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ARTICLE I.

THE SABBATH.

“THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN.”

Philosophers tell us that all the forces of nature are indestructible. They may go from one form to another, and thus seem to pass out of existence; but, in reality, they are imperishable. The first ray of heat which came to the earth from the sun, though it may have been millions of years ago, exists to-day, somewhere, in some one of its Protean forms.

While physical force is thus, in the divine providence, immortal, it nevertheless wearies and grows tired. Illustrations, which are proofs of this, are easily given. Razors lose the power of acquiring an edge after they have been in constant use for a long time. In such cases, it is necessary simply to allow them to rest a while, and they are again ready for service. As a matter of actual observation, it has been found that the iron or steel of a railway track becomes brittle and liable to dangerous breakage, if it is subjected to the constant pressure and jar of passing trains. If there are suitable intervals of repose, the same number and weight of trains may pass over the track without serious injury. The same fact is observed with regard to cannon; and is, indeed, a truth of universal observation.

A more familiar illustration may better serve our purpose. Moses commanded that the seventh should be a year of rest for the land. There was an economic reason for this, which every

notice the supposed conflict between religion and science, let us take this opportunity gratefully to acknowledge our indebtedness to science for its exposure of wickedness and error.

The thought with which we close, is at once the saddest and the most obvious. Be the explanation of spiritualism what it may,—let all the claims of its adepts be granted,—it is none the less *necromancy*. If its artists are impostors or self-deceivers, the deception they attempt is impious. The *animus* of the impious act is as fully there as though the power were present. If their claims are real, then the actual crime and guilt are there. That crime is as sternly and as distinctly prohibited by the Scriptures as idolatry or murder. It is ranked, indeed, along with the former in its dishonor to God, and its degradation to man. The readiness with which the people of a Christian country countenance this wickedness, often in professed sport or scepticism, gives a deplorable view of the practical irreverence felt for God's law. Let spiritualism be known by its fruits. It is usually a system of infidelity, of Bible-despising, of imposture, of uncleanness, of all iniquity.

ARTICLE V.

THE EVANGELIST AND THE PRESBYTERY.

In the year 1874, there was present at our Assembly at Columbus, Mississippi, a beloved missionary from China, the Rev. Mr. Stuart. His brethren of the Assembly admitted him by courtesy to a seat in their body, first having undertaken to organise a Presbytery in China out of five missionaries there and one Chinese elder, giving to it the name of "*the Presbytery of Hangchow.*" Next year these missionaries overtured the Assembly—met in St. Louis—to dissolve this Presbytery and restore them to their former relations. This overture from China raised the question of the constitutional power of the General Assembly

to establish or dissolve Presbyteries on foreign soil; and also the important practical inquiry, whether our missionaries abroad should become associated with natives in the composition of Presbyteries, or whether holding their membership in the home Presbyteries they should, as evangelists, sustain a catholic relation to the foreign field. The Assembly at St. Louis referred this question to a committee, which reported its answer to the Assembly at Savannah.

This report was read to the Assembly and docketed for consideration; printed copies of it being meanwhile placed in the hands of all the commissioners. Subsequently a paper was adopted, approving the report, and declaring that the Assembly has no authority to organise Presbyteries on foreign soil. The next day, on a motion that the Treasurer should pay for the printing of the report, objection was raised to the doctrine it contains, that the extraordinary powers of the evangelist may not be wielded by any man within the settled church-state. Some discussion ensuing, on motion of the chairman of the committee, the vote approving the report was reconsidered, with a view to its being referred to the next Assembly, when there might be time for fuller discussion. But after debate, the Assembly again adopted the declaration that it has no power to organise a Presbytery, leaving out this time the qualifying phrase, "on foreign grounds," and then referred the report to the consideration of the next Assembly.

The Minutes of the Assembly give us the resolution adopted as in this form:

"In reference to the constitutional question, the Assembly adopts the following resolution: *Resolved*, That the General Assembly has no constitutional power to establish or dissolve Presbyteries; and accordingly, that the brethren of whom the Assembly of 1874 proposed to constitute the Presbytery of Hangchow are now, and have been, *de jure* members of the same Presbyteries to which they belonged at the time of such action."

We have not been able to find in the Minutes any record of the vote referring this report, or any portion of its contents, to the next Assembly, although our recollection is perfect of its having been in general so referred. The Minutes being, however,

the *official record*, what they may chance to omit will, of course, we suppose, not come up for consideration at New Orleans.

The subject being, however, of great interest, we have thought it might be well to present our readers with a brief statement of the positions assumed in this report, and some observations respecting its doctrine of the evangelist in particular.

I. The first question discussed is, whether the Assembly has constitutional power to establish or dissolve Presbyteries on foreign soil. The committee say that they did not find this question to be altogether devoid of difficulty. But after full conference, and giving to the subject their best consideration, they hold that it must be answered in the negative, and for the following amongst other reasons:

1. Our Assembly is that of "the Presbyterian Church in the United States," and can only "represent in one body all the particular churches of this denomination." In the nature of representative government, it cannot superintend any other. Its business is defined generally as "the promotion of charity, truth, and holiness through all the churches under its care." It cannot have *under its care* any churches in foreign countries, except in so far as those churches, through Presbyteries legitimately established over them, are entitled to send commissioners chosen by themselves, to represent them in its deliberations. And then, of course, these commissioners would have the very same right to *take care* of our American churches, as the commissioners belonging to this country would have to *take care* of the churches abroad. No inherent or extra-constitutional rights which may possibly be ascribed to it, will warrant our Assembly's undertaking to control or *take care* of the churches of any Presbyteries which are not its own constituents.

2. A Presbytery, likewise, is a representative body, and cannot be set up by any outside power where there are no churches. Where churches exist in a foreign land, these must associate themselves together in a classical Presbytery through the joint action of their respective sessions, and out of these Presbyteries may then grow the higher courts.

3. Our Constitution makes it the Synod's business to erect.

unite, and divide Presbyteries. If the Assembly cannot make a Presbytery at home, where, undeniably, it has a sphere of constitutional right, *a fortiori* it cannot erect one abroad where it represents no churches, and can claim no representative powers. It cannot ordain a foreign missionary; how, then, can it establish a foreign Presbytery?

Now this is a strict and narrow view of the Assembly's powers and of the nature of our courts generally; but every fact of our Church's history and every lesson of its past experience commits it to *strict construction*.

But it may be said that our present Book does not contemplate foreign missions at all, and it is not fair to press strict construction here; that some latitude of interpretation must be allowed, and that new applications of old principles must be made in meeting the new circumstances that rise around us from time to time. True; and hence the necessity for revising our formularies of government and discipline at times; but never are we to make any such new applications of our principles as will contradict that fundamental doctrine touching the representative character of all our courts.

From these arguments the conclusion is drawn, that if the Assembly had no constitutional power to establish a "Presbytery of Hangchow," there exists no such Presbytery for it to dissolve.

But there is a fourth objection of a different sort to our Assembly's setting up a Presbytery of its own in a foreign country, viz., that we ought not to seek to propagate our own distinctive Presbyterian body in various parts of the world, but rather to disseminate simply the principles and doctrines which we hold. Instead of new branches of every different Presbyterian church planted in China for example, thus establishing there so many various denominations, all Presbyterian, would it not be better for all the Chinese Presbyterians to form one Presbyterian Church?

It will be alleged that all this gives the General Assembly no part in spreading abroad the divine system of Church government. But that system provides for its own spread in foreign lands, in a way more self-consistent and more efficient than the

way of direct intervention by the Assembly. It sends forth *evangelists* or *missionaries* endowed with extraordinary powers. They are sent to found new churches, and ordain over them pastors and teachers. All these churches are free-born, and have the inherent right of self-government through rulers whom the Lord authorises them to elect. It is neither lawful nor needful for any Assembly of the churches in another land to establish a Presbytery amongst them. As soon as the evangelist ordains elders in every church of any foreign land, these, of inherent right and necessary duty, must affiliate together in parochial and classical Presbyteries, and the higher courts will grow out of these by a natural development.

Here emerges the question, What are the powers of the true evangelist, and what his relations to the courts of the Church?

The committee answer that this is a new question, and difficult because new. Foreign missions—modern Protestant missions, the glory of this age—were not yet born when our present Form of Government was drawn up. It contains, therefore, no adequate statement of the duties and powers of the evangelist, and in fact makes very slight allusion to such an officer. So, in older Presbyterian formularies, there is little or nothing on the subject of missions. Our fathers during the Reformation, and long after, were absorbed with defensive operations, and could do little in evangelistic work. We must therefore betake ourselves to the Scriptures directly, must consider what the fundamental principles of the Church-government, therein revealed, involve, and what the examples of apostolic missionary work authorise; and so, in the new circumstances of her modern aggressive warfare, the Church of to-day is to work out for herself, from the Word of God alone, an answer to the question, Who and what, ecclesiastically speaking, is the evangelist or missionary?

To this question the committee's answer is, that according to the best judgment they have been able to form, the evangelist is a minister of the Word, commissioned by the Presbytery to go into foreign or frontier parts with powers which he could not be allowed to wield within the settled church-state. He is invested not merely with the "several power" of the Word and Sacra-

ments which belongs to every teaching elder, but he also carries in his single hand what belongs to no minister at home, but only to the courts of the Church. He has what George Gillespie calls "the power of jurisdiction," being commissioned by his Presbytery to organise churches, to ordain church officers, to admit, suspend, and excommunicate, and to receive again, church members. He is not an apostle—the primitive evangelists were not apostles. The modern missionary gives none of the signs of an apostle. On the other hand, he is not a prelatial bishop, for he is "in the regions beyond," where there are no churches or Presbyteries to dominate over with his illegitimate one-man power; where there is, perhaps, not a single brother to aid him, so that he must act alone, or what is needful to be done, by and for the Church, remain undone. The revealed Church government possesses all needful elasticity. Church courts are of the settled Church-state, but the solitary evangelist precedes the elderships. He founds and plants. He organises churches, each with its necessary plurality of rulers, and then he must go again outside the established Church,—must move on with his one-man power, scripturally conferred on him, to regions still further beyond.

But while he thus goes abroad and beyond, he is still a member of the Presbytery which commissions him, and is still amenable to it. He retains thus his hold upon the Church at home, and it retains thus its hold on him. And the Presbytery can recall him should he become heretical or immoral, or be guilty of irregular proceedings, and after trial and conviction, it can depose him or inflict some lesser censure.

In like manner the General Assembly has a control over the evangelist abroad through its executive committee which appoints him. But, necessarily, this control is of a more general character. They can require him to abandon or amend any scheme involving expenditure of their funds which they may deem to be unwise. They may call on him to leave one region and go to another, or quit the foreign work and return home. They cannot tell him when and whom to baptize, where and of whom to organise a church, where or whom to ordain for deacons, rulers, or teachers;

neither can they instruct him what or how he is to preach, because neither from the Executive Committee nor yet the General Assembly did he derive either the "several power" of the preacher or that "power of jurisdiction" committed to him as an evangelist. Yet, if guilty of serious irregularity in baptizing, organising, or ordaining; if he fall into heresy or immorality, it would be for the Assembly, through its Committee, to remonstrate and even to withdraw their appointment and his support; and also to report him to his Presbytery for it to deal with him in the way of discipline.

The committee then draws the conclusion, that, as the Assembly may not intrude into the sphere of the Synod at home, nor violate the rights of the native churches abroad, so far as to set up a Presbytery by its own act in any foreign land; so it may not, by the same kind of action, interfere with the proper functions of the evangelist, sole founder of those native churches, thereto commissioned and authorised by his Presbytery under direct responsibility to it. And, accordingly, the answer of the committee to the first question is, that any such step by the Assembly as is under consideration, must be held to be unconstitutional and unscriptural, and therefore void.

II. The second question is, Whether missionaries should be associated with native pastors in the composition of Presbyteries.

Here again the answer is negative, because,—

(1.) The missionary or evangelistic office cannot be conjoined in any strict sense with the pastorate. The one founds, the other builds; the one is temporary, the other permanent; the one is ordinary, the other extraordinary; the one belongs to the regular Church-state, the other precedes and introduces it. If the missionary becomes a pastor, he must settle down to the work of edifying, and cease to give himself to the work of founding. If he become associated with native pastors in a Presbytery, his evangelistic office comes, necessarily, to an end. He ceases to work outside the settled Church-state, is no longer an extraordinary office-bearer, and rules thenceforward jointly with other brethren, instead of exercising severally, as heretofore, his proper evangelistic powers.

(2.) The best development of native church resources calls for the system which puts native pastors forward as shepherds of the flock. A Christian community emerging from heathenism must learn to *govern itself*; and until it learns this there can be little stability, either of personal or ecclesiastical character. So long as the foreign missionary, however, holds the office of pastor, it will naturally acquiesce in his ruling,—can never learn the art of self-government, and must continue always to be a mere nursling.

But *self-support* must be learned by the native church as well as self-government. And it can support a native, but not a foreign ministry, whose habits are and must needs be so much more expensive.

But *self-propagation* is a third thing the native church must needs learn. No heathen land can be thoroughly evangelised except through the agency of its own people. The men must be raised upon the soil who shall carry on the work which the foreign evangelist can only begin. What the Church has to do for the nations, is not to raise in this country a supply for them of the bread of life, but simply to carry to all parts of the world the *seed corn*, and let the nations raise the bread for themselves. The foreign missionary enterprise is not *Quixotic*, but sober, and, with the divine blessing, perfectly practicable. But no native Christian Church will ever do much to extend the gospel all over its native country, unless trained to self-government and self-supporting efforts for the gospel in its own bounds.

The conclusion drawn by the committee from these considerations is, that the missionary—the true and proper evangelist—is simply to plant the gospel, while natives are to be raised up for the permanent and settled pastorate. This accords with the plan and example of the Apostle to the Gentiles, and also with the principles of our divine system of Church Government. And this tends to the most rapid as well as the fullest development of the Church in heathen lands; and this prevents all necessity for a hurtful variety of Presbyterian organisations amongst the converts gained by missionaries from various Presbyterian bodies in Europe and the United States.

Such is the doctrine set forth by the Assembly's Committee. It will be observed that they regard the office of the evangelist in its fullest and highest modern form, (that is, in the missionary to the heathen,) as by no means of unlimited authority. The Assembly, through its Committee, controls this evangelist of chiefest note in some of the relations of his office; the Presbytery controls him in others. He can do some things which no minister at home is authorised to attempt by himself; and yet he is not independent of the authority of his brethren, the rulers of the church. It would be strange if he were. He is not an apostle. But even the apostles put forward continually, as much as possible, the "pastors and teachers;" and as speedily as they could, they rolled off all ecclesiastical authority from their own shoulders upon those of the ordinary office-bearers.

It is the office of the evangelist to go before and prepare the way for "pastors and teachers;" that is, for ruling elders and teaching elders, who are to have charge of the settled church state. He goes before them, and he must keep on going before them; and as they overtake him from time to time, he must move on to regions beyond.

In one aspect, his office is permanent; for the Church will always need such an aggressive agency until the whole world shall be subjugated for Christ. But in another aspect, the evangelist is a temporary officer, performing a work which is introductory to another that follows after his.

We call him, and rightly, an *extraordinary officer*; one of three such—the other two being apostles and prophets. But these other two were both inspired, while inspiration does not form any necessary feature of the evangelist's office. One may be a true and proper evangelist, as much so as those who lived at the beginning, with no such gift as inspiration. To be an evangelist in the strictest sense of the name, is just to go found the Church where it does not yet exist; to go plant the seed in some new soil where yet it does not grow; to go work for the Church outside her established limits; to go where there are no "pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;" and there, in

those frontier or foreign parts, to get things ready for these other and permanent workmen of the Church. The evangelist, therefore, is *extra*, that is, *outside and beyond*, the ordinary church state; but he constantly works to the establishment of the ordinary church state, and the consequent cessation of his own office and work at each successive point where he labors. For, as soon as he converts a few persons, he organises them into a church, they choosing their own rulers, and he ordaining these over them; and then his extraordinary rule must give way to the ordinary rule of the courts of the Church. These ordinary rulers, whether they teach as well as rule, or rule only, become his equals in ruling as soon as he ordains them, and thenceforward he can neither rule over them nor over the church committed now to their care.

There may be found at a given point in some frontier or foreign region, one evangelist or several; but each of them is an individual, and acts on his separate responsibility. They cannot, under our Constitution, be held to be an ecclesiastical court. The Assembly cannot make them a Presbytery. The Synod cannot do it. They cannot make themselves to be a Presbytery. But when the evangelist or evangelists shall have organised churches, each one with a plurality of elders, these churches, through their respective elderships, may, nay must, associate themselves, and, assembling by delegates, become a *classis* or Presbytery. It is churches, then, and churches electing to be represented in an assembly of rulers, which are the essential thing in the constitution of a Presbytery.

But how is it with the evangelist as he is found working within the bounds of an established Presbytery? In answer to this question, it may be observed:

(1) That in general, such a minister is not strictly or properly an evangelist. He is called, in a popular sense, by that name, but ordinarily he has not the powers constitutive of that office. Perhaps of all who bear that honorable name amongst all our Presbyteries, there is not one who can be said to be precisely or fully what that name imports. The Presbyterial evangelist is commonly more preacher than ruler. He supplies vacant and feeble

churches and destitute settlements with the Word and Sacraments, but he does not generally carry with him in his single hand the "power of jurisdiction." He is not allowed to found churches at his discretion, nor receive, suspend, and excommunicate members, nor license and ordain ministers.

(2) If there is any Presbytery whose bounds cover so much truly missionary territory that it really cannot itself superintend and control the whole, it would seem that it must be admitted to be as justly competent for it to confer extraordinary powers upon one minister to go found and plant all over those waste and desert parts as to send a minister with such powers into some foreign and heathen land. For if there be a Presbytery having territory which it is impossible for itself to reach, then of course its relations to such territory are not and cannot be of a strictly Presbyterial character. Such territory really belongs not to it; for, to belong to a Presbytery, is to be under its rule and government, which the case supposed does not admit of. And then, moreover, Presbyterial rule, from the very nature of the case, must always be by cheerful consent; whereas, in the case under consideration, there are no Presbyterian churches or people in the supposed territory to give consent to the Presbytery's rule. The peculiar relations of any one Presbytery to such a territory, arise simply from contiguity. Such a territory does not come within its proper limits which it can rule over and supervise, but lies beyond them. A church session cannot rule outside the sphere in which it lives and moves and has its being. It consists of the pastor or pastors and ruling elders of a particular congregation, and its business is to "maintain the spiritual government of the congregation," and to "concert measures for promoting the spiritual interests of that congregation," which, of course, however, may include missionary efforts in quarters contiguous to it. In like manner, a Presbytery consists of all the ministers and one ruling elder from each congregation within a certain district; and it has to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care, which, of course, includes efforts to fertilise and improve the whole of its bounds, and, as far as possible, to send out the truth beyond its bounds. So, then, wherever there are

wide-spread, destitute, inaccessible regions in the nominal bounds of a Presbytery which it is not able to *oversee*, in the full and complete sense of that term—regions which cannot, in any strict and proper sense, be said to belong to that Presbytery, and in which it cannot itself superintend and carry on the Church's work—it ought to be acknowledged that there the true and proper evangelist, with all his extraordinary powers, must be employed, so that the Church's work may there be thoroughly accomplished.

This is in accordance with our Book, which says, "It is sometimes important and desirable" to ordain "an evangelist to preach the gospel, administer sealing ordinances, and organise churches in frontier and destitute settlements." Here is a very brief but still a pregnant description of the real and true evangelist; for, of course, to organise churches, is to ordain rulers over them; and whoever can ordain rulers, can ordain teachers also; and in fine, can do everything which belongs to a Presbytery, or to a solitary missionary on a foreign shore.

But it is important to emphasize the word "sometimes." In the full sense of the description here given, such a course of proceedings is not oftentimes necessary. There cannot be many, if there be any, Presbyteries in the condition we have been considering; and if there be any such Presbytery, it will be, and it ought to be, very jealous of sending forth, through its proper bounds, such a one-man power. And if it is according to our Book, and according to the genius of our system, to employ the evangelist, in the highest sense of the title, wherever indispensable to the doing of the Church's work, it is also according to the Book and the genius of our system that a Presbytery be organised in the legitimate way as soon as possible, so that the one-man power may pass on to its proper place. It is and it must be understood to be *extra* the ordinary, and to be working always to the introduction and establishment of the ordinary, and to the cessation of the extraordinary at any given point.

The report of the Committee, therefore, says well, as we believe, that "the evangelist is a minister of the Word, commissioned by the Presbytery to go into foreign or frontier parts, with powers which *he could not be allowed to wield within the settled*

church state." His extraordinary powers are conferred on him by Presbytery, and to Presbytery he is responsible. He has no independent or absolute authority anywhere, not even in his far-off foreign field. Presbytery can bring him back from thence, and take away all his powers. And whenever he comes within the sphere of a Presbytery, his extraordinary powers must lie in abeyance. And whenever the Church's growth and spread causes him to be overtaken by the rule of its ordinary office-bearers, his extraordinary authority must come to an end, unless he will move still further out into the spiritual wilderness. For the Scriptures set forth a government of the Church by her representatives; and to organise and set up a Church to be thus governed, the evangelist is just a pioneer, constantly going on before.

ARTICLE VI.

A NEW "TESTIMONY OF THE ROCKS;" OR THE CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS AND BIBLICAL HISTORY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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5. *Historical Researches into the Politics, Intercourse, and Trade of the Principal Nations of Antiquity—Asiatic Nations, Persians, Phœnicians, Babylonians, Scythians, and Indians.* By A. H. HEEREN. Translated from the German. 2 Vols. H. G. Bohn: London. 1846.
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