This peremptory and haughty assumption, coupled with the universal range of the claim over all events and relations of life, marks a theory of church power absolutely different from that right of instruction carried by the apostolic commission. Surely there is cause, an infinitely weighty reason, for a deliberate attempt to develop the boundary between the admitted right of the church to teach and this overshadowing tyranny which is confounded with it.

The first fatal objection to the ultramontane theory is that the claim to an authoritative decision as to what is truth in the ultramontane sense is that it is absolutely inconsistent with the very nature of a spiritual institute. Such an institute aims solely at a spiritual impression: its only instrument is the truth; its purpose is to govern by *conviction* and a true persuasion of the hearts of men. It by no means follows as a logical or necessary conclusion, that in assigning instruction in his truth to his kingdom Christ has repudiated the fundamental principle of that kingdom, *obedience from conviction*, government by the truth, and established a court of decision by authority. Such an idea sweeps away the very conception of the church as a convincive and spiritual institution. The ultramontane theory involves an apostasy in the church from its fundamental character.

A second objection to it is that it sweeps away the great line of distinction between the spheres of human duty as drawn by Jesus in his definition of his kingdom, and, in spite of his careful vindication of the indestructible freedom of the kingdom of Cæsar and all other secular spheres, everything is subjected to the control of the church. "The secular order exists only for the spiritual, personified in the Sovereign Pontiff, and should in all respects be subjected to it."¹ "Therefore all that which regards the law of God, conscience, eternal salvation, the whole world, nations and individuals, sovereigns and subjects, are subordinated to the power of the church and of her chief. Hence, also, in all that which interests conscience, civil legislation is subordinated to the legislation of the Catholic Church."² From this springs the audacious claim to depose princes and absolve their subjects from their allegiance, an authority asserted as "the inherent right" of the church.³ The independence of the secular spheres is annihilated, equally with the restricted sphere of the spiritual kingdom, by this desperate usurpation of papal tyranny.

A third objection to it is that it destroys that free action of intelligence and will which is guaranteed by the very nature of a

¹ *Brownson's Review*, July, 1852. Quoted in *Baltimore Critic*, p. 148.

² *Rohrbacher's History*, cited by Brownson. See *Baltimore Critic*, p. 179.

³ Same, pp. 149-176.

spiritual institute as a government by truth and conviction. The very nature of its appeal asserts the indestructible freedom of the intelligence to which it appeals, and the moral worthlessness of an adhesion to the kingdom not grounded in honest belief and consent of faculties. Acceptance of a mere authoritative decision is the natural opposite of an intelligent and free assent; and the ultramontane theory not only alters the whole character of the kingdom, but degrades the nature of the being it seeks to influence, and makes his adhesion to the kingdom a reproach to his moral and intellectual nature. The true function of teaching as conferred by Christ upon his church necessarily regards and honors the inherent rights of reason and conscience: it provides for their full contentment.

A fourth objection to this theory is that it destroys the limitations placed upon the teaching function of the church itself, and abolishes the rights of instruction conferred upon other parties. The church, as the appointed teacher of the truth, is not without limitations clearly defined in regard to her teaching. The first limitation is in regard to the *nature of the truth* she is to inculcate. She is rigidly confined to spiritual truth, and can handle secular truth only so far as it is strictly incidental and necessary to the teaching of her legitimate subjects. The second limitation is found in the investiture of the right of instruction within her own organization. Within the church itself the *official right* to teach is invested in the teaching presbyter, and no one has a right to teach as of official authority unless invested by regular ordination with the teaching office. The restriction bars as against any other office in the church as well as against the private member, and against any altogether outside of the church. No elder or deacon or private member has any right to assume the function of the teaching elder. The ruling elder is ordained to rule, and he can lawfully do nothing more under his official obligations. The deacon is ordained to take care of the poor, the widow and the orphan, and to administer the finance of the church, and he can lawfully do nothing more. The official teaching of the truth is confined to the office of the teaching presbyter, and his teachings are not without marked limitations. He is not empowered to

teach authoritatively in the sense of being empowered to command and enforce the acceptance of his instruction by any species of penal power whatever, civil or ecclesiastical. Such a claim is barred by the very nature of a spiritual institute, by the very nature of his instrument, which is simply the truth, and by the very nature of the influence he is set to produce—*conviction and assent*. The intrinsic freedom of human intelligence and responsibility is fully recognized by the whole nature of the christian propaganda, and this indelible freedom of human agency *necessarily limits the authoritative capacity* of the teaching presbyter. His authority is confined to a legal investiture with the obligation and right to declare the truth committed to his charge, as that truth is understood by the church which has commissioned him. The only compulsion he is authorized to use is the compelling power of truth, reason and pathetic persuasion—the legitimate compulsion of an appeal to the judgment, the conscience and the emotions of the soul. He is not set to be “a lord over God’s heritage.” He has “no dominion over the faith of God’s people”; he is only the “helper of their joy.” He is to do his work by “reasoning out of the Scriptures” and by “testifying to the grace of God.” His work is done, his commission is discharged, when he has expounded the word of the Lord, addressed the intelligence of his hearers, and proclaimed the will of the King. Their responsibility then comes into play, and to their own master they stand or fall according to the manner in which they receive the truth and obey or disobey it. The claim of the papal power to coerce the reception and obedience of the truth, even by the sword of the civil magistrate as the servant of the spiritual authority, is an outrageous tyranny from which the church is debarred by the fundamental principle of the kingdom of God: rule by the truth and by nothing else.

There is yet another limitation upon the teaching function of the church in its teaching offices: it is limited by the *common right* of investigating and declaring the truth vested in every other officer and member of the church; yea, in every human being to whom the knowledge of the truth comes, whether in or out of the church. All who are authorized to use the means of grace established to lead men to reconciliation with God are endowed with a

divinely authorized right to read the Word of God, which is one of that series of means. To prohibit, limit, or condition this right, is not only rebellion against God, but robbery of the chances of salvation to man. The Scriptures say of themselves they were written that men might believe, and believing have life through the name of Jesus. All who have a right to believe have a right to use the means of faith. The command is given even to the enemies of the truth to "search the Scriptures." The Bereans searched them to test the teaching of inspired apostles; they were commended for doing it, and the result was that many of them believed. Every one who hears the proclamation of the divine amnesty is expressly authorized to say, Come. What men learn from the Word of God they may repeat. Parents are expressly commanded to teach the truth to their children, when they go in and go out, when they rise up or sit down. The master may teach his servants, a friend his friend, a Sabbath-school teacher his scholars. A private christian may not only teach in private, but may lawfully address a public audience. An elder or a deacon may do the same in the exercise of his franchise, though not of his public office. All this class of instruction is sharply discriminated from the *official teaching* of the teaching presbyter, and when suitably protected from abuse and from all semblance of intrusion upon the functions of the official ministry is altogether proper. The two modes of teaching are distinguished by the one being the discharge of an official function, the other of an individual right. The one is a matter of liberty or of obligation purely personal; the other is a matter of permanent and official obligation. All private christians are not bound to address audiences in public; the vast class of female believers are expressly prohibited from it. All ministers of the church are bound to preach publicly and from house to house. It is clear, then, that other parties beside the teaching presbyter are authorized to teach in these private relations, while strictly restrained from intrusion on the office of the ministry. It follows, then, irresistibly that neither the teaching presbyter nor the courts of the church in his behalf have any right to abolish the obligation where such obligation exists, or to restrain the liberty where such privilege exists,

or to interfere in any way with the use of non-official, yet divinely given rights of instruction conferred upon other parties. The official teaching of the church does not trench upon the rights and duties of such parties, and is consequently *just so far limited and restrained by them*. The ultramontane theory abolishes all these individual rights. It claims to subject all learning and teaching of religious truth whatever to the jurisdiction of the church. It claims to condition or prohibit the reading of the Scriptures and all study or report of the truths of the christian system. It is thus again convicted of tyranny towards man and rebellion against the will and law of God.

There is yet another limitation to the teaching function of the church which sweeps away the last vestige of support for the ultramontane despotism, and also its modified Protestant form. The papal claim asserts for the church an unlimited right as *the sole judge in morals and religion*. The modified Protestant form of the claim asserts for the church the right to handle at discretion matters in which the moral distinction inheres. Both ground upon the admitted right of the church to teach the whole law of God. But there is a limitation which, while it admits the right of the church to teach the whole law and range of morals, positively *denies the sole right of the church to judge and declare the moral distinction*. It thus logically overthrows the ultramontane despotism altogether and restrains a too-adventurous Protestant zeal by asserting the claim of other parties than the church to examine and conclude matters relegated to them and as such excluded from the handling of the church. This limitation is found in the authoritative distinction in spheres decreed by divine law and the consequent investiture of other parties to determine the moral element involved in the matter assigned to these spheres distinct from the church. This uproots the claim for the church as the sole judge of morals, and it destroys the asserted right to handle ecclesiastically matters not assigned to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. This limitation is illustrated by the conduct of our Lord when asked to adjudicate in a question of property. To the request to interfere and make one brother divide an inheritance with another, he refused in the half-indignant inquiry: "Who made me a judge or a

divider over you?" Here was a question in which a moral element was strongly involved; a gross injustice may have been involved, yet Christ refused to touch it. Why did he refuse? This act of the King in Zion is plainly instructive on two points holding a vital relation to the question of the relation of his kingdom to secular matters. It plainly indicated that where a secular matter was to be decided, even though a marked moral element was involved in it, he deemed it improper for him to interfere, because it was no part of his business to determine secular matters. If the issue to be settled was secular, it was aside from his province, even though the settlement was to come through the settlement of the moral quality inhering in it. This determines the impropriety of his church seeking to control secular matters because of the moral interests involved in them, because this rule of action would justify ecclesiastical interference to an extent perilous to the authoritative distinction between the temporal and the spiritual spheres. If the Head of the church refused to interfere in such issues, what right has his church to do it? The other point settled by this example of Jesus is that where other parties, say a civil magistracy, were empowered to determine secular affairs, *it was also their province to settle the moral question involved in them.* This is equally true of other matters determinable in the civil sphere besides civil government proper. If men in the civil or secular sphere have the right to form associations for lawful, social or personal advantage, they have the right to consider and decide the moral question of their propriety. Now, if the example of our Lord in this question of property referred to him determined that the moral question of justice in the case was lawfully referred to other parties for decision, it is obvious that his church is not the sole judge of morals, and the ultramontane claim is demolished. If he refused to meddle with a secular matter in spite of the moral quality inhering in it, the loose claim of mistaken Protestants to deal at discretion with secular matters *because* of the moral quality involved in them is likewise discredited.

These four great limitations on the teaching function of the church are altogether sufficient to guard the freedom of the individual and the independence of all lawful secular spheres from

ultramontane tyranny and from mistaken conceptions among Protestant bodies touching the extent of lawful ecclesiastical interference with secular affairs.

6. From this radical distinction between the kingdom of this world and the kingdom not of this world, the dominion of Cæsar and the dominion of Christ, will issue the settlement of some of the practical questions of our own day, if it is resolutely applied. The two species of kingdom differ in their ends and differ in their means, so that neither has the right to pursue the ends or employ the means belonging to the other. A thing ascertained to belong to the temporal sphere, whether it be end or means, is thereby excluded from the spiritual, and whatever is assigned to the spiritual sphere is thereby excluded from the jurisdiction of the temporal. Nor does it at all qualify this law of the spheres of action determined by the law of God, that all things temporal have a moral side, and all things moral have something of a temporal side. That fact only makes it more difficult to run the line of distinction in spheres with precision in many cases, but it does not abolish that line and merge the spheres into unity. The kingdom of Christ is still not a kingdom of this world, and Cæsar still has a claim to the things which are Cæsar's, and God to the things which are God's. However difficult it may be to define a principle of interpretation which shall be at once logically perfect and practically effective as soon as applied in any and every particular case, the question to which sphere a given thing is to be referred will not be difficult of solution in actual practical judgments. It will often be found easier to assign the sphere to which a thing belongs than to induce the honest acceptance and execution of its legitimate consequences, especially in cases where it may be both church and state have been thoroughly committed to a policy discredited by those consequences. Such a question is the system of secular education in this country, and the question of union between church and state in all Europe. If it is indeed practically impossible to determine to what sphere a thing belongs, the distinction so emphatically asserted by our Lord between his kingdom and a kingdom of this world is absolutely impracticable and useless. But this is inadmissible, and the force of the imperative principle, that

what belongs to either sphere is excluded from the other, except all those common rights in things essential to the working of both, is not at all impaired.

The fundamental spiritual character of the church of God runs through all its functions of teaching and every department of its government, legislative, judicial and executive. It sends are negatively defined as not physical or temporal well-being, and positively defined as moral and religious well-being. Its power is negatively defined as not compulsory, and positively defined as convince and persuasive. Its instrument is negatively defined as not physical force, and positively defined as truth and nothing but the truth. No physical force backs its teaching, its legislation, its judicial decisions, or its executive enterprises. Its laws and judgments, its executive energies, its appeals for work and revenue, are only enforced by the truth in the form of law or demonstrated duty. Its culture of moral obedience and religious affections, its development of purity in motive, holiness in character and righteousness in conduct, depend not on force or interested suggestions, but on the force of the truth in the form of an instrument to convince and persuade. Let us attempt to apply these principles of a spiritual kingdom to some of the questions of the day. Some of these questions concern the relations of the church to civil government proper, and others lie in the general sphere of secular matters distinct altogether from civil government. We will study them in succession.

7. Relation of the church to rights and obligations in the individual, domestic and social sphere of civil society.

(1.) The spiritual character of the church determines a restriction on the church in relation *to the incidental effects of its own proper work*. The teaching of the gospel is full of fruit which is the mere incidental result of its influence. The conversion of a human soul, the infusion of holiness into its moral energies, the establishment of the divine law as a practical rule of action, will exert a commanding influence over all the relations and energies of the man. It will make him a better man in every relation and qualify his energies, however employed. But many of these relations are outside the sphere of the church: they extend into the

private, domestic, social and political spheres, and are thereby excluded from the domain of the church. In such things as the management and education of children, the reading and study of the man, the selection of a profession, the selection of associates, and the formation of party affiliations in politics, the church has no right to dictate. Her purifying influence will control him in the use of such things, but the right to determine that use is his own. The only right of the church to qualify it is the right of discipline for abuses of personal privilege inconsistent with christian character and with vows of obedience to Christ. Nor has the church the right to designedly and directly attempt the development of these incidental and uncommanded objects which result from the discharge of her proper commission; for they lie in other spheres, and to designedly attempt them by direct use of her powers would involve a departure from her bounds.

(2.) The spiritual character of the church determines its relation to the rightful use of both duties and lawful liberties or privileges of other parties, in many things—in domestic management, in combinations for social advantage and moral reformations. The church can only teach duty or define moral and warranted privilege in its general form: the particular decision touching the discharge of the duty or the use of the privilege in any separate sphere is to be made in that sphere itself. Among these questions of privilege are such matters as public libraries, lyceums, social charities, the treatment of animals, the legal and police protection of wives and children, Masonic associations and trades' unions. These things are civil and secular in their main purpose: they are all incidentally moral to a greater or less degree. The fact that they are civil in their main end and purpose consigns them to the civil sphere, and excludes them from the domain of the church. Their incidental moral bearing by no means warrants the withdrawal of jurisdiction over them from the civil power and the consignment of them to the control of the church. The church is warranted to teach that a good man is merciful to his beast; but it has no right to determine what civil measures are to be taken to protect animals. The determination of the question whether any member or officer of the church may unite to form or join a Masonic associa-

tion, a particular social charity, a lyceum or public library association, is purely a personal right. Such acts belong to the sphere of moral liberty or privilege or duty purely personal: they belong to man in his individual and social capacity. Any such question is referred absolutely to his personal decision, and this carries with it the right to determine, on his own responsibility, the question of moral propriety involved in it. It is bootless to allow any rights, individual or social, if they are always to be conditioned by the dictum of the church. They belong to a domain civil, from which the church is excluded by her own essential character as spiritual. The war of the Roman Catholic Church on the Masonic association, and the prohibition of her members to join it, is an unwarranted usurpation upon their personal rights, and an intrusion beyond the lawful bounds of a spiritual institute.

The relation of the church to societies for reform is settled by the same rule. In many parts of this country the church assumes a relation to temperance societies which is utterly unwarranted by her true relations to all such associations for moral reforms. It assumes to require a pronounced friendship for any form of temperance organization and an adhesion to their principle of total abstinence, or a positive union with them, as essential to good standing in the church, and in some cases to the recognized character of a christian and the privilege of communion. Temperance societies in their various forms, Washingtonian, Total Abstinence, Sons of Temperance, or Women's Christian Temperance Unions, Anti-Gambling Associations, Associations for the Promotion of Purity, are all of the nature of means to an end. That end may be proper; it may be so far forth absolutely coincident with the end of the church; both seek the suppression of a vice. But each seeks the end, if they properly seek it, by different means. The church is authorized to seek it only by the use of her own divinely appointed and commanded ordinances. The associations seek it by their own selected influences. All these societies, then, are of the nature of *means*; and not only so, but means adopted in the use of that liberty of choice which belongs to the individual. The end may lie in the sphere of duty; the means may be merely in the region of privilege, the domain of allowable but

not obligatory action, or in the region of specific but not universal obligation. The liberty to adopt any particular means implies the liberty to reject it and choose other expedients. The most fanatical zealot of temperance would probably allow that there was no imperative general obligation on a member of the old Total Abstinence Society to join the modern order of the Good Templars. He would be at liberty to do it, but that is all. The church has no right to curb a liberty by a law. As a true moral liberty, it already has the sanction of law. If any *positive* moral obligation exists upon any particular person to join any one or all of these associations for the suppression of any one vice or more, that obligation is personal and particular, and the church has no right to expand such a limited obligation into universal law. Masonic bodies, Odd-Fellows, Temperance Societies, Anti-Gambling Associations, may be all right as means to serve the ends of charity and pure living, but they are all in the civil sphere, and as such excluded from the sphere and patronage of the church. But the church, acting in her own legitimate bounds, though seeking the same end, is bound to seek it exclusively by her own commanded means and ordinances; nor has she any right to try to enforce any other means whatever upon her officers or members. If she does, she violates her spiritual charter, her fundamental law.

What is true of *liberty* or *privilege* inhering in other spheres is equally true in regard to *positive duties* similarly placed. The church has no right in its teaching capacity to interfere with the duty of any other party authorized to judge the moral distinction, to learn, judge, teach and enforce that distinction. It has no right in its judicial, legislative or executive capacity to interfere with the duties assigned to other spheres. If, for instance, the duty of the education of children, either secular or religious, has been assigned to the parental relation, the church is not empowered to meddle with it. She may teach the child religious truth by her ordinary agencies, but she has no right to enforce even religious instruction contrary to the convictions and will of the parent. The responsibility is his and his alone. Still less is the church empowered to control the secular education of the child, for that is exclusively assigned to the parental relation. Any

duty or any privilege attached to any other domain is *ex vi termini* excluded from the domain of a spiritual kingdom.

8. Relation of the church to civil government proper, and the mutual duties of the two species of kingdoms.

The spiritual character of the church, while establishing a fundamental difference between it and a kingdom of this world, is nevertheless entirely consistent with certain duties it owes to the state, and the state is equally bound in certain duties to the church. The tendency of the existing dispute in reference to the union of the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches has been to create the impression that the Southern Church in its strong exceptions to the latitudinarian action of the Northern Church does not recognize any political duties in the spiritual kingdom at all. This is altogether a mistake. The records of the Southern Church courts bear witness to the firm discharge of its political duties, and this circumstance has been unfairly employed by partisan writers in the interests of the organic union proposition, as a fair offset and even a greater violence to the spiritual character of the church than any political misdemeanor in the action of the Northern body. The fact that the Southern courts have dealt with political matter is construed as implicating them in the very abuse of which they complain, and in view of their emphatic assertion of the non-secular nature of the christian kingdom, this implication is asserted to involve both absurdity and guilt. That such a view should have been taken by shallow thinkers, who can see no difference between a proper and an improper dealing with political matter, and accept any dealing with political obligations as involving an unlimited claim to political action, is not strange; but that it should have imposed on some of the best thinkers in the church on both sides is certainly curious. The tendency in the Southern Church in consequence of this is to run to an extreme opposite to the Northern extreme, and to suppose that there is no consistent assertion of the non-secular character of the church without condemning all political deliverances whatever. A brief examination of the teachings of the Scriptures, and a just application of the admitted functions of both church and state, will correct the error upon both sides, and show that the just complaint raised touching the abuse

of the spiritual character of the church is not that the church in both sections of the country has touched upon political duties, but that in one case at least these political deliverances have entirely transcended the duty of the church, and by so doing have violated its spiritual character. The church is plainly required in the Scriptures to do certain duties to the state, and these duties when done involve no breach whatever on its true spiritual sphere.

9. Duties of the church to the state.

(1.) The church is positively required to inculcate *the duty of obedience to "the powers that be."* This obligation is created by the plain words of the Holy Spirit, and is obligatory on the church in her courts and pulpits alike. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 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: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; 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. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."¹ "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work."² The duty of the church is here plain and positive. She is to teach obedience to "the powers that be," no matter what they may be. She is to inculcate obedience to every *de facto* government. From this requisition in the inspired record spring several incisive and far-reaching principles, negative and positive, regulative of the duty of the church to the state.

(2.) The church is clearly prohibited from raising any ques-

¹ Rom. xiii. 1-7.

² Titus iii. 1.

tion concerning the legitimate *title* of any civil government under which she may be founded. She is intended to exist in every nation of the earth and under every government, and is prohibited from raising any question touching legitimacy of title. Her bond is to government *de facto* just as she finds it. The question of legitimacy of title in the claim of government is a secular matter, to be settled solely in the secular sphere. The humiliating issue of the attempt of the English Church to uphold the divine right of the Stuart dynasty illustrates the folly of the church undertaking to settle the legitimate title of a civil government and of thus passing her legitimate bounds.

(3.) The church is prohibited from adhering as of divine or spiritual authority to any one particular form of civil government as specially obligatory under the law of God. Her duty is to the powers that be, no matter what they may be. Kings, emperors, consuls, chief magistracies of every sort, republics of every form, are all alike entitled at her hands to recognition as powers that be. All are in the same sense ordained of God. The question of form in civil government is a secular question to be settled in the civil sphere, and is thereby absolutely excluded from the spiritual kingdom.

(4.) As a further consequence of her spiritual character, the church has no right to dispute or perpetuate or guarantee the territorial limits of any country in which she may exist. Designed to exist under every government, no matter what its form may be, and to occupy every country in the world, whether its territorial domain is large or small, she is rigidly excluded from handling all such questions. The establishment of territorial bounds is a secular matter, alone cognizable in the secular sphere of political power, and is thereby excluded from the jurisdiction of the church. All consideration of such issues by the church is a mark of apostacy from her divine commission.

(5.) The church is bound to inculcate the lawfulness of coercive power in civil governments, and teach that the magistrate "beareth not the sword in vain." She is to teach her people to recognize him as "the minister of God for good," and to obey him for conscience' sake as well as from fear of wrath, and give him honor as

one to whom honor is due. She is not to approve the coercive forces of government in a war of conquest or revenge, or except for just and necessary ends, but is entitled to bear testimony against such policy, because she is entitled to testify against all moral wrongs. But she is bound to uphold the exertion of coercive power in civil governments in all just and necessary wars for the safety and protection of the people from the tyranny and abuse of evil men. In this lesson that the sword is not borne in vain or empty show, there is no departure from her sphere as a kingdom not of this world.

(6.) The church as the teacher of moral obligations may lawfully teach that treason against the government is a crime, but only under limitations. Treason as a political crime is differently defined under the laws of different governments, and under its civil definition is not always a crime against God. Nay, technical treason may sometimes be the highest of virtues, as where a patriot imperils life and honor in the rescue of his country. Washington was technically a traitor; he was actually a noble example of public virtue. The church has no right to pronounce treason a crime unless it is a violation of the divine not less than of human law. If it involves an unnecessary and unjustifiable breach of the divine law, which requires obedience to the bearer of the sword of civil justice and the powers that be, the church has the right to pronounce treason a crime against God as well as against human law, but not otherwise. Technical treason belongs altogether to the civil sphere, and the church has nothing to do with it. Her condemnation of a technical traitor may involve the condemnation of the noblest virtue.

(7.) The church is prohibited by her essential nature as a spiritual body from all interference with the decisions of magistrates on the bench, of statesmen in council, of legislators in parliaments, and of the private citizen in his political action. This restriction is created by the limitation on the teaching function of the church arising from the coördinate right of other parties to judge and determine the moral element in things assigned to their responsibility. To deny this right and yet to impute this responsibility to such parties, is absurd. The obligation to determine the civil

or secular question carries with it the duty and consequent right of determining the moral question implicated in it, or else the civil responsibility cannot be determined by the person on whom that responsibility rests, which is absurd and contradictory. It is at once to impute responsibility and deny it. It is to impose responsibility and at the same time disable it by disabling the settlement of a question absolutely essential to that settlement. For the church to claim the determination of this controlling moral question is to claim jurisdiction over the secular or civil matter in which it is involved. But this is absurd and contradictory; for it has been already recognized that this responsibility is in the individual in his secular relation, and it is contradictory to impute it to the church. The church cannot assume it without usurpation and a trespass beyond her spiritual sphere. The church may teach the moral duty of a civil magistrate *in thesi*; but to assume to dictate duty to a judge upon the bench and in his official action, is to assume control over his official act. He must decide the justice of the case himself or betray his duty. Any constitution which directly or indirectly subjects the civil magistrate to the dictum of the church, or to ecclesiastical penalties for disregarding the teaching of the church in any particular case, is a constitution fundamentally vicious. The state possessing such a constitution is the vassal of the church. The church which seeks or permits such relations to the civil magistrate is at once tyrannical and corrupt: she invades a sphere from which she is precluded and betrays her own. The decision of judicial matters is assigned to the civil magistrate. For similar reasons, political matters are assigned to the political sphere, social matters to the social sphere, and domestic matters to the domestic sphere. The distinction is clear between the right of the church to teach morals, and the right to enforce her views upon one under distinct personal or official responsibility, in the civil or political or domestic or social sphere, by any form of ecclesiastical penalty. To do this is usurpation, tyranny, and a violation of her spiritual character. The church may teach duty in its general form; the particular decision of its application in any distinct sphere of right and responsibility is to be made in that sphere itself.

(8.) The church is required to uphold the right of taxation in civil government as essential to the existence and efficiency of "this minister of God for good." "For, for this cause pay ye tribute also; render tribute to whom tribute is due." The lawless abuse of this power may be lawfully censured by the church, as she may lawfully testify against any great wickedness; and neither the support of a lawful power of taxation nor just testimony against its abuse is any departure from the spiritual sphere of the kingdom of God.

(9.) The church is required "to pray for kings and all who are in authority," that the people may live in all godliness and honesty. In her private and family devotions, in her assemblies for public worship, on ordinary and extraordinary occasions, she is so bound to pray; and to do it is no departure from the spiritual law.

(10.) The church is bound to give counsel upon matters of a moral and religious nature when thereto invited by the civil magistrate. The Confession of Faith says plainly: "Synods and councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical; and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary, or by way of advice for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate."¹ In this paragraph the right of the church to advise the state is limited, *first*, to moral and religious matter in which conscience is involved; and *second*, by the previous request of the civil authority for counsel. It is excluded from all advice on any political or civil aspect of the subject, and confined to its moral or religious side altogether. The right to advise, thus limited, is clearly within the bounds of the true sphere of the spiritual kingdom.

(11.) The church is recognized in the Standards as possessed of a right to petition government in "cases extraordinary." These cases extraordinary are recognized as belonging to the civil sphere and not merely to matters moral and religious. If the proposal was made in this country to establish a union of some branch of

¹ *Confession of Faith*, Chap. XXXI., Sec. 4.

the church with the government of the United States, no one, we presume, would question the right of all other branches of the church to petition the government in relation to it. It would be on one side a civil matter concerning greatly the interests of the commonwealth, and on the other a grave implication of the interests of the church. But does this paragraph warrant the presentation of a petition to a state legislature or convention asking for a law prohibitory of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors? It is true that the moral and the physical interests of the people are involved in it. So far as moral interests are involved, they are also seriously involved in the theatre: would that justify the church in petitioning for the prohibition of theatrical performances? Moral interests are involved in the influence of a certain class of newspapers: would that justify the church in asking for legal restraints on the freedom of the press? So far as physical interests of the people are concerned, these are in chief the concern of the commonwealth, just as sanitary laws and quarantine regulations are. Physical interests are involved in various kinds of business, as in the trade of the glass-cutter and in the manufacture of chemicals. If the church is not warranted in petitioning government in relation to sanitary and quarantine regulations, or asking for the suppression of all trades unfriendly to health and physical safety, is she warranted in petitioning for the prohibition of all dealing with intoxicating drinks on this ground of physical well-being? Yet further; admitting the right to petition for the prohibition of certain kinds of intoxicating liquors, is she warranted in petitioning for a law which would, at the same time, exclude a kind whose use is warranted by the Word of God? The distinction which regulates the action of the church in relation to acts of legislature bearing upon moral and physical well-being, is the same which regulates her relation to private associations for the same ends. An act of legislature or a social combination for the suppression of any vice is *a means to an end*. The end may be moral and obligatory, and so far coincident with the end of the church; but the *means* may lie in the region of liberty, privilege and free choice, or in the civil sphere altogether. The obligation to seek the end by no means carries the obligation to

support any and every means which may be adopted lawfully to carry the end. The end may be sought by different means—by different means in different spheres only there appropriate. An order of Templars or of Sons may be a perfectly just means in the social sphere to suppress the vice of drunkenness. A prohibitory law may be a just means for this purpose in the civil sphere. The church may lawfully seek it in the use of her own appointed means; but so far as her relation to other means is concerned, she is strictly limited by a due regard to her spiritual character. She has no right to either teach, legislate, or judicially determine that it is the duty of her members to join or support any one or all of these associations, or to vote in their political capacity for such a law. Means to the end lying in the social or civil sphere are beyond her bounds, and are not subject to her approval or disapproval. In the case of secular societies, they are matters of liberty and privilege, not of obligation, and the church has nothing to do with the legitimate use of a legitimate privilege. *In the case of legislation by the state, she has no right to intervene, because the state has the sole right to judge of civil matters and of the moral element involved in them. The right of the church to petition in relation to a prohibition law is discredited, *first*, by the general fact that legislative means to any end lie wholly in the civil sphere, and *secondly*, by the special fact that the trade in intoxicants does not belong to “cases extraordinary”: it has been one of the regular employments of society for thousands of years. It is a trade which ought to be rigorously restrained, but this legislative restraint is a matter to be handled and concluded solely in the civil and social sphere. The war of the church upon it ought to be confined to her own divinely appointed means: for she is in lawful possession of no other.

(12.) The church is prohibited by her spiritual character from forming such relations to the state as will either give the church power to guide the policy of the state or the state power to interfere with the rights and duties of the church. All union of church and state is prohibited by the spiritual character of the church. The church may teach the general duty of the state to make just laws, but it is not at liberty to dictate any law to the legislature

as just. It has no right to expect, demand or contrive that the state shall levy tax for its support. Its spiritual character requires all its revenue to come from the free offerings of its members, in obedience to the truth in the form of law divine. Especially has the church no shadow of a right to subsidize the coercive power of the state to compel men to accept her doctrine and yield to her dominion. She has been prohibited from all coercion by her very nature as a spiritual institute, and to indirectly employ the secular arm is a base evasion of her fundamental duty which merits condemnation as a fraud as well as a tyrannical usurpation. The unctuous deprecation of all right in the church to shed human blood when the Roman Catholic Church turns over the victims of her *auto's da fe* to the secular power merits the indignant scorn of every honorable mind.

(13.) Lastly, wherever there are two governments coëxisting over the same people on the same territory, and any question of precedent claim springs up between them, it is no part of the business of the church to determine that issue. This is a special form of the prohibition upon the church to settle any question of title already discussed or to take any part in the foundation of any government. This was one of the grave errors of the Spring Resolutions, which have proved so grave an obstacle to the organic union movement now in agitation, but not the only one. Four distinct breaches of the spiritual character of the church were involved in those resolutions. They proclaimed the "obligations to promote and perpetuate the integrity of these United States," which involved a breach of the church's prohibition to guarantee the territory of any country in which it may be founded. They asserted the right to "uphold and encourage the government in the exercise of all its functions," where the functions thus exercised were military functions in a war of conquest. They asserted the adhesion of the church, by its divine authority and in the exercise of its divinely appointed powers, to a particular constitution of civil government, contrary to its character as a spiritual institute equally designed to exist under every constitution of civil government. Lastly, it settled the disputed question of priority of claim as between the government of the United States and the

governments of the States, and determined the question to which the allegiance of the private citizen was primarily due. On the other hand, the record of the Southern Presbyterian Church has been deliberately assailed as the worst of the two.¹ But so far is this from being true, every political act of the Southern Church courts, taken in their true intent, has been in conformity with either the political or moral duties positively required of the church in the Word of God. It is no credit to the discrimination or justness of judgment in those who can see no difference between political acts of the church in conformity with its duties and in consistency with its spiritual character, and political acts of the church in violation of both, and who condemn both as equally guilty, as equally tampering with matters political. There are matters political with which the church may lawfully interfere; there are others with which it cannot lawfully interfere. To confound the two is absurd.

10. Duties of the state to the church. *

These duties may be more summarily stated. The Standards of the church set them forth with sufficient directness and point.² The following series of statements will set them in more detail:

(1.) The state is bound to protect the church in all its rights of worship and in its obedience to the laws of God. It has no right to prevent the administration and discipline of the church, according to the laws of God, over its own members voluntarily subjecting themselves to its jurisdiction, but over no other persons whatever.

(2.) The state is bound to prevent the tyranny of sect over sect, to protect the good name and person of all her people from injury or abuse on account of their faith, and to guard the rights of conscience from all coercion or other disturbance.

(3.) It is required to protect all the property of the church lawfully acquired and held, and to prevent every attempt to destroy it or to alienate it from its lawful owners.

(4.) It is bound to protect the property of the church from all perversion from the uses for which it was given. All church property is of the nature of a public charity as well as lawful pro-

¹ Dr. Baird's pamphlet.

² *Confession of Faith*, Chap. XXIII.

perty, because it is the gift of charitable and religious persons for the religious benefit of mankind, and all such persons have a right to designate what particular form of religious belief they consider it a worthy charity to tender to their fellow-beings. All church property is therefore fully entitled to that noble rigor of protection thrown by the English and American law around all charitable foundations.

(5.) The state has no right to levy any public or general tax for the benefit of the church or any part of it.

(6.) It has no right to form any such alliance or relation with the church or any part of it as will enable the state to control the appointment of officers or the revenue and work of the church.

(7.) The state has no right to subject its own powers or rights of decision and control to the control of the church, and emphatically no right to use its coercive power to promote the purposes of the church or compel adhesion to it.

(8.) Where many branches of the church are existing on the territory and under the protection of the state, it has no right to favor one at the expense of the other, or to throw its influence as distinguished from any form of coercion in favor of any one in particular. Nor has it the right to use the church or any part of it as a factor in politics, to promote any measure of policy or any party in politics, even under pretext of great moral issues to be settled in the civil sphere. All union between church and state, under any modification of the idea, is forever prohibited by the fundamental character and law of both church and state.

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