

# THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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ARTICLE I.

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ST. LOUIS.

Our Church was very fully represented at the last Assembly. If we have counted rightly, 133 commissioners were present; every Presbytery was represented, at least in part, excepting only Sao Paulo, our Missionary Presbytery in Brazil; and not counting that Presbytery, every commissioner was present, excepting three ruling elders. The body is now almost or quite large enough. An overgrown Assembly is no blessing to any Church.

Without designing any invidious comparisons, the marked ability of the late Assembly may also be referred to. This certainly is a very great blessing to any Church—to have its highest court filled with men of wisdom and learning and the grace of God; men competent to handle the grave questions which concern the whole Church; “men that have understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.”

It was a wise arrangement, as the late Assembly found by experience, to give the afternoons of the first four or five days to the standing committees. Time is not lost, but saved by it. Reports considered thoroughly in committee are apt to be quickly and favorably disposed of by the body at large.

Last year the Northern Assembly met at St. Louis, with its half a thousand commissioners. When our Assembly at Columbus resolved to meet this year in the same city, the Philadelphia

*Presbyterian* declared that it was a great venture for our "little craft" to follow their immense ship into those waters. God helping us, we have experienced no damage, but great advantage.

THE MODERATOR'S SERMON.

The Moderator's opening sermon was of rare excellence. The subject discussed is of the most fundamental importance always, but has special claims to our attention in these slack times. Dr. GIRARDEAU holds with Dr. Duff, that there is a fatal law of degeneracy always operating amongst fallen men, even in the very Church itself, and ever demanding constant intervention by the Almighty to save mankind from immediate and final and irretrievable ruin; and moreover, that at the present time our own Church gives some signs of being in the downward sweep of that fatal law. The strength of Presbyterianism is in its firm and fast hold of the Word, as setting before us the whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, unto which nothing is at any time to be added. The design of the discourse was to set forth the Word as that only and perfect rule to which, as Calvin expresses it, the Church is *astricted*. We deem the discussion so able and so important, that we here place a summary of it before our readers, laboring the while under only one apprehension, viz., lest the brevity of the statement may do injustice to the argument.

The text was Matt. xxviii. 20: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The preacher found here a great principle, laying on the heart of the Church two supreme obligations: (1) to evangelise all nations; (2) to inculcate and maintain all the truth which the great Prophet has taught. There are obviously two aspects of this second charge—*positively*, the Church is to teach all Christ has commanded; *negatively*, she is prohibited from teaching anything which he has not commanded. Here, then, is that principle tinged with the blood your Puritan, Covenanting, and Huguenot forefathers, that whatever is not either explicitly or else implicitly commanded in the Scriptures, is prohibited to the Church. She can utter no new doctrine, make no new laws, ordain no new forms of government, invent no new modes of worship.

The question to be discussed is, whether the Church has any discretionary power. The Word and the Spirit are our Supreme Judge in religion: And has the Church any discretion, or is she to be conformed in everything and at all times to the written word.?

This question is to be answered by means of an antecedent one: What is the nature of the Church? It is a supernatural institute, to which God has given a supernatural rule of faith and practice, complete and supreme. Her whole duty, then, manifestly, is obedience to this rule; neither in the sphere of doctrine, nor of government, nor of worship, can she add anything of her own. This conclusion is obvious; and yet the history of the Church presents continual contradictions of it. The explanation of this strange fact introduces us to the theory of discretionary power. This is the secret of the Church's constant tendency to degeneracy, by departing from the Word, her sufficient and divine rule. This theory makes the Church the Lord's confidential agent, from whom he expects counsel and the amendment of his ordinances, not obedience to the same. Her freedom is not to be fettered nor her energies crippled by the constant demand for a divine warrant. She is not to be tied to the letter of Scripture, for the Lord hath made her free. Wherever Scripture is silent, there she may speak; and she is at liberty to ordain whatever to her mind is not contrary to the general scope and spirit of the word.

1. The first point discussed is the operation of this theory of discretionary power on the sphere of doctrine. Under its influence the claim is made for what is called, in high-sounding phrase, *the development of doctrine*.

Now there is no question as to a divine development of doctrine in successive dispensations by the hands of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles; but the canon of Scripture having been closed, has the Church any power to continue the development?

Again, there is no question as to the subjective development of doctrine in the minds and to the knowledge of men—a development, as Dr. Rainy expresses it, not *of* Scripture, nor *from* Scripture, but *up* to Scripture, as the ultimate standard.

But the question is as to an expansion and enlargement of the doctrinal system by substantive accretions. Here lies the very core of the theory before us.

As Rome defends this theory, it is conceded that the alleged development does not proceed by its own law, but is managed and regulated by the Church. She is the real creator of the new doctrines. But if the Church be thus inspired, let us have her credentials for it. Let the Pope once raise the dead.

The Rationalist also defends this objective development of doctrine; reason being with him, instead of the Church, for an ultimate developing authority. And reason may abridge as well as enlarge the doctrines. With this opponent our issue respects mainly the inspiration of the word. If the Bible be indeed inspired, it may not be subjected to the fallible judgments of the human mind.

Now, against all assertions of the development of doctrine in the sense of positive additions to the Scripture, we accept its own testimony, that it is perfect and complete. To talk of developing a complete rule is absurd; to say that Scripture is not complete is wicked.

But what of that development by *inferences* which our Confession sanctions? That involves no additions to the doctrine. That is the explicit evolution of what is implicitly contained in the word, and is really a part of the original enunciation. Here is no discretionary power lodged with the Church; for the inferences she may draw are such as logic necessitates. Let the Church confine herself to the deduction of *good and necessary consequences*, and she will never develop the doctrines and commandments of men.

And here we meet a specious and dangerous form of this theory, which claims that the creeds and confessions in which the Church has logically arranged the doctrines of the Scripture shall not bind the conscience nor shackle thought. Creeds are just collections of the dogmas of men. To forbid the development of doctrine beyond their limits, is a tyranny of the intellect. The free, progressive, advanced thought of the age must not be strapped down by old dogmas gone to sleep with the conflicts

which gave them birth. The demand of the times is for untrammelled development. The young, vigorous, exultant intellect of this era will be satisfied with nothing less. If the Church will cling to antiquated ideas, she will be left behind by the grand army of progress, in its onward and triumphant march. This is eloquent. All it needs to make it effective, is truth. The simple question is, Do Church creeds reproduce faithfully the Scripture doctrine? If they do not, the development required is to expunge the faulty dogmas and insert better ones. If they do, thus uttering Christ's word, these creeds have Christ's authority. And the cry, Down with creeds! then, means, Down with the Bible! These are not Christian views, but the children of Rationalism, brought to the font of the Church, and baptized under the attractive names of Broad Church, Liberal Christianity, and Progressive Thought.

And in the name of reason we would ask, why should confessions of faith be rejected because they are old! What is there in age to invalidate truth? She is as old as God, and as immortal as he. Is not the Bible old? Has age made it worthless? Is it not now, as it ever has been, the impregnable tower into which the righteous runneth when pressed by the legions of the pit? Has age made it decrepid? Is it not now taking wings like the Apocalyptic Angel, to fly in mid-heaven and blow the trump of jubilee to the slaves of sin and death? Is not nature old? And are her laws inoperative because they began to work from the foundation of the world? Are her ordinances worn out because they are old? Shine not the heavenly host with the same lustre with which they beamed upon the plains of Uz, when Job sang of the bands of Orion and the sweet influences of the Pleiades? And are the grand facts and doctrines of redemption effete because they date back to the Promise, which, springing like a bow from the abyss of the fall, has spanned the arch of time? Is the panoply of God of no further service, because for ages the darts of the devil have been driven in a fiery storm against it? And is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, now useless and to be discarded, because in the conflicts of centuries it has run against the armor of error and the mail

of hell? No: the difficulty with these confessions—the battle-torn standards of the Church—is not that they are antiquated; it is that they are as young and vigorous as ever. The light of immortal youth, which rests upon the divine Word, kindles upon them. Their crime is, that they too faithfully represent God's authority—that they restrain the license of speculation, call the students of truth into the school of Christ, and bind his yoke upon their necks.

2. The second point of discussion relates to the sphere of government. To suppose that Scripture gives no constitution for the supernatural kingdom of Christ on the earth, is to impeach his divine wisdom. But it is said no definite form is given, only the essential principles; that is, government in the general, but no form in particular. Now we can understand the proposition that Christ has given no government at all; we can perceive in the abstract the logical distinction between the generic notion of government and the different species which may be contained under it; but it passes our ability to comprehend how, in the concrete, an organised society can be under government in the general, but under no particular form of government. It is like thinking away all the distinctive marks which characterise a thing, and then attempting to form a notion of the thing itself. If Christ has in his Word ordained any government at all for his Church, it must be one capable of being realised in a definite form. Has he done this? Well, the essential elements of a government are laws, officers, courts; and each of these is revealed in the New Testament. There are a particular sort of officers, courts peculiarly composed, and a specific principle distinguishing the mode of administering this government from every other, viz., the principle of government by representative assemblies, which discriminates this polity from Prelacy on the one hand, and Independency on the other. Now the extent to which the Church has discretionary power in the sphere of government is in ordering the circumstances of time, place, and decorum—circumstances, all of them, common to human actions and societies. She can make no laws, create no offices, institute no

modes of government. Her power and duty are alike summed up in absolute conformity to the written word.

3. The same line of argument applies to the Church's power in the matter of public worship; for that belongs to the Church, and all that is predicable of it is not predicable of the family or the social circle.

But there is no divine institution in respect to which natural wisdom and natural taste are so apt to arrogate discretion as this. It involves the æsthetic element in our nature; the imagination and the sensibilities, as well as the reason, plead for a share in the control of this matter. A cultivated carnality begs, clamors, storms for some license here. But let it never be forgotten that will-worship, under every dispensation of religion, has been the special object of divine denunciation and wrath.

There are certain well known modes of worship revealed by Christ in his word. The Church has no discretionary power to introduce any others. Such is the clear doctrine of our Standards, and of the best and truest Reformers.

But our Confession admits the right of the Church to order some circumstances concerning the worship of God. What is the nature of these? As Dr. Thornwell has well said: They are the concomitants of an action without which it cannot be done at all, or not with decency and decorum. Public worship requires public assemblies, and these require some time and place of meeting, and some costume and posture. These are the circumstances which the Church may regulate; circumstances attending an action, not appendages to an action. The Church may not appoint appendages. These do not belong to the substance of the action, nor yet surround it so that it cannot be performed without them. A liturgy is a circumstance of this sort. Such is the doctrine of one who was a master of the Presbyterian system; such was the doctrine of Calvin and Owen, of Cunningham and Breckinridge; such the doctrine of the Reformed Church of France, of the Puritans of England; such the doctrine to which, by the grace of God, the practice of the Free Church of Scotland and of the Presbyterian Church in

Ireland, in an age of growing laxity, still continues to be conformed.

There are three criteria by which the kind of circumstances falling under the discretionary power of the Church may be determined: *first*, they are not qualities or modes of the act of worship; *secondly*, they are common to the acts of all societies; and *thirdly*, they are conditions necessary to the performance of the acts of worship. Take, now, a liturgy which is an appendage to one of the acts of public worship, viz., *prayer*, and bring it to the test of these criteria. It cannot abide the first, because it is a mode of the act of prayer itself. It cannot abide the second, because it is not common to all human actions and societies. It cannot abide the third, because a liturgy is not a condition necessary to the act of prayer itself. The other strict and proper act of worship is the singing of praise. Let it be observed, it is not *praise*, but the *singing of praise*. This distinction is precisely drawn by the New Testament and by our Standards. Now, let us submit instrumental music, which has been made an appendage to the singing of praise, to the test of the three criteria. *First*, this is a mode in which the act of the singing of praise is performed. *Secondly*, this is not a circumstance common to all human societies. *Thirdly*, this is not something without which the singing of praise cannot be performed. This line of argument ought to be conclusive with all Presbyterians against ranking instrumental music in public worship with the circumstances falling under the Church's discretion. And therefore to justify it, one must prove that it is of the commanded things which the apostles taught the Church.

What has been said on this last point is not the dictate of a captious or arrogant spirit, but the offspring of a solemn conviction of the duty of the Church, and her danger in departing from the word.

This admirable discourse was closed with an earnest presentation of the idea that the Church is not only the divinely commissioned publisher, but likewise the divinely commanded conservator of the truth. Conservation and aggression are twin duties of the Church. To maintain is as important as to propagate the



truth. In her onward march, the Church must not neglect her base line. We are not without our perils. The law of degeneracy is written on all the past, and we may not fondly dream that our Church will be found outside its scope. In the best Churches of Protestantism, we behold a growing latitudinarianism. Defections and struggles are before us. Perilous times are coming. Seducers are waxing worse, deceiving and being deceived. We may not doubt that as the hopes of the Church sank into the grave of Jesus just before the ascending glories of the Apostolic Reformation, and as they again descended into the sepulchre just before the resurrection light of the Protestant Reformation, so they will again decline into the gloom of a wide-spread apostasy and a mighty tribulation, just before the Morning Star of the Millennial Reformation shall beam amidst the rifted clouds of an ecclesiastical night. Protestantism itself will need to be reformed.

What, then, is the course which our own beloved Church is called by the Head to pursue? What, fathers and brethren, what? What, youthful students and thinkers, into whose hands, under God, the destinies of this Church—her type of faith, thought, and action, of doctrine, polity, and worship, are to be intrusted when the actors in her early organisation shall have mouldered into dust? What, ye ruling elders, responsible and honored guardians of each little flock, as it rests in its own particular fold? What is the great, paramount vocation of this Church? While yet in the body of her mother, she struggled, as conscious even then of a separate individuality, against the Esau of discretionary power; and the first breath of her independent historic existence was expended in protest against error and testimony for truth. Conformity to the Word was the reason of her separate being; let conformity to the Word be the law of its development—conformity to the Word, close, implicit, undeviating in doctrine, government, and worship. The opportunity furnished us is inexpressibly grand. Freed from the conflict of antagonistic ideas, almost a unit ourselves, we have the moulding and fashioning of a Church in our hands. What will we do with her? Let us rise to the greatness of the occasion. Let us endeavor, by grace, to make this Church as perfect a specimen of scriptural truth, order,

and worship as the imperfections of the present state will permit. Let us take her by the hand and lead her to the Word alone. Let us pass the Reformers, let us pass the Fathers, uncovering our heads to them in token of our profound appreciation of their labors for truth, and heartily receiving from them all they speak in accordance with the Word; but let us pass on and pause not, until with our sacred charge we reach the Oracles of God, and with her bow at the Master's feet, and listen to the Master's voice. Let obedience to the Word of Christ in all things be the law of her life; so that when the day of review shall come, and section after section of the universal Church shall halt for judgment before the great Inspector himself, although, no doubt, there will be much of unfaithfulness of life that will draw upon his forgiveness, his eye may detect no departure from his Word in her principles, her order, and her worship. He cannot discredit his own commands; and that Church will receive his chief encomiums which has been most closely conformed to his WORD. Let us strive for that glory.

#### ELECTION OF THE MODERATOR.

Drs. LEFEVRE and HOGE were nominated, but at the earnest request of the former his name was withdrawn and Dr. HOGE was chosen by acclamation. He discharged the duties of his high office in an eminently satisfactory way. Very felicitous were his responses to the salutations borne to our Church from corresponding bodies, and very edifying his manner of conducting the daily religious services. The devotional element is said to have been very prevalent, and the "singing of praise" with the voices of the whole body, led by the commanding voice of Mr. Penick of North Carolina, to have been "grandly impressive."

#### REPORT ON FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Excepting the heavy debt with which the year closed, never did the work of the Committee wear a brighter aspect;—a larger number of missionaries, more efficient schools, more diffusion of the truth printed, preaching in more languages and with greater power, new churches organised, and converts at almost every station and at some in considerable numbers.

We have six missionary stations in the Indian country, one in Mexico, two in Colombia, two in Brazil, one in Italy, two in Greece, and two in China—in all sixteen, with twenty-seven ordained missionaries (of whom eight are natives) and twenty-seven assistant missionaries, together with sixteen native helpers—in all a body of seventy laborers. In the schools are upwards of four hundred pupils.

The receipts for the year were as follows :

From churches and individuals,	\$31,711 41
“ Women’s Missionary Associations,	4,455 33
“ Sabbath-schools,	6,067 55
Balance from last year,	2,056 48
	\$44,290 77

The expenditures amount to \$58,913.95, so that the debt amounts to \$14,623.18. It does not belong, however, to the last year alone, but to the last two years, for it includes the payment of several heavy drafts for outlays of preceding year, which (as was anticipated by the last Report) reached the Treasurer shortly after the close of the year just ended. This is always liable to occur, and the more liable as the work expands. It had not appeared to the last Assembly, or to the Committee, unreasonable to expect that the receipts of the last year would amount to \$60,000, less than 60 cents per member. Till late in the year, it was confidently hoped this amount would be realised. When it became certain that it would not, it was too late to retrench without incalculable damage to the work. It is to be observed, however, that there has been no material falling off in the receipts. Those named in the first line actually exceeded the previous year’s by more than \$1,000, while those of the third line fell short nearly the same amount. But the Women’s Associations more than doubled their previous year’s contributions.

Only about one-half of our churches give any thing to Foreign Missions, although there is an increase of seven in the number of contributing churches. Three hundred of the contributing churches do not give as much as \$10 each, less than 10 cents for each of their members.

To pay the debt, meet the expenses of the next missionary year, and send out a few more laborers, who are much needed, will require at least \$80,000. This will not be 75 cents for each of our members.

REPORT ON SUSTENTATION, ETC., ETC.

Fifty-six of our sixty-four Presbyteries coöperate with the Executive Committee. Three of the remainder are on ground cared for by the Foreign Missions Committee, so that but five of our home Presbyteries are not in active sympathy with the Assembly's Committee. None of these are known to be opposed to the principles or methods of Sustentation.

The Southern Aid Society of New York gave to our work the past year \$2,240. This friendly society being on the point of dissolution, we are not to expect any further aid from it.

Collections have been received from 855 churches for Sustentation, from 415 for Evangelistic work, and from 556 for the Invalid Fund. This is a small gain on the preceding year. Yet, not one-half of our churches contribute to Sustentation, not one-fourth to Evangelistic work, and not one-third to the Invalid Fund. Thus we have an immense reserve force in our Presbyteries, as yet unutilised.

The receipts for the year (not including the gift of the Southern Aid Society) have been \$21,186.65. Last year they amounted to \$25,249.06, but that included a considerable legacy. The regular contributions of the churches this year have exceeded those of the last year by \$2,651.07, and leaving out the contributions from Missouri, there is a net gain of \$2,158.27 from the churches represented in the last annual report.

The payments to Presbyteries from this fund have been \$15,751.24, besides the amount received from the Southern Aid Society.

The receipts for the Evangelistic work have been about the same as last year; for the Invalid Fund a little less; for the Colored Evangelistic work, very small, and chiefly from outside of our own Church.

The investments for the Relief Fund amount now to \$16,000. Forty-seven of our sixty-one home Presbyteries have asked

and received aid from *the Sustentation Fund*. One hundred and fifty-three ministers, representing perhaps four hundred churches, have been aided and assistance given in the erection of twelve church buildings.

The aim of the Committee is to develop pastoral support and awaken interest in the Sustentation Fund, as the agency by which really poor churches are helped to a supply of the ministry of the word. Three Presbyteries report each one church receiving aid last year, which can this year do without help. Seven Presbyteries report a decrease in the average of pastoral support; eleven an increase of the average. Five Presbyterial Committees report that no efficient means are used to bring the duty of enlarged pastoral support to the attention of their congregations. In seventeen Presbyteries the proper grouping of churches so as to form accessible and self-sustaining pastoral charges has not been satisfactorily adjusted.

That the work has made progress is evinced from these facts, to wit: (1) Nine additional Presbyteries coöperate; (2) pastoral support has obtained some increase; (3) the number of collections is increasing; (4) the sum of receipts this year is increased by 16 per cent., yet the pastors of many feeble churches are living without adequate support. And this fund ought to be largely increased in order for it to meet the legitimate demands upon it. Much depends on the Committees into whose hands Presbyteries place this interest of our Church, and especially much on the chairman of the Presbyterial Committee.

On *the Evangelistic work*, reports have come from fifty-three Presbyteries; thirty-six of these coöperate with the Assembly's scheme by enjoining collections in all their churches. In the reporting Presbyteries, thirty-five evangelists have been employed for their whole time during the year past, and three for one-half their time. Some few Presbyteries have two or more evangelists. In many Presbyteries the work is done by details of pastors and supplies sent to distant points either singly or by couples. Some of our Presbyteries having territory well covered with churches do not feel the need of evangelistic labor.

The Committee have sought to stimulate this kind of efforts,

especially in the newer regions, and to this end have made large appropriations to the Southwest. Of course the selection of the evangelist and the direction of his labors rests with the Presbyteries. The only condition required by the Committee is, that the work shall be conducted in accordance with the Assembly's by-law. The main difficulty is to get the right men engaged. Already in this field are some of the best ministers of our Church. If our Zion is to go forward and fulfil her evident mission, this branch of labor must be prosecuted with renewed earnestness.

In regard to the *Colored Evangelistic* work, circulars expository of the Assembly's plan were addressed to our ministers and sessions, and also to the ministers of the Reformed Church in America. The results have been meagre. The demands for help in this line have not been large, but larger than the funds. Appropriations have been made to the Presbyteries of Memphis, Central Mississippi, and Central Texas—partly from the Sustentation Fund, for the lack of other means. It is hoped more may be done during the current year. From none of our presbyterial reports does it appear that any, except the Presbytery of Memphis, is making earnest, extensive, and concerted efforts to evangelise this race. A few Presbyteries report Sabbath-schools and preaching by individual ministers.

Thus not more than a beginning has yet been made amongst us in this field so inviting and demanding so imperatively our attention. The obstacles are of no ordinary nature, and yet patient labor will overcome them. The scheme of the Assembly is acceptable to the colored people themselves, and seems to meet almost universal approval in our Church. It is high time there should be throughout our bounds a hearty and united effort to give this people the gospel in its purest form, who do so much need the regulative and elevating influence of Presbyterian doctrine and order. Faithful preachers of their own race should be instructed and trained, churches of their own planted and nurtured, plain but comfortable houses of worship provided, and Sabbath-schools organised and maintained.

The conclusion reached by the Committee, as to the "best

method of providing for the training of colored candidates for the ministry," which the last Assembly required should be considered, is that for the present this can be best secured by private studies under some approved divine of the Presbytery having charge of the candidate.

There being six annual collections already instituted by the Assembly, it is suggested by the Committee that they should be empowered to set aside, if necessary, 10 per cent. from the Sustentation Fund for carrying forward this colored evangelistic work.

From the *Invalid Fund*, appropriations have been made to twenty-three aged and infirm ministers, and sixty-four families of deceased ministers. These have ranged from \$25 to \$300. The whole amount has exceeded ten thousand dollars. It is believed that not a dollar has been unworthily bestowed. There are indications that the fund ought to be increased. This year \$665 was appropriated more than last year;—last year \$1,735 more than the year previous. It would be indeed a pity, if hereafter any curtailment of appropriations should be made necessary by deficient receipts. For the past two years the funds have been equal to the demands upon it.

On the lists of the *Relief Fund*, there are at present ninety-four names. Just at the close of the year two contributors departed this life—the Rev. Wm. Pinkerton, of the Synod of Virginia, and the Rev. Wm. Banks, of the Synod of South Carolina. The whole benefit accruing to the family of the former has been paid, amounting to \$360, he having paid in three annual instalments of \$30 each; also the first annuity of \$400 accruing to the family of the latter, he having paid in four annual instalments of \$60 each, thus entitling his family to six annual payments of \$400 each.

This fund now has \$16,000 of invested bonds.

#### THE ASSEMBLY'S ACTION ON SUSTENTATION.

On the sixth day, in the evening, the Assembly held a missionary meeting to receive and act on the Standing Committee's Report, through Dr. Stuart Robinson, chairman. The special points of interest in that report, as the Assembly adopted it, were

(1.) thanks returned to the Southern Aid Society ; (2) a call on the churches to support the scheme for evangelising the colored people, and authority given to the Committee to use 5 per cent. of the general Sustentation funds for this purpose, and a commendation of the Sunday-school Union's work amongst these people; (3) the approval of the Manual of Sustentation.

An eloquent and encouraging address was made by Dr. STUART ROBINSON, who was distressed at his own Synod's giving but \$1,000 and his own Presbytery but \$400 to this cause. And there are other Synods which do no better; but he called no names, for he was afraid of giving offence. He said he was afraid of the Revivals, for they seem to be filling up the churches with the same kind of material we have now—members of the Church who do not worship God with their substance.

Dr. PALMER spoke tenderly and sweetly of the communion of saints which this Sustentation cause realises. And he said that, poor as we are, we can replenish this treasury as well as raise the funds needed for the foreign work. It was a privilege also to take care of the orphans of the Church. He knew two widows of ministers, whose only support for themselves and their children was the \$100 from this fund.

Dr. GANSE, of the Reformed Church, had little say but much to feel. He had been riding two days to reach this place, and he felt his heart expand as he met those representing the vast missionary fields of Georgia and Alabama, and the great, broad Southwest. His church is accustomed to applaud the courage with which we came up out of the strife and difficulties and discouragements of the past. Brighter days are coming. Sympathy for you is coming too.

Dr. McILVAINE'S address closed the meeting. He said our Church will succeed. Her progress is onward. He saw it in the signs of the times, and knew it from indications about which he could not be mistaken. There had been material improvement during the past year. The churches have given 16 per cent. more in this year of hardness than last year. More churches give than ever before. There is one Synod in which a very large proportion of all the churches give. But some of you



represent Presbyteries not one-sixth of whose churches have given one cent to Sustentation ; and some to Presbyteries not one-fifteenth of whose families have given one cent to support the families of the deceased servants of the Lord. Some of our ministers let a whole year pass without taking up a collection for any cause. Nor is it only the weak and vacant churches that are remiss, but many strong churches neglect it. There is need of the exercise of authority—of authority tempered with grace.

#### REPORT ON EDUCATION.

Owing to interruptions from the removal of the Committee to Memphis, the report covers only three-fourths of the year, which closed April 1st. The Committee at Memphis began their work with a debt of \$3,846.27, in the form chiefly of appropriations to students which had not been paid. The liquidation of these claims was judged the first duty to be done. It was accomplished by the month of December. But the amount now due to our young men is \$3,992.45, which it is hoped will shortly be reduced to \$2,000.

There is an increase of nearly fifty in the number of contributing churches. Our candidates for the ministry, in all stages of preparation and under different kinds of control, is not less than one hundred and seventy. Of these ninety-two have been under care of the Committee, fifty-six of them being students of theology.

The receipts from all sources have been \$15,214.79. The Committee is now simply a disbursing agency, powerless to guard against a misappropriation of funds. They invite the Assembly to consider the possibility of enlarging their powers so as to give them joint supervision with the Presbyteries, and to authorise them to require quarterly reports of the standing, diligence, and piety of each beneficiary. They ask the Assembly to enjoin upon the Presbyteries the utmost vigilance in receiving candidates. The too great facility of admission for candidates is prolific of evil. Another obstacle in the way of the greatest usefulness of the Committee is the independent position occupied by some of our Presbyteries.

## THE ASSEMBLY'S ACTION ON EDUCATION.

Dr. HENDRICK, chairman of Standing Committee, presented its report on the sixth day. The chief points of it, were, (1) urging on all the churches, especially the vacant ones, to do something for this cause, in order to raise the \$25,000 it needs this year; (2) enjoining on the Presbyteries greater vigilance and care in receiving and recommending candidates for the ministry; (3) that all our Presbyteries be recommended to coöperate, as far as practicable, with the Committee at Memphis; (4) that the chairman of the Executive Committee obtain from Professors in seminaries, colleges, and schools, a quarterly report of the diligence, progress, and standing of each beneficiary, these reports to be furnished to the Presbyteries for their immediate action in the premises; (5) that the last Thursday of February be appointed as a day of special prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit on our youth and our institutions of learning.

Dr. CHAPMAN urged greater rigidity in the examination of candidates by Presbyteries.

A lively debate followed, turning on the question, whether reports of the conduct and standing of beneficiaries should be made to the Executive Committee of Education, or to the Presbyterial Committees, or to both. Dr. SHEARER maintained the exclusive authority of Presbyteries. Dr. BOGGS would have the reports come to the Executive Committee and be sent by them to the Presbyteries. Whereupon Dr. SHEARER moved an amendment to that effect. Rev. W. V. WILSON held this to be a round-about way. He moved to amend by providing that the chairmen of the Presbyterial Committees should receive the reports. Drs. J. R. WILSON and SHEARER urged that the Secretary of Education was the proper channel through whom the reports should be sent to the Presbyteries. Rev. W. V. WILSON wished to keep the matter entirely out of the Executive Committee. It did not belong to them, but exclusively to the Presbyteries. The round-about plan would work evil by causing Presbyteries to feel released from their own proper duty. Another objection was, that after a while the rights of the Presbyteries in this matter would be forgotten, and when asserted, the

answer would be that the highest court of the Church must regulate. Rev. H. G. HILL sympathised in these views. He was utterly opposed to the Secretary having any thing to do with receiving reports of the scholarship and behavior of candidates. Dr. BOGGS, as a member of the Executive Committee, desired that the Assembly, without giving that Committee any jurisdiction, should yet make it their duty to furnish information to the Presbyteries respecting their candidates. They had already volunteered opinions where they thought a case was flagrant and no attention was paid to them. He said: I received not long ago a letter from a man who had been engaged for a long time in the Church's educational work. He stated to me that the most serious objection he had to beneficiary education, was this—that after twenty years of personal observation, he is persuaded that a very considerable percentage of the young men passed through our Colleges and Seminaries by this scheme, are in fact useless to the Church after they have graduated. He feels the utter weakness of our scheme right there, and that unless some plan can be devised to prevent the reception of a beneficiary education upon too slight recommendation, the result will be that the whole scheme will collapse and the Church suffer thereby. Dr. STUART ROBINSON said: There is no reason why the officer there at the centre should not have some voice in this matter. It is all good theory that the Presbyteries have the care of the candidates; it is also certain that it is the universal practice of the Presbyteries to be very nervous about stopping improper men and thereby offending their friends: and if they can divide the responsibility with the Secretary who does not know the family, they are glad to do it. The Presbyteries have not the backbone to stop a man who has not perhaps done anything immoral, but simply has not the brains, and run the risk of offending him and his kindred, perhaps a whole county. I hope the thing will stand as it is. While the Presbyteries have the jurisdiction, the misfortune is they will not and do not exercise it. Dr. Boggs has thrown out a most important consideration, one that I am alarmed at; one that I hear almost every month and week, the idea that is getting into the Church that the whole matter of

beneficiary education had better be given up, just for the reason mentioned. I hope we shall try to arrange matters so as to have a stricter supervision. Without that, I believe it will have to be given up. There is another matter I wanted to mention—whether we had not better change our system of Education and confine appropriations to the students in Theological Seminaries or in their last collegiate year, and call out their energy and that of their friends to secure the preliminary training. We are doing damage by taking them up in our arms and carrying them along. Let them and their friends struggle to get them through College, and let us take them through the Seminary. I know how it has been in my own experience. I am not ashamed to say that I was in difficulties once. Dr. LEFEVRE wished the reports made both to the Secretary and the Presbyterial Committees. Professor MARTIN joined him in this desire. No one connected with a college or a theological school can be ignorant that some stimulus is necessary. The Presbyteries are generally lax. Owing to laxity of supervision, or perhaps “want of backbone,” as Dr. Robinson has suggested, very unsuitable candidates receive appropriations. This is a crying evil and is jeopardising the whole scheme of beneficiary education. There is growing opposition to it. He hoped the Assembly would adopt any measure that promised to increase the vigor of Presbyterial supervision. There would be no difficulty in having duplicate reports sent forward. At Davidson College they do it now. He moved to amend the amendment so as to have these reports sent both to the Executive and the Presbyterial Committees. The Rev. A. C. HOPKINS preferred to have the Presbyterial Committees alone receive these reports. Ruling elder Livingston agreed with Dr. Robinson. He called for “the question,” and the call was sustained. Professor Martin’s amendment to the amendment was agreed to, and the amendment as amended was adopted. Dr. WADDEL, the Secretary, was then heard, and the report as a whole was adopted.

For ourselves, we cordially agree with those who desired to see the rights of the Presbyteries fully maintained. In fact, we have always been of opinion that the education of their candi-

dates would be better left altogether in the hands of the individual Presbyteries. But if the Church will manage it through a committee of the General Assembly, we can discover no objection to having duplicate reports respecting the candidates sent to that Committee as well as the Presbyterial Committees.

REPORT ON PUBLICATION.

The receipts have been as follows :

For general purposes of Committee, . . . . .	\$6,875 34
For business capital on Endowment Fund, . . . . .	523 30
For the Publishing House, . . . . .	7,395 42
	<hr/>
Total from the churches, . . . . .	\$14,794 06
From Merchandise, . . . . .	34,175 60
“ Borrowed money, . . . . .	4,295 51
“ Rents, . . . . .	2,275 00
	<hr/>
Total available resources, . . . . .	\$55,540 17

The disbursements have been as follows :

On Account of Stock, . . . . .	\$29,346 57
Grants of books, papers, etc., . . . . .	5,945 32
Salaries, . . . . .	9,192 00
Incidentals, . . . . .	3,181 90
Principal and interest on building, . . . . .	6,390 45
Insurance, Repairs, Taxes, . . . . .	4,040 72
	<hr/>
	\$58,096 96

Excess of disbursements over receipts, . . . . . \$2,556 79

The endowment fund now stands at \$39,191.89. The circulation of the *Children's Friend* and of the *Earnest Worker* have both diminished, and the receipts from these sources have fallen short of the expectations cherished some \$1,800. A correspondence with the Reformed Church's Board of Publication has resulted in a plan of business coöperation, subject to the approval of the two churches. It is proposed that the two publishing houses shall become depositories each for the other ; that no new book shall be issued without the approval of both the Committee and the Board, and the *imprimatur* of both houses placed on it; that the same Sabbath-school paper shall be used by both churches; the Board and the Committee publishing such a

paper, into which *The Children's Friend* shall be merged; while *The Earnest Worker* and *The Sower and the Gospel Field* shall also be merged into one, to be issued simultaneously at the two publishing houses, one of these papers being published at Richmond and the other at New York.

The account of the Publishing House stands as follows:

Received from churches and individuals for the Building	
Fund, . . . . .	\$16,631 39
From Rents, . . . . .	4,018 16
“ Interest on Deposits, . . . . .	62 64
	<hr/>
Total resources, . . . . .	\$20,712 19
Paid on Building, . . . . .	\$14,000 00
“ Interest, . . . . .	3,710 92
“ Taxes, . . . . .	1,298 22
“ Insurance, . . . . .	595 82
“ Repairs and fitting up, . . . . .	2,162 13
“ Agent's salary and expenses, . . . . .	1,156 00
	<hr/>
	\$22,923 09
Excess of expenses over receipts, . . . . .	\$2,210 90
During the past ten years the Committee has received of contributions, . . . . .	
	\$92,585 40
Grants during this period, . . . . .	\$45,246 59
Assets at present, . . . . .	43,828 79
	<hr/>
	\$89,075 38

So that the business of the Committee has about paid its expenses.

#### THE ASSEMBLY'S ACTION ON PUBLICATION.

On the sixth day, Dr. FISHER, chairman of the Standing Committee, reported. On all the points of the report, the Committee was unanimous, except the fourth, where there were two dissenting voices. The *first* point commends the ability and fidelity of the Executive Committee. The *second* recapitulates what has been accomplished during the year in this department of the Church's work. The *third* refers favorably to the plans of business coöperation agreed on between our publishing house and that of the Reformed Church. The *fourth* expresses the judgment that, notwithstanding the debt of \$31,000 overhanging the property at Richmond, it ought nevertheless to be held and not sold, and recom-

mends collections on the first Sabbath in March for our Publication interests, each church to specify the particular use to be made of its contribution. The *fifth* commends and returns thanks for the services of the Rev. S. J. Baird, D. D., which were to close in July. The *sixth* repeats advice of last Assembly, about stereotype plates. The *seventh* urges on Presbyteries the work of colportage. The *eighth* is a reply to the overture from Presbytery of Memphis, touching retrenchment, and commends both the prudence and the economy of the Committee. The *ninth* opposes any removal of the Committee to St. Louis, and re-appoints the same secretary and members of Committee.

This report gave rise to some debate. Dr. BOGGS favored selling the house. He thought our publishing work a great mistake, and that the sale he advocated would be the beginning of a change for the better. Corporations always were expensive things when they went out of their legitimate work. He would illustrate by Mr. McCombs, who, when he bought out a great railway, sacrificed the machinery for working over old iron rails, saying he could gain by having them done by others who give their whole time to such work. Dr. Boggs was opposed to fostering a home-bred literature. The policy is wrong. The Methodists and Baptists had tried it, flooding their churches with books of which not one in a score is of any value. Let private parties publish, and our Committee only purchase from such the right kind of supplies. He read a statement from an elder in Tennessee, a business man, to show that the secretary is mistaken in saying the work of the Committee had supported itself.

Dr. IRVINE maintained that it would not be for the honor of this Assembly to sell that property and break up that establishment. The experiment has not yet had a fair trial. Again, it would not be for the pecuniary interest of the church to sell that property. This would be a dangerous if not ruinous policy. The cost was \$43,000. It is worth now 60,000, and yet it is proposed to sell it for \$31,000, half its value. It pays now, by rents, 8½ per cent. interest. When all the offices are finished, there will be paid in annually more than the whole interest. Besides, our people have paid already \$14,000 on the debt. And

what will you do with that? Will you rob them? Will you rob God? That is a sacred trust given you by God's people, and you are bound to apply that money to the purpose for which it was given.

Dr. BAIRD was heard in explanation, but his speech is not reported satisfactorily, and we shall not attempt to reproduce his statements, except the declaration that leading publishers in New York and Philadelphia had expressed their astonishment at our success, beginning a new enterprise without capital. He had done his best, and the Committee the same.

The motion to sell was laid on the table, and the Standing Committee's report was adopted.

#### CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE REFORMED CHURCH.

Of the two delegates from this body, the *primarius*, elder JONATHAN STURGIS, having recently deceased, the *secundus*, elder S. R. W. HEATH, was introduced to the Assembly and invited to the platform by the Moderator. In connexion with this introduction, Dr. PALMER read the report of the Committees of Conference of the Reformed Church and our own on the subject of coöperation. The report set forth that it was agreed by the two Committees that actual denominational work be commenced betwixt the Churches, (1) in Publication; (2) in evangelising the colored people of the South; (3) in the establishment of but one united Church by any contiguous Foreign Missions of the two bodies; (4) in theological education; (5) in the interchange of annual reports.

This report was referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, of which Dr. Joseph R. Wilson was the chairman.

#### CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE NORTHERN ASSEMBLY.

Dr. WILLIAM BROWN read the report. It had been unanimously agreed betwixt the two Committees, that the Conference should be held in private, and also by written communications, but not to the exclusion of oral conferences whenever desired by either side. It was opened on January the 7th, at evening, in the lecture-room of the Franklin Street church, Baltimore, and continued till the evening of January 15th, when, in joint session, it was declared to be adjourned, *sine die*. According to



the terms of the commission given by the Assembly of 1874, "the causes which have heretofore prevented fraternal relations between the two Churches," and what was believed to be indispensable for their "removal," were stated clearly and fully by our Committee in the Conference. The "results" were laid before the Assembly, in a copy of the correspondence held by the two Committees. The other party having asked consent to have the correspondence published, this was readily granted by our side, and accordingly it had appeared in all the papers of our Church. But it was not known that any publication of it whatever had appeared on the part of the other Committee.

This report and correspondence were referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, which, on the fifth day, through its chairman, Dr. J. R. WILSON, recommended the discharge of the Committee of Conference from the further consideration of the subject intrusted to them, and the adoption of the following minute, which was unanimously adopted :

This Assembly, in the name of the whole Church, tenders special thanks to the Committee of Conference for the diligence, fidelity, and Christian prudence with which they have discharged the delicate and important trust committed to them; and whilst regretting the failure of the Conference as to its chief end, hereby approves in general the course of the Committee, and, in particular, approves and endorses, as satisfactory to the Southern Church, the condition precedent to fraternal relations suggested by our Committee, viz. : "If your Assembly could see its way clear to say, in a few plain words, to this effect, That these obnoxious things were said and done in times of great excitement, and are to be regretted; and that now, in a calm review, the imputations cast upon the Southern Church," (of schism, heresy, and blasphemy,) "are disapproved, that would end the difficulty at once."

As part of the history of this matter, we here append the minute adopted in the Northern Assembly. The reader will observe the bearing of the word *present*.

*Resolved*, That this Assembly deeply regrets that the negotiations in reference to fraternal correspondence between the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States, (popularly known as the Presbyterian Church South,) have failed; that the Assembly deems it inexpedient to press the question of fraternal relations at present by further negotiations, through the

appointment of another committee; at the same time the Assembly avails itself of this opportunity to affirm unequivocally its confidence in the integrity and Christian character of our brethren of the Southern Church, and to declare that all the acts and deliverances of the Northern Assemblies of which they complain are wholly null and void, and of no binding efficacy as judgments of the Church we represent, or as rules of proceeding for its Presbyteries and church sessions; and that in so far as they, or any of them, can be supposed to import any injurious imputations upon the *present* character and standing of the churches and members of the Southern Assembly as Christians and Presbyterians, such an application of them would be unjust to them and would be disapproved and regretted by us; and further, to reaffirm explicitly, in harmony with the repeated and emphatic deliverances of former Assemblies, our hearty willingness and our earnest and sincere desire for the re-establishment of fraternal relations between the two bodies, on terms and conditions which shall be mutually honorable, and in the spirit of Christian charity, forbearance, and brotherly love, and that we await, in charity and hope, the early coming of the day when we shall again mingle with our brethren of the Southern Church in Christian fellowship and co-operation.

Just before the dissolution of our Assembly, Dr. Stuart Robinson stated that on his reading this minute, he thought he saw that it had been so framed as to put us into the position of not accepting the "olive branch;" and so, with a view of estopping all clamor about this olive branch, he took the responsibility of sending the following telegram:

ST. LOUIS, May 29th.

*To Rev. Robert Hays, or Moderator of General Assembly, Cleveland, Ohio:*

Will your Assembly strike out from minute on fraternal relations, the word "present," before "character," and officially communicate resolution on Monday, by telegraph? If so, I will propose to appoint delegates.

STUART ROBINSON.

He had received no answer, but had observed that they had declined, in different forms, to do the very thing which he proposed. The morning after our Assembly was dissolved, Dr. Robinson received the following:

CLEVELAND, O., May 31st.

*Rev. Dr. Stuart Robinson, General Assembly, St. Louis:*

Our Assembly cannot, at this late hour, reconsider its action.

E. D. MORRIS.

It may be added, that in reply to Dr. Niccolls's fiery harangue

in the Assembly at Cleveland, the Rev. Ben Ezra Styles Ely had told them: "There are those upon the floor of this house who have letters now in their possession from leading men in the Southern Assembly, expressing the same opinion as that of Dr. Robinson, and indicating that if this Assembly would simply say that any reflections upon the Christian character of the Southern Church were to be regretted, they would be willing to appoint a delegate from their Assembly in St. Louis to meet with us in this General Assembly."

COMMITTEE ON COMMISSIONERS' AND CONTINGENT FUND.

This matter was at first referred to the Committee on Systematic Benevolence; but after discussion, was taken out of their hands and referred to a Standing Committee on that subject, as provided for by the last Assembly. On the seventh day, the Rev. H. G. HILL, chairman, reported at length; and on the tenth day, his report, after considerable discussion, in which Dr. LEFEVRE, Mr. GORDON, Dr. ROBINSON, Mr. NEIL, Dr. J. R. WILSON, Mr. HOPKINS, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. AIKEN took part, was adopted. It confirms the action of the last Assembly, adopting a system for defraying the expenses of commissioners and the contingent expenses of the Assembly, by assessing each Presbytery so much for every church member in its bounds; the same to be apportioned by the Presbyteries amongst their respective churches. The money is to be paid over at the spring meetings of Presbytery, and forwarded by the commissioners to the Assembly's Standing Committee, at whose call the apportionment of each Presbytery and the bill of the travelling expenses of its commissioners is to be presented. The Standing Committee, at each Assembly, is to make an estimate of the expenses of the next Assembly, including the journeys to and fro of its members, and the *per capita* rate is to be determined accordingly. For the next Assembly it is to be eight cents per member, designed to raise the sum of at least \$8,000. Any Presbytery declining to coöperate, and preferring to pay the expenses of its own commissioners, is to contribute to the contingent fund at the rate of two cents per member, the remaining six being supposed to be what will pay the travelling expenses of its own commissioners.

The main ground on which the scheme was urged, is, that the distant Presbyteries ought not to have to pay so heavily in support of the General Assembly, it not being their own business on which they come, but the business of the whole Church; and not as any matter of charity to them, but in simple justice, the expenses of the Assembly ought to be met by the whole Church, the stronger Presbyteries paying much, and the weaker little. The Church is one body, a free commonwealth; its commissioners are sent from particular Presbyteries, but they do not represent each his own Presbytery, but the whole Church. They are not deputies sent to do the bidding of their own constituents, but they are *general representatives*, who hear all that is to be said on every question, and then, guided by an intelligent comprehension of it, vote as the good of the whole Church, and not of their own Presbytery, may require.

The main point of the opposition was, that the Form of Government, Chapter XXII., § iii., says, it is proper that expenses be defrayed by the bodies represented. It was maintained that the Assembly cannot require the whole Church to divide out the Assembly's expenses *pro rata* amongst its members, because of this provision of the Constitution. But it was properly answered that there has grown up a practical interpretation of this provision, which makes it consist with assessments by the Assembly laid on the stronger Presbyteries, with a view to lighten the burden of the weaker, because this old custom has all the force of law.

It seems to us that the provision of the Constitution in question does not apply to the Presbyteries as distinct from the Assembly, but as distinct from the ministers and elders sent to represent them. These are not to go at their own charges, but the Presbyteries represented shall pay their way. If the Assembly finds it necessary to provide additionally towards this end, surely the Constitution is in vain appealed to against any such measure.

The measure now adopted, it was said, had been pronounced against by a majority of the Presbyteries. We doubt whether that can be fairly stated; there was some misunderstanding of

the matter when it came last before our Presbyteries. There is no attempt to deprive any Presbytery of its freedom. They may coöperate with this scheme, or they may pay the expenses of their own commissioners; only those who do not choose to cooperate, are expected by the highest court of our Church to contribute to its contingent fund two cents per member.

But whilst we make little of the constitutional objection, it is not our expectation that this measure will secure the general cooperation of the Presbyteries. That ceremony prescribed to each commissioner, of "stepping up to the Committee's office" and handing in the apportionment on his Presbytery, and then his own bill for travelling expenses, will kill the scheme. It would kill one far more generally acceptable. Our Presbyteries will for the most part, be non-coöperating, but they will, every one, we hope and trust, send up the amounts assessed on them by the Assembly.

#### PROPOSED EXCURSIONS.

The President of the Denver and South Park Railroad invited the Assembly to take an excursion to Colorado. Thanks were returned. The ladies of the church where the Assembly met invited the Assembly to a lunch at the Fair-grounds, it being the annual *picnic* of the children. Mr. WEBB moved to accept. Dr. ROBINSON said he would like to be there, but did not like the idea of the Assembly adjourning to attend a *picnic*! He would recognise every kindness offered, but did not care to go into the *sensational*, so prevalent amongst our brethren from whom we have separated. Dr. LEFEVRE said it is always proper for a court of the Church to return thanks for courtesy extended, but the accepting formally any invitations, goes right across his views of what is becoming. Mr. WEBB modified his motion so as simply to return thanks, and it was unanimously agreed to.

#### PLACE OF NEXT MEETING.

Savannah was nominated, on the invitation of the First Presbyterian church of that city, by the Rev. E. C. GORDON. Dr. PALMER urged the acceptance of the invitation, and hoped no other place would be put in nomination. That church was his first pastoral charge, had struggled with great difficulties, has

emerged gradually from obscurity, and is becoming an important church. He pleaded also the general interests of Presbyterianism in Savannah. Dr. ROBINSON said he had designed nominating Louisville, but after Dr. PALMER'S appeal he would not, unless other places were nominated. Dr. GIRARDEAU said Charleston greatly desired the Assembly to meet there, but waived all claim in favor of her sister city, Savannah. It was to be remembered, also, that Savannah made this same request last year, but had waived it in favor of St. Louis, because we had just then joyfully welcomed our Missouri brethren. Here, then, in St. Louis, let us now appoint Savannah for the next place of meeting. Dr. J. R. WILSON said that Wilmington church had asked for the next Assembly, but he would now prefer going to Savannah. Dr. ROBINSON then moved that the "vote be taken on Savannah unanimously, by acclamation." And the vote was so taken.

CASE OF THE FIRST CHURCH, LOUISVILLE.

On the fourth day, Dr. PALMER presented the Judicial Committee's report upon this case. It could not be taken up as an appeal, because the Rev. J. J. Cooke, not having been "a party aggrieved," in our technical sense of that term, could not appeal. As a complaint, it might be entertained by the Assembly; and as all parties desired the decision of it to be made by this body, (to which it has come,) over the head of the Synod of Kentucky, the Committee recommend that the Assembly should take it up. The whole difficulty arose from a difference of interpretation upon one or two points of constitutional law. (1.) It is alleged in the complaint that the Presbytery of Louisville, in receiving certain memorials, and upon the allegations in them, proceeding to exercise its visitorial powers in the First church, did, from the nature of the charges, commence what was essentially a judicial investigation, which should, therefore, have been conducted under judicial forms. (2.) From the action of the Presbytery, in proceeding to an investigation, Dr. S. R. Wilson took an appeal to a superior court, claiming that this must operate to suspend proceedings until it could be settled in the higher court. Upon both these points the Assembly might render a decision, and also upon any others where the parties appeared open to censure. Then,

by remanding the case to the Presbytery of Louisville, with an injunction to take it up from the beginning under these rulings, opportunity would be afforded all parties to retrieve errors, and the Assembly, in the tenderest way, would arbitrate between brethren who, for their past fidelity to the truth and kingdom of the Master, are entitled to the confidence and affection of the whole Church. Then followed the usual recommendation of the order of proceedings.

A discussion then arose upon a motion by Dr. J. R. WILSON to elect a commission of nine to review this case, decide it, and present their decision to the Assembly for its confirmation or disapproval. Some of the speakers held that the Assembly had no right to send the case to a commission; some were clear that the body did possess this right, and ought to exercise it in this case; and some, again, were favorable to a commission, but wished it to consist of the members of the Judicial Committee. Dr. LEFEVRE accepted the principle of the commission, though not its expediency in this case. Dr. GIRARDEAU was clear that the precedents of the Presbyterian Church would justify the appointment of a commission. And Dr. PALMER would very much prefer that our Form and Discipline should provide for the trial of every judicial case by commission rather than by the Assembly, and make that commission a court of final verdict. He trusted the time may come when that will be the case; but as such is not now our law, he objected to adopting that practice on the hurry and spur of an occasion like this. Only make the commission a true court, and then its decisions would be just as wise and just as valid by, say, twelve men, as if by twelve hundred. But when that practice is to be introduced, he wished it to be done deliberately, after full discussion and upon the naked ground of the principle itself, rather than to meet the exigencies of any particular case. Dr. J. R. WILSON insisted that the principle of the commission is settled amongst us, and has long been acted on. It is no new theory that the Assembly, or any other of our courts, can act by commission. Every Executive Committee of our Church is a commission as to the business committed to it. These executive agencies transact business which the Assembly

is unable to transact, not being in perpetual session. But then their decisions and determinations are merely provisional, and must be subjected to the revision of the Assembly, by which alone they can get permanent authority. Now, Dr. PALMER had said this case turned on points of constitutional order. Why, then, could not a commission of nine or eleven bring before this body these points, making them as luminous as light, bringing them out distinctly, first as they emerge from the testimony, and then pointing out clearly from the Constitution, or from custom and precedent, what should be the decision of the Assembly in the premises? In that way, if the business were well done, the whole matter could be so concentrated in a few points as to the facts, that we could ascertain them by a glance, and then the few points of controversy could be speedily adjudicated.

It appears to us very clear, that the principle of commissions generally is settled already amongst us, for it cannot be denied that our Executive Committees are such, and moreover, that the Assembly cannot do its work without them. And if all the other affairs of the Church can be legitimately superintended by commissions, (which nevertheless must submit their action to the inspection and review of the supreme judicatory,) we are unable to perceive why the particular business of hearing an appeal or complaint may not be transacted in precisely the same way. A large body cannot give its attention to all the details of an ordinary judicial case. The thing is simply an impossibility. But a smaller body can attend to and master these details, and can present them intelligibly and fairly to the larger. The principle of commissions is quite in harmony with Presbyterianism, which regulates everything by a few acting in the room of the many. The principle of the whole body managing everything itself directly, is the very genius of Congregationalism. What Judge CLAPP said, that no legislative body can delegate its legislative authority to any inferior body, and that on the same ground, no judicial body can delegate its judicial power, is true; but the principle of the commission delegates power of neither sort. It only enables the court *to get work done* which itself cannot directly perform, while the final decision is kept



in its own hand. Dr. PALMER'S idea of the commission, however, would make it "a true court, rendering a final verdict." This, we hold, would not be Presbyterian. We cannot make any new court, as we cannot create any new officer. Scripture gives us authority for the Session, a court ruling over one congregation; and for the Presbytery, a court ruling over several associated congregations; and for the Synod or Assembly, a court ruling over several Presbyteries, with their groups of congregations; and we conceive that Scripture warrants (as Dr. PALMER on another occasion pointed out,) the gathering of several Synods or Assemblies all over the world, when the time shall come for it, into one grand court—an *Œcumenical Council*. But it does not seem to us that Scripture warrants "a true court," made out of part of the Session, or the Presbytery, or the Synod, or the Assembly, and constituting a body separate from and independent of each respectively. It is Presbyterian to do by committee the *inquiring*, and by commission the *inquiring* and *acting*, which the court cannot do itself; but in every case of committee or commission, there must be a report made for final judgment by the appointing body. Our church courts are representative bodies, and they may not delegate to other bodies either their legislative or their judicial powers.

Judge HUNTON favored the motion for a commission. He had read the discussion in the papers, and regarded it as most unfortunate. Kentucky was famous for angry political discussions. He would not say there had not been in *those* as much vituperation and bitter denunciation; but he would say that in *this*, using the language of a Georgia Judge, there had been practised "a great economy in the use of soft words." The Georgia Judge was asked if a certain man was not the greatest liar in the State, and replied that "he would not say that, but he did say that the man used great economy, indeed, even a *penuriousness*, in the use of the truth." He did not wish these private quarrels brought before the Assembly.

Dr. STUART ROBINSON rose to a question of privilege. He must protest against the imputation of "economy in the use of soft words," so far as concerned the Presbytery and himself. He

challenged any to take the record and find any evidence of violence or passion. For the complainant, likewise, (Rev. J. J. Cooke,) not a member of the house; he must challenge any one to find in his paper aught constituting impropriety of language. It is not just to speak of this as one of those cases not fit to come in here. There was, indeed, an appeal alluded to in the report, (which has not been prosecuted,) that might have given rise to some personal feeling. But he wanted the Assembly to understand distinctly that, as conducted by Mr. Cooke, who has complained against the irregularities of our Presbytery, there is nothing in the case to call up the least feeling. He himself had never experienced more especially the blessing of God in giving him grace to keep down his Irish temper than in this matter. He had uttered nothing angry, except, perhaps, once or twice, in a hasty moment, which, as soon as checked by the Moderator, he had taken back and apologised for. The trouble has been that, by one party the appeal has, from the start, been to the outside world, through the secular papers; and from the tone of that appeal, people inferred that the other side were as violent. But the violence and passion were like his countryman's account of his ardent love for the girl that had jilted him. When asked if his love for Biddy was reciprocated: "Och," he said, "it's reciprocal enough, but the reciprocity is all on one side." Mr. Cooke's paper has some hard things in it, but he had a right to say them, and they are in no vituperative language. There is nothing that will come before this Assembly to justify this fear of taking up the case. I do not care to say a word about the question, but am perfectly willing that Mr. Cooke, on the one side, and Mr. Morris, on the other, who is an elder in the church, and not a lawyer either, should just tell the Assembly their story. You know it takes a great deal of grace to keep the Irish, and I might say, the Kentucky, temper down, under provocation. But I vow before God that I have not felt any bitterness. I have done nothing but what my duty as a presbyter compelled me to do in this case. I have prayed, and God has given me grace, as everybody in my Presbytery will testify. Why, sir, some of the people of Louis-

ville, surprised at my forbearance, think that I have got converted within the last six months.

The motion to appoint a commission was then laid on the table. The Moderator charged the Assembly, and the case was opened with the reading of the two complaints of the Rev. J. J. COOKE against the Presbytery of Louisville. On the next day, the fifth, the records of the Louisville Presbytery, as to the trouble in the First Church, occupied the Assembly's hearing until near evening. On the sixth day, the complainant was heard, occupying a large portion of the day. The main point attempted to be made was, that the investigation into the affairs of the Church asked for by the memorialists was really a judicial proceeding, since it must condemn or acquit one or both parties; and this being so, Dr. Wilson, as one of the parties, was entitled to take an immediate appeal to the Synod, the effect of which, from the very nature of an appeal, should have been to stop all proceedings in the Presbytery. On the next day, the seventh, Dr. STUART ROBINSON was heard on the side of the Presbytery. He argued to show that the investigation undertaken by the Presbytery was a visitation of the church which the Form of Government expressly empowers a Presbytery to make; also, that the appeal, so called, by Dr. Wilson, had none of the features of an appeal as described in our Book. Dr. ROBINSON did not conclude until the close of the night session, at half-past ten. On the eighth day, in the evening, Rev. Mr. COOKE was heard in reply. The roll-call for the expression of opinions by the members began at twenty minutes past ten p. m., and was continued till eleven, when the Assembly adjourned. This was continued on Saturday, the ninth day, and was resumed and concluded in the evening. The vote being taken, there were 38 to sustain in part, and 68 not to sustain, and some twenty or more absent or not voting. Afterwards, Dr. GIRARDEAU, from the majority, offered a minute, which proved acceptable to many who voted to sustain in part, and which, in fact, was adopted unanimously, or perhaps with one dissenting voice. Dr. PALMER, of the minority, also offered a minute, signed by a portion of those who voted with him to sustain in part, which he desired to have appended to Dr. Gi-

rardeau's minute, and then the Assembly would have approached a good degree of unanimity in the final settlement. His request was unanimously granted. These minutes were as follows:

*The Minute adopted by the Assembly.*—The Assembly, in voting not to sustain the complaint of J. J. Cooke and others against the Presbytery of Louisville, would be understood as passing judgment only upon the constitutional issues involved in said complaint; while, at the same time, there were, in its opinion, some irregularities in the proceedings of the Presbytery which it could not approve, but which it did not deem necessary to pass upon judicially.

*Dr. Palmer's Minute.*—The undersigned, being of the minority who voted to sustain in part the complaint of J. J. Cooke, accord with the minute adopted by the majority, with the exception that in some of the points termed irregularities in the above minute, they regard the Presbytery as having transcended the limits of their constitutional power.

As a part of the subsequent history of this case, we mention that shortly after the dissolution of the Assembly, a meeting of Louisville Presbytery was held, and Dr. Robinson, after some remarks, said to be very courteous to Dr. Wilson, proposed the following resolution, which the Presbytery adopted, along with another, which is here appended to it:

*Resolved*, That, as the General Assembly has decided all the constitutional points raised in the complaint of the Rev. J. J. Cooke adversely to the complaint, and in favor of the judgments of the Presbytery—bringing us to a point where this unhappy difficulty may be settled; and as the Presbytery is indisposed to impugn the personal character of Rev. Dr. Samuel R. Wilson, now, therefore, Presbytery hereby declines the prosecution of the charges tabled against Dr. Wilson.

*Resolved*, That, in view of the final action of the General Assembly at St. Louis, this Presbytery desires now to settle this unhappy difficulty in all its forms as speedily as may be consistent with justice and kindness to all parties, that the interests of our churches may receive immediate attention; and in order, therefore, that the Presbytery may shape its action intelligently in reference to the business now before it, the clerk of Presbytery be directed immediately to give notice to Dr. Samuel R. Wilson of the desire of Presbytery to know at once whether he now recognises the jurisdiction of this body, and will submit to its decisions concerning himself.

In reply, Dr. Wilson refused to recognise the authority of either the Presbytery or the General Assembly, and formally renounced their jurisdiction. His answer was received by the

Presbytery and ordered to be placed on file, and then, by unanimous vote, the Presbytery adopted the following resolution :

*Resolved*, That, Dr. Samuel R. Wilson having finally and formally refused to recognise the jurisdiction and submit to the decisions of this Presbytery and also of the General Assembly, the Presbytery hereby declares that said Dr. Samuel R. Wilson has no further authority from this Church to preach and administer ordinances, and his name be stricken from the roll.

Dr. Wilson has since been welcomed into the Northern Presbyterian Church.

#### ACTION UPON SUNDRY OVERTURES.

From the variety of overtures presented to the Assembly, and reported on favorably or unfavorably by the Committee of Bills and Overtures, through their chairman, Dr. GIRARDEAU, we select a few of special interest, being all we can make room for. The first one we introduce is on EDUCATION, Overture No. 8, from the Presbytery of Concord, asking the Assembly to consider the propriety of abandoning the present scheme of Education, and remanding this subject to the Presbyteries. The Committee recommend that, as the overture contemplates a radical change in the policy of the Church, a Committee of two ministers and one elder be appointed to consider the subject maturely, collect the sense of the Church by correspondence, and report to the next Assembly.

The next is on BIENNIAL SESSIONS, Overture No. 16, from the Presbytery of Macon, asking the Assembly to propose to the Presbyteries such change in the Constitution of the Church as to require only biennial instead of annual sessions of the Synods and the Assembly, and these to be arranged so as to alternate—the Synod meeting one year and the Assembly the next. The Committee recommended that the Assembly answer the overture in the negative.

Another is on the PRESBYTERY OF HANGCHOW, Overture No. 19, from Rev. M. H. Houston, Rev. B. Helm, Rev. H. C. DuBose, and Rev. J. W. Davis, members of the Presbytery of Hangchow, China, asking the Assembly to dissolve said Presbytery and restore the memorialists to the Presbyteries to which

they originally belonged. This overture raises 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. In view of the difficulty of these questions, and the desirableness of settling our policy in regard to these matters, the Committee recommend the Assembly to appoint a committee, consisting of J. B. Adger, D. D., J. L. Wilson, D. D., and T. E. Peck, D. D., who shall be charged with the consideration of this subject, and who shall report to the next Assembly.

The only other one we can refer to is on the EDUCATION OF COLORED MINISTERS, Overture No. 21, from Rev. C. A. Stillman, D. D., and others, asking the Assembly, at its present meeting, to take action looking to the establishment of an institute for the education of colored preachers, in pursuance of the policy recommended by the last Assembly; or, in case the way be not clear to do that at their meeting, to appoint a Committee to take the subject into consideration, and, if they deem it expedient and practicable, to digest a plan for the organisation, management, and support of such a school, and report to the next Assembly. The Committee recommended that the Assembly accede to the latter alternative of this request, and appoint a Committee for the purpose specified in the overture, of which Dr. Stillman shall be chairman, and who shall report to the next Assembly.

In each of these cases, the report of the Committee was adopted.

#### CORRESPONDING BODIES.

The Rev. JAMES B. LOGAN was received as delegate from the Cumberland Presbyterian church, and the Rev. Dr. HERVIE D. GANSE, with Ruling elder S. R. W. HEATH, from the Reformed Church. They addressed the Assembly in very pleasant terms, and the Moderator gave them kindly replies. Dr. SMOOT and Rev. J. W. PUGH were appointed principal and alternate to attend the Cumberland Presbyterian Assembly meeting next May

at Bowling Green, Kentucky; and Dr. LEFEVRE and Hon. J. A. INGLIS, the General Synod of the Reformed Church at Jersey City in June of the current year.

#### SABBATH-SCHOOLS.

Dr. SHEARER, chairman of Standing Committee reported on the sixth day.

The No. of Presbyteries reporting in 1875 was,	55
“ “ Schools reported,	871
“ “ Teachers reported,	7,642
“ “ Scholars reported.	56,039
The No. of Teachers added to the Church,	328
“ “ Scholars added to the Church,	2,221
The amount of moneys contributed by schools,	\$30,058 00

There is a growing disposition to put the schools under the control of the Church. The standards of the Church are used largely, but not universally.

The resolutions adopted set forth—

(1.) That the Sunday-school is the old catechetical school, and should drill its scholars in the Scriptures and our Church standards.

(2.) That the pastor and elders, and such others as they may approve, are the divinely appointed catechists or teachers.

(3.) That family training is in no wise to be transferred to the Sabbath-school.

(4.) That the Sabbath-school is not to be allowed to interfere with the hours of public worship or family religion.

(5.) That the Assembly utters a solemn testimony against the sentimental, the sensational, and the formalistic in the music and literature of Sabbath-schools, and the devices invented to popularise them. Children intoxicated thus must have deeper draughts at the same fountains in maturer life.

(6.) That churches and presbyteries be earnestly exhorted to establish Sabbath-schools for the colored people whenever practicable and report to the Assembly separately. [This resolution was offered by Ruling elder KIRKPATRICK.]

#### EVANGELISTIC WORK.

The Rev. J. W. NEIL, chairman of the Standing Committee, reported. Only twenty-nine Presbyteries had made reports, three less than last year and five less than the year previous—and the reports made were extremely meagre. Some merely

mention that an evangelist is employed, some make no distinction between the evangelist and the stated supply. In the reporting Presbyteries, thirty-five evangelists have been employed for the whole of their time, and three for the one-half of it. No doubt this work requires men of peculiar gifts and graces. We have men enough, however, every way competent; but the deficiency is of funds.

But whilst so few of the Presbyteries have made any report directly to the Assembly, fifty-three of them did report to the Executive Committee. It is believed that it would be less likely to create confusion if the reports were all allowed to pass through that channel. The Assembly adopted this suggestion of the Standing Committee, and also passed resolutions urging the work upon the attention of the Presbyteries.

#### THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

Dr. LEFEVRE, chairman of Standing Committee, on the seventh day, reported seventy-seven students at Union, and thirty-eight at Columbia. It was recommended that the Assembly elect a Professor of Church History and Polity, and the Composition and Delivery of Sermons, for the latter institution. The last Assembly having altered the Constitution so that the Board of Directors should consist of twelve, one-third going out each year, and having actually elected twelve Directors on that plan, but this action not appearing on the Minutes, the Assembly required the twelve who were elected last year to determine, by lot or otherwise, at their regular annual meeting, which of them shall serve for one, which for two, and which for three years. It also appointed the Faculty and Board a Committee to enquire what changes, if any, in the Constitution would promote the usefulness of the Seminary, and especially charged them to consider the question of placing the election of Professors and the adjustment of their chairs in the power of the Board, the Assembly always reviewing their action; and also the question of putting the final determination of all matters of discipline in the hands of the Directors.

On the next day the report was adopted, and the election of Professor made the order for the day after at ten o'clock. Dr.



LEFEVRE was nominated but withdrew his name. Dr. JUNKIN and the Rev. C. R. VAUGHAN were nominated. Subsequently, Dr. LEFEVRE presented another report, stating that Dr. Plumer had tendered the resignation of his chair that he might be transferred to a chair to be called the chair of Pastoral, Casuistic, and Historic Theology. It was therefore recommended that the Assembly agree to this arrangement, and recalling all the previous action on the subject, proceed to nominate and elect a Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology, leaving Church History and Government, and Sacred Rhetoric, to be taught by the other Professors. The next day, Saturday, this report was adopted, and Dr. Girardeau was nominated by Dr. PALMER, and his election urged by Drs. J. R. WILSON, McQUEEN, STUART ROBINSON, JUNKIN, and the Rev. T. E. SMITH, the nominee seeking to dissuade the Assembly and declaring that he could not accept. On Monday, Dr. Girardeau was elected unanimously and by a rising vote. Dr. GIRARDEAU subsequently thanked the Assembly for the highest honor ever conferred upon him in this mortal life. He professed to be impressed with the unanimity of his call by this supreme court, but begged for time to consider, and trusted that if he should find himself at last in the unhappy position of appearing to resist the unanimous will of the Assembly, his brethren would do him the justice to presume that only a profound conviction of duty and conscience, in view of all the facts known to the individual himself, could have induced him to take such a position.

#### SYSTEMATIC BENEVOLENCE.

Dr. BOGGS, chairman of the Standing Committee, presented its report on the ninth day. It set forth that only forty-six Presbyteries had complied with the Assembly's directions to forward their annual report on this subject—nine less than last year. Moreover, many of the reports sent up are both irregular and defective. The printed blanks of the Committee of Publication would enable Stated Clerks of Presbyteries easily to make these reports all the Assembly desires.

The forty-six Presbyteries which have reported embrace 1,313

congregations. Of these, 284 have contributed to the six schemes of the Assembly, 167 to five, 101 to four, 119 to three, 126 to two, 122 to one, 394 to none so far as known. The whole number of collections by these 1,313 congregations should have been (1,313x6) 7,878, but they have been only 3,674—less than half.

The chief causes which interfere with our success in this matter are undoubtedly (1) the failure of many ministers to expound the Scripture doctrine of worship with their substance; (2) the neglect of many sessions to afford the people opportunity to give to the six schemes. With regard to the first, it is pertinent to remark that the ministry is responsible to the Lord, above all other agencies, for the Church's enlightenment and her growth in this, as in other graces. Touching the second, the Committee are fully persuaded that the time has come to assert the binding force of the Assembly's orders to take up collections for specified purposes. If it be true that the solemn injunctions of the Assembly upon the Sessions are merely of the nature of advice which may be set aside without the sin of disobedience to lawful authority, then it is difficult to see wherein our system of Presbytery differs from Congregational Independency and Voluntarism. Now, "the jurisdiction proposed is solely over ministers and sessions, touching the matter of their presenting these beneficent objects to their people. . . . It does not trench in the slightest degree upon the individual Christian's private judgment and liberty in regard to giving."

The action contemplated in the succeeding paragraphs was unanimously recommended by the Committee, and on the next day, the tenth, was adopted by the Assembly:

1. The Assembly solemnly urges upon pastors and other ministers their obligation to expound fully to the people the duty and privilege of giving to Christ as an essential part of acceptable worship.

2. The Assembly urges upon all its constituent Presbyteries to include this branch of ministerial duty in their stated conferences upon the state of religion in their bounds.

3. The Assembly hereby solemnly enjoins the Presbyteries to require of church sessions, in case of failure to take up any one of the collections ordered, to report in writing the reason therefor, upon the validity

of which the Presbytery shall pass judgment, approving or disapproving, as the case may be. And the Presbyteries shall state upon the face of their annual reports on Systematic Benevolence in regard to their compliance with this injunction.

4. It is made the duty of the Standing Committee on Systematic Benevolence of each General Assembly, to ascertain from the Presbyterial Reports on this subject, how far the above injunction has been complied with, and to report to the Assembly what Presbyteries, if any, have failed to comply with either of them. It is also made the duty of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to enter upon the docket the duties hereby imposed upon the said Committee as an item of business, so that the attention of the Committee may be expressly called thereto.

5. In case any Presbytery fails to report on the subject of Systematic Benevolence, or to report in due and proper form, as ordered by the Assembly, or to report in regard to either of the requirements made in the above injunction; or, if the report in the case of any Presbytery shows that it has not complied with the injunction first named, in Section 3 above, viz., in regard to the requirement from church sessions of the reasons for their failure in any case to give the people an opportunity to contribute, the Moderator of the Assembly shall thereupon appoint some member of said Presbytery as the Assembly Commissioner thereto, to bring the failure to the attention of Presbytery. And the Presbytery shall send up to the next General Assembly, along with its report on Systematic Benevolence, a statement of the reasons for said failure.

6. In order the more surely to obtain collections from vacant congregations, (without, however, lessening the separate and full responsibility of the sessions thereof in the premises, and in the absence of supplies,) the Presbyteries are hereby enjoined to require supplies sent to such vacant churches to attend to this business; and, in case of failure to do so, to render a reason therefor.

Now let it be carefully observed that this action of the Assembly assumes no jurisdiction over private individuals, nor trenches on the Christian liberty of church members. It deals only with ministers and church sessions in their official capacity, simply requiring that they give the people an opportunity to contribute.

Let it be observed again that there is a necessity for some such action by the Assembly. The Foreign Missions debt of last year was \$15,000, and more than half our congregations contributing nothing! The General Assembly enjoins on its Presbyteries collections for this and the other schemes of the Church, but has never carefully supervised the Presbyteries to see if its injunc-

tions were carried out; and the Presbyteries have never carefully supervised the ministers and sessions respecting the matter. The results stare us in the face. And it appears very plain to us that these regulations adopted by the Assembly are *lawful*, were *called for*, and will be found *practicable*, and that as enactments by the General Assembly, both scriptural and constitutional, they should receive the cordial assent and coöperation of the Presbyteries and all concerned.

#### TRANSFER OF COMMITTEES.

On the ninth day, Dr. JUNKIN, chairman of the Standing Committee on Foreign Missions, made a supplementary report, ordering the transfer of that Executive Committee to Baltimore, on the ground of the necessity of better commercial and financial facilities. Dr. STUART ROBINSON, chairman of Standing Committee on Sustentation, also presented a supplementary report, ordering the transfer of that Executive Committee to the same place, on the ground of the difficulty of separating it from Foreign Missions and the additional expense such separation would involve, and "for other reasons."

On the next day the matter was again taken up and the Standing Committee's reasons for recommending the transfer of the Foreign Missions Committee read to the Assembly, viz., greater commercial facilities, and the expensiveness of gathering the Committee from points at a distance from Columbia. These were the reasons for the transfer, while against it were the expense of dividing the Committees one from the other, and the undesirableness of placing three of our four Executive Committees within the bounds of one Synod.

Dr. LEFEVRE expressed the readiness of Baltimore to welcome both Committees, and said a house for the conduct of the Church's work would be there freely provided. He perceived the force of the objection about the one Synod. If there was any *feeling* in any part of the Church on this point, he hoped the Assembly would not make the transfer.

The report was adopted, and the transfer of Foreign Missions made.

The question then came up of transferring Sustentation also.

The report was read. Ruling elder THOMSON moved to lay the matter on the table. Dr. STUART ROBINSON pleaded the expense and the difficulty of separating the two Secretaries. He urged the laying aside of all local feelings on the subject. The motion to lay on the table did not prevail, and the motion to adopt came up. The Rev. Mr. MURKLAND protested, that, in favoring the transfer, he had regard only to the glory of the Master and the good of the Church. Dr. BOGGS urged that the expense would be less if Sustentation were kept at Columbia than if removed to Baltimore, and pleaded what was due to the Synod of South Carolina. He urged that at least there be a pause for one year. Dr. J. R. WILSON urged that the Presbyteries of the Cotton States, if *ignored*, will *ignore*. Ruling elder SHELTON pressed the same view. Ruling elder LIVINGSTON said the Assembly erred in removing Foreign Missions, but must now needs remove Sustentation also. If you do this without consulting the Presbyteries, you will furnish the people an excuse for not giving. The two Committees must be kept together. He would like to have the first action reconsidered, and let both points go together before the Presbyteries. The Rev. D. C. BOGGS said the Sustentation Committee ought to be near either to the fountains of supply or else to the field of active labor. Baltimore was neither. The Assembly ought to be careful. The Rev. J. N. CRAIG called for Dr. McILWAINE'S statement, who then remarked that this was a Sustentation Assembly—twenty of the ministers present being chairmen of Presbyterial Committees of Domestic Missions. Moreover three members of the Executive Committee were in the Assembly, two from South Carolina, and one from North Carolina. He thought the reasons for removing Foreign Missions imperative. If sure that the debt now felt to be so heavy is the heaviest we shall ever be called to carry, we might be able to meet it at Columbia. In conducting Foreign Missions, when the time to pay money abroad arrives, it must be there. In Columbia he had not one particle of help in doing this. Had it not been for a firm of James Adger & Co., in Charleston, he did not know what he would have done. We must have commercial men at the back of the Committee. Still

further, it was necessary that Foreign Missions be committed to men trained to deal with such questions. Dr. Wilson cannot live always, and the Committee ought to be in its place of permanent location, and Dr. Wilson sent there to train a Committee for this business. Yet another reason: at Columbia we cannot get without difficulty the attendance of the ruling elders of the Committee. A fourth: the Committee as now constituted is scattered at Wilmington, Charlotte, Pendleton, Sumter, Augusta, and to get them together is quite expensive.

As to Sustentation, two things are to be observed: it ought to be put where the Church will be satisfied to have it, and where you can get a good Committee. He thought there was great force in the difficulty about jealousies. He had no views of a personal nature—whatever the Assembly should say, he would be content with.

Now as to separation of the Committees. The largest sum ever raised for Foreign Missions amongst us in one year was \$42,000. But our current expenses for this year will be \$58,000, and we owe \$15,000—in all, therefore, we must raise \$73,000, which is \$31,000 beyond what we ever have done. It can be done, with earnest effort, with combined, hearty, persistent, working power put forth. But if you separate these two departments, you must give Dr. Wilson an associate, at least a Treasurer, so that he may go forth into the field where there is immense dereliction. And he trembled when he thought of Dr. Wilson being left to carry forward this work alone under this weighty burden the present year. Dr. Boggs says any Secretary can get a couple of members of his Committee to carry on his correspondence. That might be so in Education—he would not like to trust anybody to carry on his in Sustentation or in Foreign Missions. You are obliged to have a man in the Foreign Missions office. He trusted the Assembly would not act upon the idea that Dr. Wilson could leave the office and expect any of the Committee to do his work in his absence.

The Rev. Mr. CRAIG said Foreign Missions must go to Baltimore. Sustentation must go with it, until we can support a third efficient man, when it might be placed at Nashville or St. Louis.

He saw no other way. And if the reporter will take down the speech of Dr. McIlwaine, and our papers will publish it, the whole Church will say what I say and will be satisfied.

Ruling elder J. ADGER SMYTH wished, as a member of the Executive Committee, to make a statement. He was not opposed to removing the Committee from Columbia, but did not believe the argument of Dr. McIlwaine will satisfy the Church of the propriety of this movement. The statement he would make is this: the venerable Secretary of Foreign Missions had expressed to him great doubts as to the propriety of this removal of Sustentation.

Dr. GIRARDEAU said, if we crowd our Committees into the extreme Northeast on the border line, it seemed to him a large portion of the sympathies of our Church will be alienated. The time has probably come for a division of these Committees, and he hoped Sustentation would be left for the present at Columbia.

It was then moved to postpone the further consideration of the subject until the next Assembly by a vote of 51 to 42. Dr. LEFEVRE then moved the reconsideration of the vote transferring Foreign Missions to Baltimore, on the ground of his profound conviction that the separation of the two Committees would be damaging to the Church. This was agreed to. The question recurred on the adoption of the report recommending the removal of Foreign Missions. After further remarks from Drs. Stuart Robinson and Chapman and Rev. H. G. Hill, the vote was again taken, and the report again adopted by 45 to 42.

Just before the dissolution, it was moved to reconsider the vote to postpone the question of removing Sustentation to Baltimore until the next Assembly. Dr. STUART ROBINSON urged the necessity of not separating the two Committees. We shall run the greatest risk imaginable of breaking down the whole concern. He would send both to Baltimore this year, with the understanding that, after they get through with their difficulties, we shall remove the Sustentation Committee to Nashville or St. Louis.

Some questions of order were here raised, and the hour being late, it was moved to adjourn, but lost. Dr. LEFEVRE then called

the question. The call was sustained, and the motion to reconsider agreed to.

Dr. E. P. PALMER urged the danger of serious complications, if the Committees were separated.

Dr. STUART ROBINSON pleaded for bridging over this year by leaving the two together.

Dr. BOGGS said Dr. Wilson had told him emphatically that he did not think it necessary to send the Committees together, and he besought the Assembly not to agree to this important change of policy at this late hour of the night.

The Rev. Mr. MURKLAND strongly urged the Assembly not to send them Foreign Missions without Sustentation also, and quoted Dr. J. L. Wilson for that view.

The Rev. Mr. SILLIMAN favored sending the Committee to Baltimore. He said Dr. Boggs had misunderstood Dr. J. L. Wilson. He had talked with him more than once on the subject.

Dr. ROBINSON said just insert the words "for the present year," and every body will be satisfied.

Under the call of "the question," the motion to postpone was not agreed to, and then the report of the Committee was adopted.

We agree entirely with Dr. Robinson that all *local* feelings in reference to these Committees ought to be abandoned. We "do not see (as he said) that it makes any difference where they are," so that we get a good Committee, without too much expense in bringing them together, and so that the Church is satisfied. Whether the Church will be satisfied to have three of these Committees in the Northeast corner of her boundaries and in one Synod, we cannot tell. But, for ourselves, we hope that the Presbyterians of the Cotton States will not fulfil Dr. J. R. Wilson's prediction, and ignore because ignored. The honest fact is that no ecclesiastical power belongs to these Committees—they are in no sense the old Boards. And no danger can possibly arise to the Church from their being crowded into any corner whether northeast or southwest, provided the brethren will just believe so and be satisfied. It is high time that we put away all these petty sectional jealousies, and view our Church as indeed



one body, with no diverse interests whatsoever. Surely we are little enough to keep us from such intestine divisions; and this is one reason why we oppose organic union with the North.

STATUS OF DISMISSED ELDERS.

On the tenth and last day, the Assembly took up the report on Overture No. 20, from J. R. Hughes and J. N. Saunders and others, asking the Assembly to decide the force of our Discipline, Chap. X., § 1, in relation to the status of a church member dismissed, who does not make use of but returns the letter of dismissal to the session; and also to say what is the official status of a ruling elder in the same circumstances. The Committee of Bills and Overtures recommended the Assembly to answer that the church member is to be recognised as a member, but that the elder is not to be recognised as an elder without a fresh expression of the wishes of the congregation to that effect.

Dr. BOGGS objected to that answer. There are but four ways in our system for putting an end to the functions of a ruling elder: (1) death; (2) degradation; (3) valid dismissal, which has become a consummated act when the dismissed elder becomes simply a member in the second congregation, possessing still the ruling eldership, but not the right of exercising it in that congregation; (4) an agreement between the elder and the session that he shall cease acting in the congregation where he has been an elder. The method now proposed of getting rid of elders comes in under neither of these four heads, and constitutes therefore a fifth and new method. We do not need a fifth. The report makes *ex post facto* law, and puts into the Constitution what is not there. He wished this important matter referred to an Assembly not so home-sick as this one.

Dr. LEFEVRE said he was opposed to the fundamental idea of the report. Dismissed elders are elders till received into another church—as much so as if they had merely gone on a visit to Europe and returned.

In the evening session of the last day, just before the dissolution, the subject was again taken up, and referred to the next Assembly.

There can be no doubt whatever that our Discipline (Chap. X., § 1,) leaves the dismissed member amenable to the jurisdiction of the church dismissing him until he is actually received into the other church. Now duties and rights stand and fall together. If amenableness to jurisdiction stands during the *interim*, the rights stand along with it. The one cannot be more enduring than the other. It would be orderly, however, for the session to take note of the return of the member to the rights and duties of membership.

Now as to the ruling elder, there can be no more question than as to the private member. Our Discipline expressly says (Chap. X., § 2,) that the same principle applies to the minister as to the private member—and why should it not apply also to the elder or the deacon? The highest officer amongst us—the teaching elder—cannot lay down his office without the Presbytery's act after hearing from the people. The logic of our system would seem to require that no ruling elder can ever be properly released from his office in any church, unless first the people are heard from by the session on the subject. If it be said that no such course is ever considered to be necessary, and that by usage and custom the eldership is left to stand or fall with the membership, then of course it must follow that, in the case under consideration, the eldership is restored with the membership.

#### SEARCHING FOR THE POLITICAL IN OUR ASSEMBLY RECORDS.

Dr. BOGGS offered the following paper, prepared by one on whose shoulders much of the responsibility devolved in the recent negotiations at Baltimore :

Whereas, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, did, at its first organisation in 1861, and also at various times since, formally and distinctly declare its conviction as to the nature and functions of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, especially as to its non-secular and non-political character ;

And whereas, notwithstanding this, it may be that certain expressions have been inadvertently admitted into some of the papers on our records, which, as it is alleged, are inconsistent with the well considered and formal views aforesaid ; therefore,

*Resolved*, That this subject be referred to a committee of three, whose duty it shall be to make a careful examination and make report to the

next General Assembly; to the end that no vestige of anything inconsistent with the clearly defined position of our General Assemblies may be left to impair the testimony of our Church upon this vital point.

He said it was rarely inexpedient to do right. It cannot hurt us as a Church to carry out those principles so dear to our hearts, and search our records, as with a candle, to find any thing there which is inconsistent with them. It has been said that some expressions have inadvertently crept in, which, while not to the full extent political, do nevertheless squint in that direction. He thought we ought carefully to expunge them from our records, or adopt explanatory minutes of doubtful expressions, such as "conserving slavery," etc. The resolution was adopted unanimously.

This is a good step, although it has already been and will again be misconstrued into the confession that our Assembly has erred like her Northern sister. We can afford to do right, however, even though misrepresented for it. But Dr. Boggs's suggestion about *expunging* strikes us unfavorably. We have no right to *expunge any thing* from our records, though we might explain. There will be found, however, very little to explain on the records of our Assembly. As to the expression quoted, it is not a political utterance at all, but a moral and religious one. The subject under consideration at the time by the Assembly at Charlotte, was the spiritual welfare of the slaves and the duties owed by us to them. It was only in reference to the moral and religious aspects of slavery the Assembly spoke. And viewing the slaves of the South as a sacred trust providentially committed to a Christian people, our Church spoke of slavery as the Church of Jesus Christ of old always did speak of it, and as the Scriptures speak of it, *conservatively*. We feel very little disposed to have our Assembly offer explanations of its language to the wild, radical, infidel spirit of this age which assumes to be better than the Bible. Let Northern Presbyterians pander, if they will, to this spirit—we hope our Church never will. Bible morality is good enough for us—whoever wants better dishonors God's word.

#### PRESBYTERIAN CONFEDERATION.

Overtures from four Presbyteries having proposed to the Assembly to revoke the action of the last Assembly and to adopt

measures favorable to this scheme, the Committee on Bills and Overtures, on the fifth day, recommended that this Assembly appoint delegates to the conference proposed to be held on this subject in London on the 21st July ensuing. The chairman, Dr. GIRARDEAU, stated that he acted simply as the Committee's organ, whose action did not represent his views. The report was made the order of the day for the next day at 3 p. m., but it was not reached, nor did the subject come up until the tenth and last day. Dr. ROBINSON then offered the following resolution as a substitute for the Committee's report :

*Resolved*, That this Assembly appoint a Committee on Confederation of the Presbyterian Churches of the world, with authority to correspond with similar committees of other Presbyterian bodies in reference to the Constitution to be proposed in such a general council, and, if the Committee deem it wise and practicable, appoint a delegate or delegates to the proposed conference, to be held in London on the 21st day of July, 1875.

He said he was not in favor of sending Commissioners, but of putting ourselves *in line* in the matter. We are making a mistake by isolating ourselves too much. We complain that we are not known, but are ourselves partly to blame. We ought to look into this thing; and if it is right, get into the Confederation circle. If we do not choose upon examination, we will not go into it. I do not like the idea of standing off.

Dr. PALMER was willing to appoint a Committee to consider the question, but Dr. Robinson's paper went beyond that and settles our policy. If adopted, we must go into that confederation. We cannot now, at the very heel of the sessions, adequately discuss the subject. Give us the interval of a year, and let us see the shape and form which the thing will take, and you may have our Church a unit for it.

Dr. IRVINE said the first meeting of the confederation is expected to be held in May, 1876. Dr. Palmer's judicious suggestion would render it impossible for us to take part in it till 1877. Again he thought it would be a serious error for this Assembly, which is just getting to be known and felt as a power amongst Presbyterians, to appear indifferent to this movement.

Ruling elder X. RYLAND said the proposition simply was, for all true Presbyterians to take each other by the hand.

Dr. CHAPMAN would amend by striking out what related to the appointment of delegates.

Dr. E. P. PALMER objected to intrusting the question to any Committee. Let the Assembly settle it.

Dr. GIRARDEAU said the various Presbyterian bodies have their standards, and through these they express their external unity; while if they desire to express their internal unity, there is the Lord's Supper, in which we hold communion with all our Christian brethren. He thought the action of the last Assembly should not be reversed. The ground then taken was, that this is not a matter relating to the coördination of courts. What is this confederation? Sir, it is a gigantic voluntary association. Label it Presbyterian, if you choose; but it is not a Presbyterian court that is proposed to be formed. It is not a grand œcumenical council, holding national churches together by one common bond. If it were, it would be a serious question whether we should keep ourselves apart from the current which would draw all Presbyterian bodies into that recapitulating Assembly. But, sir, just because this is a voluntary association, and is proposed to us as Presbyterian, let us not be deceived.

Are we prepared to be factors in the origination of this voluntary society? He did not see how we could do so in consistency with our principles. This body will be executive in its functions as well as advisory in its powers. And do you suppose that this great body gathering to itself the supreme intelligence of the Presbyterian Church will be content with doing nothing? It will lay its hand upon the moral sentiment of the Presbyterian world, and mould it to its will.

Further, it seemed to him inconsistent just at this stage of our history to go into this connexion. We had declined (and he thought on good grounds) to go into fraternal correspondence with our brethren of the Northern Presbyterian Church. They will go into that conference; if we go in as integers, we contradict the action we have here endorsed. He was for making haste slowly, and would have the question referred to the next Assembly.

The Rev. Mr. MURKLAND said: I am deeply pained, and it is

with diffidence that I oppose these venerable brethren; but I rejoice to stand upon this floor to advocate the scheme proposed for a Pan-Presbyterian Confederation; because it is one of the first steps by which our Church is coming to the front in the great movements of the Church of God, which our century is witnessing, and to which the providence of God is calling the whole Church of Jesus Christ. . . . .

When the last Assembly met, this measure was incomplete. We knew not whither it was going. It now comes before us with a written Constitution, with specifications which are definite; and we walk not in the dark, but on the broad platform of a written Constitution. . . . .

I take it, sir, that this great Pan-Presbyterian Confederation is simply in the line of presbyterial order of government by courts, parliamentary bodies—a realisation of the unity of the Church in these parliamentary Assemblies, rising from the church Session to the Presbytery, from the Presbytery to the Synod, from the Synod to the great Assembly of all the churches. . . .

I am one of your youngest members. This is the first time I have ever stood in this grand council of our beloved Church, and I rejoice that the first speech I make is in advocacy of our Southern Church stepping forward to the front, and taking the position that God in his providence calls us to assume. Born in the throes of a mighty political struggle, baptized in tears and blood, growing to spiritual maturity amid those intense afflictions which an all-wise and merciful God has placed upon our Church, this, the youngest born of the Churches of Jesus Christ, stands now in all the majesty of her virgin beauty, commanding the love and homage of the civilised world. I say that the duty of the Southern Church is to march to the front, to take the hands of her sisters, her mothers, to speed the Church of Jesus Christ—to join hands with the mother Church of Scotland, which, although her breasts are scarred with many a conflict, still bears, covering her scars, Christ's evangel and a pure Presbyterianism; to join hands with that old Presbyterian Church in England, which, against all the opposition of prelacy, has been able to uphold the banner of a pure gospel in the great capital of the world; to

join hands with our brethren across the border who transplanted the Presbyterianism of Scotland to the climes of Canada, and have built up a noble Church for Jesus Christ; to join with the Dutch Church which we all love; to join the Reformed Church of France, and the pure Church of the Waldenses, which has held the truth of God as untainted as the crystalline snows of her own Alpine summits—to join each of these, some old and some young, but we the youngest born of all—and march to the front, singing one song “unto Him that loved us,” and reaching forth to the realisation of that great end for which Christ gave his prayers and his life.

Judge BARTON thought the Committee should be appointed; he was perfectly in harmony with those brethren who wished to send a delegate now.

The Assembly then, the hour of recess being close at hand, proceeded to other business.

On the last evening the subject was resumed. The Rev. Mr. MURKLAND moved the adoption of Dr. Robinson’s paper.

The Rev. Mr. FRIERSON said there had come no motion or paper before the Assembly that he more cordially approved. The Presbyterian family is large—there are noble men in the Reformed Church of France, of Holland, of the Waldenses, of Scotland, Ireland, England. Are we to be Presbyterian Ishmaelites? I trust not.

Ruling elder CLAPP said these are progressive times. The world moves. We must move with it, or be left behind. He saw here no entangling alliance and no compromise of doctrine or church polity. He would resist as quickly as any man any innovation in our principles, but here he saw none.

Ruling elder OGDEN, referring to the remark as to this being a “progressive time,” quoted Bacon to the effect that in matters of natural science, all is to be held subject to improvement; yet in matters of civil polity—and much more, (said the speaker,) in ecclesiastical affairs—even changes for *the better* are to be suspected. He thought now that the course proposed is a distinct contravention of the system of the Presbyterian Church. That system has never attempted to rear a great indivisible Church in this

world. It is the small, compact, homogeneous churches that are the greatest workers for the glory of God. The Presbyterian system unites all believers in Jesus at his table, but favors no great hierarchy absorbing all the separate organisations. Some say there is no danger, it is only a "hand-shaking." But they have adopted a Constitution, and that is a cause for alarm. What is a Constitution? It is organic law—law that produces a creature, and brings into existence a being. And what is this being we are about to produce? It is one that is to be clothed with power from the very start, and to be the judge of its own statutes, so as to extend its power as far as it may choose. It will at the start send its deliverances, of course, as *recommendations*; but with your knowledge of human nature, do you not believe, that after a while its recommendations will come down as orders, and we shall be schismatics if we do not obey? And so a Presbyterian organisation, composed of heterogeneous materials from pure Presbyterianism down to Rationalism, is to give law to our Presbyterian churches! Sir, you are about to innovate—to change the principles working in our Church from the commencement, and you are about to do it with little thought or consideration as to consequences.

When Mr. Murkland, in his beautiful remarks, referred to the Waldenses, it struck me that the illustration saps the foundation of his argument. If there is a case in all history that bears me out in the claim I make to-night, it is that of the Waldenses in their mountain fastnesses, shut out from all the world, in absolute isolation and exclusion, preserving the principles of a pure Christianity while the grand hierarchy of the Romish Church was all around them, formed exactly in the way you propose to form this great confederation, which is to glorify man—to glorify the Presbyterian Church, but not to glorify God, because it adds nothing to the strength of the Church for good in God's kingdom. Let us be guided by the wisdom of Bacon, and innovate like nature, slowly. Here you propose at a single bound to jump the whole chasm and create this irresponsible body, over which you are to exercise no control.

The Rev. H. G. HILL said the last speaker represented what



is proposed as the formation of a grand Presbyterian court, to which all shall be subordinated who enter into it. But nothing of this sort was contemplated. He read freely from a plan of Constitution for the confederation, to show the correctness of his statement.

Dr. PALMER said, if this were to be a great Presbyterian prayer-meeting, he should not say a word against it. If it were to be a *bona fide* General Assembly for the whole world, he should be equally far from opposing it. Such a proposition might be premature; but seventeen years ago, in the General Assembly which met at New Orleans, he had, on the floor, expressed the hope that he might live to sit in such a General Assembly. But his objection was, that you were now to have a General Assembly with all the moral power such a body could exert, but none of the checks and limitations attaching to a properly organised church court.

Moderator, the Presbyterian Church in this country has always suffered whenever she has departed by the breadth of a hair from her recognised principles. She never has entered into compromises with Congregationalism,—or gone into the support of voluntary associations of any sort, without suffering in the end. Here, then, is the first objection which I raise—that you are creating a power, as Colonel Ogden has so eloquently stated, and which, therefore, I need not repeat. *You are creating a power.* It may profess not to decree; it may content itself with recommendation; but still it will stand up as the apex of the great Presbyterian cone. The decisions and utterances of that body will be regarded as the annunciation of the Presbyterian sentiment of the world, and its utterances will be *pro tanto* decisions. They will, in the force which they will gather around them, overbear the opinions, judgments, and utterances of the particular Presbyterian Assemblies of the particular countries where they are held. The very argument used in this Assembly, that we must “come into line,” will continue to prevail—that we must keep in line, that we must not break away from the path marked out by this great Council, which represents the thought and sentiment of the whole Presbyterian world. Sir, it is too great a

power to be irresponsible. I am afraid of it. I tell you, Moderator, I am afraid of it; and my only hope is, that before it shall be able to do any serious detriment to the Church of God, it will break down by its own weight and become disintegrated. If it does not. I tell you that it will become, in the end, a great irresponsible, infallible Presbyterian Pope, and there will be no power in any Presbyterian Assembly, standing in our place, to lift up her voice and measure strength with that "creature" which aggregates all the elements of Presbyterian power throughout the world, and which is not held in check by one solitary restraint which we can impose upon it.

I have another objection, sir; and I will endeavor to be brief. What kind of Presbyterianism are you going to put in this general Council at the apex of the cone? Mark you, sir, each constituent factor that goes into the composition of that body, must necessarily concede something which is peculiar to itself. And when you have aggregated all the concessions which are made by all the constituent factors in that body, you get a Presbyterianism of the lowest conceivable type—a Presbyterianism the least positive in the assertion of our principles—a Presbyterianism which, through concessions here, concessions there, and concessions everywhere, will be denuded of its power. Such will be the Presbyterianism which is to utter the Presbyterian sentiment of the world, and to overbear our testimonies which will then become feeble as lifted against theirs. Here is the Presbyterianism in Europe, which is linked with the State. Is it possible that we can go into that general Council with these Presbyterian bodies which are identified with the State, and lift up the testimony which you have uttered this very evening in the paper, unanimously adopted, in which we declare, in the most emphatic terms, the non-secular, non-political character of the Church? I tell my excellent brother, Dr. Robinson, by whose side I have been laboring all my life in defence of these principles, and contending for the non-political character of the Church, that, if he should go under the appointment of this Assembly and stand upon that floor, he will find his hands tied and his tongue paralysed as to any utterance which he shall dare to make in that

body in reference to the principles which God specially calls us to uphold and to proclaim. The Presbyterianism of that general Council will be a Presbyterianism created by concessions on every hand. And, Moderator, I would not have a Presbyterian system of that sort. If we are to have a Council, let it be a Council that grows up in the form of a legitimate Assembly, where there is no contravention of the spirit and principles of our government and order.

There was a grand opportunity given to the Presbyterian Church when it was transferred from European shores and stood upon this virgin continent, to work out untrammelled the principles of a pure and perfect Presbyterianism; but, alas! under the same infatuation which I fear is overbearing this Assembly, we went into an alliance with Congregationalism and Independency; and to this very hour, our principles and our practice are, to a large degree, tainted with the influence which was exerted upon us by and through that alliance. Sir, believing that this isolated Church of ours is, in the sublime providence of God, placed in exactly the position to work out a pure Presbyterianism, I consecrate my life to that; I am content with the sphere of this Southern Presbyterian Church. I have no ambition to walk the streets of Edinburgh, or to preach to the congregations in Scotland, if I must do so at the sacrifice of appearing as a delegate upon the floor of such an Œcumenical Council as this paper proposes. No, sir, the remainder of this life will be consecrated in the fear of God to the development, the perpetuation, and exposition of the principles of Presbyterianism as I understand them, as they are stated in the word of God, as they are summarily expressed in our Standards; and I am unwilling to run any ventures by which this Presbyterianism, which I desire to be more perfect in this Church of ours, shall be strangled.

I do believe, Mr. Moderator, that my excellent brother, Dr. Robinson, is making the saddest mistake of his life in giving his adhesion to this movement, and that he will find himself, from this period to the end of his days—unless he shall be led by considerations such as I am now suggesting, somewhat to review and perhaps reverse his decision—he will find himself crippled and

trammelled in the very work to which I know his conscience and his heart are pledged. I want to save him from that mistake. I want to save this dear Church from being entangled in alliances which will cripple her efficiency and her power. Be it so, Moderator, that like the Waldenses we are the conies upon the tops of the mountains, hanging to the ledges of the rock with our feeble feet; let us, in our feebleness, in our isolation, (still in that isolation the object of universal contemplation,) work out our destiny until the Lord pushes us to the front to do the great work in propagating our principles to the end of the earth. Here, in the corners of the world, let a pure Presbyterianism find a refuge—a Presbyterianism that I believe is on the eve of being strangled in the Northern Church, that cannot successfully, under present arrangements, be worked out elsewhere anywhere on the globe but here. Let us, in our isolation, in our obscurity, upon this plane, work out our mission, and the Lord will give us all the prominence that we deserve and all that we desire; and we shall speak out from this obscurity, from the chambers in which the Lord God has placed us for a time to hide us, a voice that will peal over the earth, and whose echoes will ring until that trumpet sounds which shall wake the dead to judgment!

He would briefly state a third objection. There have been changes made quietly in this paper—the fifteen original specifications “boiled down” to five, and one or two of the most alarming things dropped out of the specifications. But there remain intimations which he regarded as of exceeding danger. They did propose to undertake the protection of the feeble and push forward civil freedom throughout the world, and to speak to the Sultan and the Czar. And they do now propose to take up the whole question of temperance and of the religious interests of great cities. The very work committed to the Church in her organised form is to be assumed by this irresponsible voluntary association.

He had not wished to make this speech. It had been pressed out of him with great sorrow and pain. He had hoped for postponement and inquiry. But the debate has come, and now what will these brethren gain by pressing to a vote which strips the movement of all effect? You will have a split vote—not such a

one as that by which you ought to carry your Church into a policy so vast and of such important influences.

Dr. ROBINSON: It is so late in the evening that, as a modest man, I will only make a few remarks in response to the argument of Dr. Palmer.

As for the first argument, I understand it to be that he agrees with me thoroughly in the idea that if we could make this a sure enough General Assembly of the world, then he would go for it. Well, Dr. Palmer and I are thoroughly together in our doctrine, so that I have not changed my principles any. But, let me ask, how are you going to get that General Assembly of all the Churches in the world, unless you begin and have a Conference, a Council with your brethren, as the stepping-stone to it? How shall we make such a General Assembly of all the Churches in the world, if we stand off as strangers one to the other, never learning anything; keeping ourselves in isolation, not knowing what the Presbyterians of the world think, and they not knowing what we think? That argument, it seems to me, is answered; he has made an argument against his own position. I doubt very much whether he and Dr. Girardeau will stand faster by the High-Church principle than I do; but it is because I love that principle, and want to carry it out, that I beg Dr. Girardeau and Dr. Palmer to help me carry it out.

We are told that this thing will exercise a great moral influence, and my friend Ogden has pictured the danger of a great central power. The arguments of our friends on the other side do not agree together. Dr. Palmer wants a central power, and Colonel Ogden spoke against it as dangerous. I set off Dr. Palmer's theory against Colonel Ogden's theory, and I think they thoroughly nullify one another; only I will add this in response further, that you do not avoid the force of that moral power by not going into it. When all the Presbyterians in the world together shall undertake to decide these questions, will not that moral power be just as great, whether we are in the concern or not? Certainly we do not avoid it by staying out of it. We had better go in.

But, understand, my resolution does not propose to go in. It

proposes to say that we are all ready for that great General Assembly which Dr. Palmer and I look forward to. If we see that they are starting in the right direction, we'll go on; and if we find that it is un-Presbyterian, we can back out easy enough.

Well, we are asked, "What kind of Presbyterianism is this going to be?" Why, that is settled before we start. Didn't you hear read from that article that it was not to be a modern Broad-Churchism, of concessions here and concessions there? It is to be the *consensus* of the Reformed Churches. That is the platform, to start with; and whenever they depart from that *consensus*—as soon as they swerve from that, we can take our hats and leave. The basis is not to be the basis of your "moderate Presbyterianism;" it is going back to the old theology—the *consensus* of the Churches of the Reformation, which we stand by. And who more eloquently could stand up and plead for that *consensus* than Dr. Palmer himself? We all hold to that. We all meet this Broad-Churchism by pleading that *consensus*. It is, therefore, a mistake to think that this is to be made up of concessions. There are no concessions to be made. Every Church is to stand by its faith. The Council will have no control over the faith of the Churches. It is a Council for executive purposes, and your doctrines are settled in your General Assemblies, as they now are. It is only to deal with the question of the extension of our religion over the world: to help the feeble Churches, is one proposition.

That leads me to suggest another idea. We have been warned not to go into the Council, because we are small. It is like Rhode Island and New Jersey, those little sand-patches, being afraid of going into the American Union. A pretty story, for Rhode Island to make a fuss about going into the Confederation with other States! Why, it is the large party that have reasons to fear, because in the Council we shall be equal to the largest. And if that big Assembly at the North don't behave themselves and stand by the truth, we little bodies will conspire together and make them behave themselves! That is my idea of the thing. I am not afraid to risk the Southern Presbyterian Church in any common concern in the world. Let us only have a fair

and equal voice, and I am not afraid of our being overrun. I maintain that, in proportion to our numbers, though it may seem a little boastful, we have more brains and more orthodoxy than any, and can better defend ourselves in any common scrimmage. As I tell my people at home, I am not afraid to go into any of these coöperative things. Presbyterians have brains enough to stand up for their end of the matter, in any partnership they go into. But we are not going into any partnership. Dr. Palmer suggests that we put it off till next year. My complaint is that we have been playing Rip Van Winkle long enough. This thing has been going on for two or three years, and we are going to wait until it is all fixed, and then ask for admission! Sir, I want to be at the first. I want to go in there before the door is shut and I have to be voted in by these brethren at the North. I would rather take part in forming the Constitution than to wait until it is done, and then ask permission to come in. Dr. Palmer speaks of his pride in the glorious truths which we hold, and in being isolated in the teaching of them. Sir, I trust I love those truths, and I have as much admiration of them, and I feel as proud, as he, when I hear even the Northern brethren speak of us, as I have heard them, as the purest body of Presbyterians in the world; but I think Dr. Palmer mistakes his calling in what he says about holding them in isolation. That is not my notion. If we have got a pure Presbyterianism, I want to go and tell it to somebody else. I want "to tell to sinners round," what a glorious gospel we have found. It is not our business to "hide our light under a bushel." Jesus Christ told us to preach the gospel to every creature. I want to get our Presbyterianism into the "frontier and destitute settlements" of the North. I am proud to say that I had a sort of invitation to consider the question whether I would go to Philadelphia to take charge of a church that was a New School church before the reunion, and I had to make the reply that I was at the centre, at Louisville, and was too old to go into the frontier and destitute settlements.

That just brings up the grand mistake that I think my good brother Palmer, whom I love above all men in the Church, and admire the most, and Dr. Girardeau make. As I told the Nash-

ville Assembly, the grand trouble with the Southern Church was, that in the command to "go, teach all nations," they interpreted the "all nations" to mean their side of the Potomac and Ohio. I do not believe in that. We have got the true thing; we have the true metal, and I want to go out and ring it in the ear of these Moderates, and No-Churchmen, and Broad-Churchmen. I want to put ourselves in the position where our testimony for Jesus Christ, and for a pure Church, will be heard—not to stand here in our isolation, and the world know nothing about it. There is where Dr. Palmer and I differ—not that we differ in our admiration for the Southern Church; but I admire it so much that I want other people to see how beautiful and how strong it is. I have changed no principles that I know of, brethren. If I seem to have liberalised up a little in some of these things, I stand by my principles as I always did. I have so much faith in them—I used to be not so certain, but now I am so certain that my principles are true—that I want to go all over the earth and proclaim them.

Says Dr. Palmer: "Go into alliance with those Church-and-State men over there!" Sir, the Church-and-State system is tottering to its fall, and I want to go over there and help shake it down! I felt gratified when that book, "Discourses of Redemption," with that appendix bringing out the doctrine of the Southern Church so strong against Church-and-Stateism, was published in Edinburgh by Clark & Co., the great theological house. I do not know anything that delighted me more than to see those Scotchmen reading that appendix. I tell you the Church-and-State system is not going to trouble any of us very long. I do not believe it will last until the first meeting of this great Council. Understand, I am not advocating going in; I am only advocating discussing the matter with these brethren, and if they do anything we are afraid of, quit in time; but if we wait and go in after the thing is all formed, we have to go in at a disadvantage.

Dr. Palmer's third argument was that a change had been made in the paper. Well, he knows more about it, I see, than I do. He says that out of this paper there has been dropped the thing



that alarmed him most. Why, that proves that a more sensible set of men had got hold of the thing.

I agree with Dr. Palmer, that we cannot touch Congregationalism with any alliance. We have suffered from that. There is where we suffered in the Westminster Assembly when it compromised. I vowed to take that Form of Government at my ordination, and I take a great deal more. I take the Second Book of Discipline of the old original Scotch Church—that original Constitution that called for this Council of Presbyterians of all the world.

I would just say in conclusion, that I have been led to this simply by hearing, as you have heard everywhere, complaints that our Church isolates itself. I complained over there in Edinburgh of the way we were treated by the churches of Scotland and Ireland. They said, "Oh, we told our delegates to go to your Assembly as well as to the other." "Yes," said I, "but when you get there, you never find any United States south of Baltimore and Washington. The strip by the Lakes is all you see. You do not know any Presbyterian Church but this Northern body." "Yes, but we have sent delegates to your body." "Yes, and I prophesy that your delegates will go to the Baltimore Assembly, and when they are about going to Little Rock, those fellows will make them believe that they are in certain danger of their lives, unless they carry an arsenal." Good men, our friends, like Dykes of London, Rainy and others in Edinburgh, when I said, "You take the Northern accounts of us," said, "But you isolate yourselves; how can we get any account of you?" When Dr. John Hall, who is a friend of ours at heart, and of our principles, because he is a conservative man, said, "You have no literature in your Church at the South." I said, "We are a talking people, rather than a writing people." He said, "Why are you complaining that you are not known? that the world believes the stories of these Northern men? If you are foolish enough to give them all the writing and isolate yourselves, how can you expect the world to do anything else?" Therefore, I want to take the step. I doubt whether we shall have a delegate at this Conference; it is simply a Conference

to consider and amend this proposed constitution. I want to show, if we do not do anything else, that we are interested in this great matter. The general principle that governs me in this, is the same that made me ask the Assembly to thank the Sunday-school Union for their missionary work. We are poor, broken down, oppressed. We have got the truth, but we have not got the means of circulating it. I am for taking hold of everything that will help to hold us up, and carry our glorious Southern Presbyterianism, in its purity, to the end of the world. Therefore, I want this resolution passed.

The Rev. Mr. SILLIMAN: I feel that my good brother Palmer is too "scarey" in this matter. We cannot afford to let this opportunity pass. Stave it off another year, and it will be too late. I am entirely in favor of rescinding the resolution of last year.

Dr. IRVINE: I said a few things this morning, very briefly. I wish to say a few words to-night, if it is not too late. Perhaps it is unseemly on my part, as I am comparatively a stranger, to say anything in this Assembly; but a few things have been advanced by our respected and beloved brother Palmer and by his eloquent colleague from New Orleans, which I think have not been entirely met by the argument of Dr. Robinson; and it is on that account that I want to make a statement or two.

First of all, it is assumed by both these brethren, and it runs through their arguments, that a juridical or authoritative power is to be assumed by or conceded to this Council. There are two grand fundamental principles which the Presbyterian Church, from the days of Calvin and Knox to this day, has held, and for which this Church has most nobly contended. The first is that her doctrinal standards are founded on and are agreeable to the word of God. For that principle, more blood was shed at the Reformation than any other—I mean the first Reformation. The second principle is that which was admirably and forcibly brought out by the retiring Moderator—that the constitution and order of the Presbyterian Church are founded in God's word. For these two grand fundamental principles of our holy and heaven-

given Presbyterianism, our fathers in the motherland and you in this land have most nobly contended.

Now, Moderator, if that Constitution, a mere synopsis of which has been read to-night, and which is but tentative (it is thrown out for hints, and your delegate to London, if you send one, may tear it up if he likes)—if that or any other Constitution should interfere with these grand fundamental principles of Presbyterianism, I should at once lift my voice against sending a single delegate to London or Edinburgh. But this proposition leaves your Confessions as they are and where they are. It tells these holy and godly men who have been compared to the conies on the mountain tops of the Alps—it tells that ancient Church of the Valleys, that they may bring their Confessions of Faith with them, and that this will not be a juridical body, a General Assembly, (I would like to see such a one myself,) with any authority to introduce or alter one single sentence or section. It tells the Churches of Scotland and Ireland and England that they may come with their Confessions of Faith and their Solemn League and Covenant. It tells the General Assemblies in these States that they may all bring their symbols and lay them on that table, and that the Council will not dare to interfere with one solitary principle of doctrine held or maintained by these Churches. It says the same to the Presbyterian Churches of France, and of Switzerland, and all on the continent of Europe. It invites Australia with her united Church, (I remember when there were three,) and the Church in Canada, once three distinct Assemblies, but which meet next month in Montreal as one body, all singing the same Psalms, all fighting for the same great principles, the old Church having shaken off all the church perquisites acquired when Canada was ceded by France to Great Britain. This proposal, therefore, interferes with no solitary principle held by us or any of the various Churches. If it did, I would say, Away with all such proposals for union; it is building with untempered mortar; we hold no alliance with a body which dares to interfere with the glorious principles laid down in our standards.

With regard to the second point, what does it say there? There are some little elements of difference between the Church of the

Waldenses and ourselves in regard to government ; there is some difference between the old Church of Scotland, the United Church, and the Reformed Church, in regard to government. Now, in that great Council which it is proposed to hold, how much of the "establishment" element, to which Dr. Palmer has very justly referred, will you find ? You will find a few who are receiving some paltry sums out of the public purse in France, it is true ; and a few from Scotland who hold the old establishment principles and collect teinds and tithes. The Irish Church has flung off the *Regium Donum*, and the Established Church of Scotland is now suing before the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain for disestablishment. And what will be the result ? The result will be that the old Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland will, probably, before Dr. Robinson or Dr. Palmer is called to the Church in glory, be all rolled up into one great body—the Presbyterian Church of Scotland—just as in Australia and in Canada.

Dr. LEFEVRE : I am suffering from a suppressed speech, but instead of making it, I call for "the question."

The call was sustained, and the question was taken on Dr. Chapman's amendment, to strike out the latter part of Dr. Robinson's substitute, leaving it to read : "*Resolved*, That this Assembly appoint a Committee on Confederation of the Presbyterian Churches of the world, with authority to correspond with similar committees of the Presbyterian bodies in reference to the Constitution to be proposed in such a General Council." This amendment was not agreed to, the vote showing, on a division, 37 to 41.

The question recurred on Dr. Robinson's substitute, which was agreed to. On the original resolution, as amended, a "call for the question" was made and sustained. A call for the ayes and noes was not agreed to, and the vote was taken by a division, which stood 44 to 28.

So the resolution as amended was adopted. The Moderator appointed as the Committee, Dr. Robinson, Dr. Lefevre, Mr. Murkland, and Judge Inglis.

Thanks having been voted to the citizens of St. Louis for gen-

erous hospitality and considerate courtesy; to the churches of the city which had been opened to our ministers; to the Railroad Companies which had reduced fares for members of the Assembly; and to the Postmaster at St. Louis for special postal facilities—the Assembly was dissolved, and another required to meet in the First Presbyterian church in Savannah, on the third Thursday in May, 1876, at eleven o'clock a. m. A hymn was sung, and the Moderator made prayer and pronounced the apostolic benediction.

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NOTE.—The following was accidentally omitted on p. 614:

#### ASSEMBLY'S ACTION ON FOREIGN MISSIONS.

1. The Assembly, gratefully recognising the hand of God in the success and enlarged scope of our foreign missionary work, would express its strong conviction that this enlarged character of our operations demands increased liberality on the part of our people. The Assembly therefore enjoins upon all its Presbyteries to see that each of their respective churches shall have the subject of Foreign Missions presented to its consideration during the current year, and an opportunity afforded to each to contribute to the cause. And it further recommends that, in some methodical way, the Presbyteries shall strive to secure the compliance, on the part of all their Sessions, with the duty prescribed. The Assembly would urge the Presbyteries to make a most earnest effort to secure at least an average of eighty cents for each member in their churches. If this be done—and it surely *ought* to be done—the Executive Committee will be enabled to carry on its work without embarrassment, and to provide for the liquidation of its debt.

2. The Assembly heartily approves the course of the Executive Committee by which the present enlarged scope has been given to our foreign missionary operations. It would express, at the same time, the conviction that it would be injudicious to expand our operations in any way that will require increased expenditure, until present financial embarrassments are removed.

3. This Assembly calls attention to the remarkable fact that the gifts of our Sabbath-schools and the "Women's Missionary Associations," during the year past, amount to one-third of the entire sum furnished by the regular contributions of the churches. And in view of this fact, the churches are urged to a large increase of these Associations; and the officers, teachers, and pupils of our Sabbath-schools are appealed to, to make still greater efforts in this good work, assured they will realise the precious truth of our Saviour's words—that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."