

# THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXX.—NO. 4.

---

OCTOBER, MDCCLXXIX.

---

ARTICLE I.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

In the remarks which we propose to make upon this subject, we have in our view the needs of the great body of private members of the Church rather than the needs of the ministers of the gospel; although we are not without hope of being able to say something which may serve to impart additional clearness to the views of some ministers who have not made the subject a matter of special study. Observation and experience have convinced us that there is not a little confusion, if not some error, in the notions entertained by many intelligent Presbyterians in regard to the nature and design of this ordinance, and to the mode in which it conduces to the sanctification of believers. Fatal errors in regard to it were taught in the Church for ages; and so inveterate have these errors become, so thoroughly had they poisoned the life of Christians, that even the great men who were raised up by Divine Providence and employed as its instruments in the work of reform in the sixteenth century, failed to reach any harmony of views among themselves concerning it; and an ordinance which had been established by the Saviour as the most impressive symbol of the union and communion of his people, became the occasion of bitter contentions and divisions. Its mission, like the mission of the Redeemer himself, seemed to be that of bringing a sword, not

## ARTICLE VIII.

## THE RECENT ORDINATION AT HANGCHOW.

Our Assembly which met at St. Louis, upon an overture from members of the Presbytery of Hangchow asking that that Presbytery be dissolved, appointed Drs. T. E. Peck and J. Leighton Wilson with the undersigned, a committee to consider and report to the succeeding Assembly on two questions: *first*, on the question of the constitutional power of the Assembly to establish or dissolve Presbyteries on foreign soil; and *secondly*, on the question whether our missionaries abroad should become associated with natives in the composition of Presbyteries. Both these questions were answered by the committee reporting at Savannah in the negative. For the first answer the reasons given were as follows:

1. Our Assembly as a representative body can superintend only those churches which are its constituents. It cannot have *under its care* any churches in foreign countries unless those churches through Presbyteries legitimately established are prepared to send and do send commissioners competent to represent them in its deliberations.

2. A Presbytery is likewise a representative body, and cannot be set up by any outside power where there are no churches to be represented. A Presbytery must grow out of churches associating together through their sessions.

3. According to our Constitution it is for Synods to erect new Presbyteries. If our Assembly cannot create one at home, *à fortiori* it cannot abroad where it represents no churches and can claim no representative power.

4. Besides these constitutional objections, there is one of a different sort, *viz.*: that we ought not to propagate our own distinctive Presbyterian body in China and other various parts of the world, but simply disseminate our principles and doctrines. All Chinese Presbyterians should, if possible, be united in one national Church of their own. The churches founded by our evangelists abroad are free-born and have the inherent right of

self-government through rulers whom the Lord authorises them to elect, and they must according to Presbyterianism associate together through Sessions, and so the higher courts grow by natural development.

Here arises the question, what is the evangelist? And the answer given is, a minister commissioned by the Presbytery to go into foreign or frontier parts with extraordinary powers. Along with the several power of preaching he carries also in his single hand, because an *extraordinary* officer, the "power of jurisdiction," and may organise churches and ordain church officers and exercise church discipline, which belongs in the settled church state only to our courts. He is not an apostle. He is not a prelatie bishop. He goes to found and to plant, but he goes still as a member of his Presbytery and responsible to it. And he is also in a more general way under control of the General Assembly through its Executive Committee of Foreign Missions. But just as the Assembly may not intrude into the sphere of the Synod at home, nor violate the inherent rights of the churches abroad so far as to set up a Presbytery by its own act in any foreign land, so it may not by the same kind of action interfere with the proper function of the evangelist, the sole founder of these native churches, the sole appointed agent for introducing among foreign converts the advantages of ecclesiastical organisation, thereto commissioned and authorised by his Presbytery under a direct responsibility to it for the time, mode, and circumstances of his exercising that authority. Any such step by the Assembly must be unconstitutional and also unscriptural and therefore void.

To the *second* question a negative answer was given on two grounds: *first*, the missionary is an evangelist, and in the nature of things his office cannot be mixed up with the pastorate; and *secondly*, the proper development of native church resources requires that the native ministers should be put prominently forward as the shepherds of the flock. The accepted policy now, with those most enlightened about Foreign Missions, is to train native churches to self-government and self-support and to efforts for propagating the faith in the regions beyond. All we have to do is to carry the *seed corn* of the bread of life to the nations,

planting it amongst them, but letting them raise themselves the successive crops which are to feed them and the other surrounding nations to the ends of the earth.

The subsequent history of this report is a little singular. Printed copies of it were put into the hands of every member of the Assembly that it might be read and considered by every member. Somewhat late in the sessions the report was taken up and seemed about to be adopted. But the Rev. Mr. Primrose of North Carolina, who had served for years as an evangelist in frontier and destitute parts, raised objection to some expressions in the report, and seeing that the pressure for time would hinder free discussion, the undersigned, who was the author of the report, moved to refer the subject to the next Assembly, which was agreed to. By some misapprehension this reference did not appear on the Minutes, and the report was not taken up at the next Assembly, and so it has quietly been dropped out of sight. It is, however, to be found in the Appendix to Minutes of the Assembly of 1876.

The Assembly at Savannah, however, adopted formally the position that it has no constitutional power to establish or dissolve Presbyteries, and accordingly that the brethren of whom the Assembly of 1874 proposed to constitute the Presbytery of Hangchow are now and have been *de jure* members of the same Presbyteries to which they belonged at the time of such action.

It appears to us that there has been also a very general acquiescence throughout our Church in the other doctrine of the report, viz., that the pastors of churches organised abroad should ordinarily be natives and not missionaries, and that missionaries should sit in foreign Presbyteries as corresponding members only.

The way was thus left by the Assembly open for the organisation by our evangelists abroad of native churches of the Presbyterian order, and for the ordination by them of native church officers and for the natural rise and development of all the courts of the Church. It seems to be admitted by us all that the Foreign Missionary may ordain "qualified and acceptable men" (men whom the native churches shall *call*) to the pastorate, and may also ordain native evangelists. To this work he is commissioned

by his Presbytery, and to deny that they can authorise him to do this work of ordination is to deprive our Presbyterian system of needful elasticity. It is in fact to shut our Church polity out from any possibility of spreading through heathen lands. If there can be no ordination except by the classical Presbytery, and if there can be set up no classical Presbytery until teaching and ruling elders who are pastors of churches are at hand, why then manifestly there can be neither beginning nor progress of Presbyterian church order abroad. All of us agree, then, that the evangelist in heathen lands, though but one man, may ordain native church officers. Outside the settled church state, Presbyterians have no objection to the one-man power of rule.

But it was not very long after this decision was formally reached in our Church before there arose amongst our missionaries in China a question as to the application of the principle to one who was not a "native" but a foreigner, to one who was not to be a "native pastor or evangelist," but a missionary of our Church, employed by it like the other missionaries in China. Mr. G. W. Painter of our Hangchow Mission, had pursued the regular course of studies at Union Theological Seminary, but because of some doubts in his own mind about his call to the ministry offered himself to our Committee to be sent to China as a teacher, and to do what else he could for the spread of the gospel there. He was accepted and sent forth, and has been a useful laborer in the Mission. No one but himself ever doubted his fitness for the ministry, and recently he was himself relieved of his doubts. Then, his ordination to the work became desirable and necessary, and the question arose how was he to get set apart by the Church to the gospel ministry—the Holy Ghost, as he was now fully convinced, having inwardly and irresistibly called him to it. There were two or three ways between which the choice was to be made. Should he go home and be ordained? Should he repair to a Presbytery of the Northern Presbyterian Church in India? Should he be ordained by one of our evangelists in China?

To the first plan it was to be objected that it would cost a great deal of money and time.

To choose the second plan might be to accept ordination from

such a Presbytery as our General Assembly had decided could not be legitimately set up.

On the other hand, it might be objected to the third plan that it would bring a foreign believer, who is still in regular and responsible connexion with the church in his own country, under the jurisdiction of the evangelist, whilst it is disorderly to have two jurisdictions on the same matter, at the same time, over the same subject. Such a believer, resident or laboring as a Christian layman in the same field with the evangelist, cannot, it might be said, come under the governmental power of the Foreign Missionary unless he shall be first dismissed from his former church relations and identified with the native church. Now there might be no native church for him to be dismissed to and no native Presbytery for him to come under, and his own Presbytery might well hesitate to dismiss him to the migratory care of an evangelist who is always liable to remove to another field. It might be quite impossible, then, for him to be relieved of his connexion with the church in his own country. Still the objection to the "two jurisdictions" might be held so tenaciously as to demand that nevertheless a large and heavy expense of time and money must be undergone in order to overcome it.

The attentive reader will have discovered a direct reference in what has just been said to the position taken in Article III. of this number of our journal by a very distinguished minister of our Church. He does not hesitate to pronounce the recent ordination at Hangchow an "irregularity," and he would have had the late Assembly not only "cure the irregularity" but "also distinctly forbid its recurrence." He lays it down as "an identical proposition that the proper object of extraordinary power is also extraordinary." We question if this is a correct statement. The power exercised by apostles was extraordinary—was it never exercised on ordinary persons in ordinary circumstances? Or, if *object* here means *end*, were the ends aimed at by the apostles in every exercise of their extraordinary power, extraordinary ends? Again, our distinguished friend and brother lays it down as a Presbyterian *dictum* that "the coexistence of two identical jurisdictions is impossible." He declares in very emphatic terms

that "the coexistence of two jurisdictions in the same matter at the same time over the same subjects" is "the most unbecoming and paralysing disorder," and that this "principle is most rigorously enforced in our existing Constitution." The point he would establish is that Mr. Painter, being the subject of the jurisdiction of a Presbytery at home, could not be the subject of an evangelist's extraordinary power abroad. Our thoughts recur at once to the case of Paul who laid hands on Timothy while he was of course under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the elders of some synagogue or church, and possibly also after he had received the laying on of the hands of some Presbytery. We do not know where this Presbyterian *dictum* so called is to be found, nor are we aware what there is in our existing Constitution which does so rigorously enforce it. According to our friend's own showing, the "product of the Foreign Missionary's power must be in as true and real connexion with us as a church organised by a Presbytery." The church which a Presbytery organises is under the government of the Synod and the General Assembly, as well as the Presbytery. The church which an evangelist abroad organises is under his jurisdiction, and through him is under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery (as this argument would establish), and also his Synod and Assembly. Every Foreign Missionary is under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery and also specifically of the General Assembly's Executive Committee. Every Session is under the jurisdiction of its own Presbytery and yet of the Synod and Assembly also, and that in reference to the same matter and at the same time. Every ruling elder is under the jurisdiction of his Session, and at the same time and in the same matter is under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery and Synod and Assembly.

We are therefore unable to perceive where lies the "*confusion*" which is said to arise from "two judicatories in the same matter, at the same time, over the same subjects;" because there is an acknowledged gradation in all these jurisdictions, and in every case the jurisdiction is very carefully defined and limited in our Constitution.

In fact, unless we greatly mistake, there is a most important

VOL. XXX., NO. 4—18.

word and a most necessary idea left out of our brother's statement regarding the two impossible jurisdictions. Very properly he declares that according to our system "the power of the whole is *in every part and over the power of every part.*" Here now at once there are two jurisdictions supposed, respecting the same matter and at the same time, viz., the jurisdiction of the part, and the jurisdiction of the whole over that jurisdiction of the part. But the one evidently is not *independent* of the other. This is the word that is wanting to make the succeeding statement a correct one: it is most unbecoming and paralyzing disorder to have two *independent* jurisdictions coexisting in the same matter, at the same time, and over the same subjects.

But will it be alleged that there was any *independent, improper, undue* authority exercised by our evangelist who ordained Mr. Painter? Can it be alleged that any "unbecoming or paralyzing disorder" has sprung or can spring out of the act? In the circumstances it was an act necessary to carry out what appeared to be the will of the Master and promote the interests of the Church, and to save *the Church* at the same time from serious inconvenience and damage; and there was no assumption of independent jurisdiction. In extraordinary circumstances two brethren in China acted in a way that certainly was extraordinary, and yet, as it appears to us, altogether legitimate. It is an error, we say with great deference, to allege that one part may not in certain particular cases assume jurisdiction over the subject of another part for the common good. Our Form of Government, the old as well as the new, provides for just such acts, and they are not to be considered acts of independent authority illegitimately assumed. It cannot be doubted that it would not be wrong in certain cases not thus to assume authority. It would have been wrong for Mr. Stuart not to have assumed authority in this case. A minister, an elder, a Session or a Presbytery, in certain conceivable cases, may be bound to assume authority not technically nor officially theirs, to reprove and admonish officially a church member or minister who sins flagrantly within their ecclesiastical territory far away from his own Session and Presbytery. A Presbytery which knows of bad conduct within its territory by a



minister not subject to its jurisdiction *must* take up the case and send notice of the facts to the body which has jurisdiction. A church member or officer moving into the bounds of another Session or Presbytery than his own and neglecting for twelve months to procure the transfer of his relations and the court having jurisdiction itself also neglecting to transfer them, the other into whose bounds the removal has been effected *must assume jurisdiction* and notify the other body.

Our esteemed friend from whom we are venturing to differ says, "The question is: who are the subjects of the evangelist's jurisdiction? We answer (he says) that they too must be *extra ordinem*—outside of the organised church and her jurisdiction." He means evidently to say they cannot be members of churches at home, because the evangelist must not assume jurisdiction over any such in any way. Well, to test the principle let us take an extreme case: suppose such a missionary in China passing through some city far inland were to find a dozen or twenty resident American Presbyterians not organised into a church, and one of them was fit to be their pastor and two or three others to fill the other offices, and there was no likelihood of his or of another missionary's passing that way again; should he hesitate to organise and ordain because they had not previously obtained letters of dismissal from home? But really we must insist that, in the case before us, the ordained as well as the ordainer was in a very just and controlling sense outside of the organised Church and her jurisdiction. Take another extreme case to test the principle: the foreign believer resident or laboring in the missionary field and called to be ordained a minister, has not the money to bring him home to America and then take him back to China; and the Church has not the money either. What now is to be done? Shall we agree that as he cannot come home, so he cannot be ordained? And has the Lord, indeed, made our Presbyterian polity like a cast-iron machine that cannot give one inch? When he calls to the ministry an American resident in China and the man desires to obey the call, and there is present one whom the Church has authorised to ordain men outside of her limits, does our polity require this lawful authority to abstain

from proceeding to set this man apart, and on the ground that formally he is connected with some home church and Presbytery from whom he cannot well be separated in an orderly way? Why, most certainly the man is just what our brother demands—he is *extra ordinem*, he is outside of the organised Church and her ordinary jurisdiction. So in fact are all our laborers, ordained and unordained, in the foreign field. Our friend says that women or laymen sent out to labor under the evangelist's superintendence are to be directed by him in their work, but that he has no ecclesiastical jurisdiction over them because they have at that very time a definite place within the ecclesiastical order. But we ask, can this possibly be the correct view? Our brother loves to run the parallel between the Domestic and the Foreign Mission: now how is it in this country? When a church member removes to a distant place where he cannot join a church, when he is even known to be engaged in Christian work there, and possibly has been sent out there under some sort of ecclesiastical appointment, does our discipline regard him as still under the jurisdiction of his own particular church? On the contrary, the Session certifies and is responsible for his standing only to the time of his leaving its bounds. The evangelist stands in a different relation to his Presbytery, because it has sent him forth and he makes constant report to it. But the church member, "the women, the laymen whom the Church sends out to labor" for life in a foreign country, are they under the watch of their respective Sessions still? If not, are they under the watch of the General Assembly or its Executive Committee of Foreign Missions? Would our brother venture to take that ground? If not, must he not admit either that they are utterly beyond all watch and supervision, or else consent to put them exactly where he says they cannot be, under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the very evangelist who directs their labors?

Whatever may be true as to this particular point, we feel disposed to insist that according to all the principles of Presbyterian church government and the express rules of our Discipline, lay members of our communion, both male and female, who live in foreign countries, are very especially to be acknowledged to be outside of the organised church and her ordinary jurisdiction.

The evangelist himself is outside of the Church, but these others are outside in a more special sense. A company of Christians cast upon an island in mid-ocean, from which they cannot escape, though having their names on church rolls at home, and being in one sense still connected with various ecclesiastical bodies there, must nevertheless be confessed to be to all intents and purposes *outside*, and may without any delay proceed to organise themselves into a Presbyterian church. Now, we feel disposed to insist that the case of such a company differs from that of believers resident in a distant foreign country only in degree of *outsideness* and not as to the reality of it.

We would not charge our distinguished brother with holding a theory which bears the aspect of mere ritualism. But we may venture to suggest that free as he is, of course, from that sort of error, many who will agree with his theory of the ordination of an American resident in China by a missionary there, will be very apt not to be so free from it. There is more or less of superstition amongst Presbyterians about ordination. What is ordination? What was the thing to be done in Mr. Painter's case? It was simply the official and authoritative setting apart formally of a man, the devoting of him by proper church authority in the name of the Church and her Lord, to a church work and office. Is it any more or greater than baptism or the Lord's Supper? Is it any more or greater than the organising formally a church? May not our Church in foreign and frontier parts perform this simple act through an evangelist as well as gather and organise a church there by him? Well, it is agreed by all that outside the settled church state and in a foreign land, this may be done if the person to be ordained is a Chinese or a Hindoo, a Mexican or an African, but if he be a white man and an American some would be disposed to say that it may not be done. One evangelist might ordain a Chinese, but at least three ministers and one elder constituting a Presbytery are necessary to ordain an American "*clergyman*." Mr. Painter cannot be comfortably and with entire assurance considered to be or entitled "*the Reverend*," if one man away off in China, quietly and without the slightest observation, sets him apart, though having full authority

to ordain in those outside regions; no, it is necessary to his clerical dignity and full official standing that he take two long and expensive voyages in order to get ecclesiastical authority from the fountain-head, which is the Presbytery. There is, of course, a great difference in the ordaining of men of different races, and, as might be supposed, it is in favor of the lower race and the weaker and feebler natural qualifications. One evangelist is competent enough to declare officially that a poor, dark, ignorant man is called and authorised to preach; but several ministers and one elder at least, acting together, are necessary in order to publish that a lighter colored and more intelligent man is set apart to this work. Yes, to make an American missionary, to make what is called a "General Evangelist," this is more than any missionary can do. This is a work the Church has always kept and must forever keep in her own hands. It would be simply monstrous that every missionary can perpetuate and multiply "general evangelists" in the full sense of the term. *Every repository of extraordinary power must have separate appointment from the original source.* This is what ordination by a Presbytery can, but ordination by an evangelist cannot, communicate. *Potestas delegata delegari non potest.* A Presbytery has original power, not delegated to it by the Lord nor from any other quarter; but the evangelist's power comes merely from the Presbytery and not from the Lord, and is delegated power, and he may not delegate it to another missionary. And if he should ordain an evangelist, the ordained could not be a "general evangelist," but only a "Presbyterial evangelist," and responsible always to the general evangelist that ordained him. Such is the mighty difference between ordination by a missionary abroad and a Presbytery at home. There is some mysterious potency in the latter that does not belong to the former.

We are brought now to a consideration of the second main position assumed by our friend, which relates to "the status *in ecclesia* of the native church and presbytery." It seems to be maintained that the foreign church organised by an evangelist abroad is just as truly and closely connected with our Church and our church courts as the church organised in this country by

a domestic missionary—perhaps within the very limits of one of our Presbyteries. Precisely “the same ecclesiastical status” is claimed for the work of “the Foreign and the Domestic Missionary;” that, is the one is regarded as in no degree more outside of our Church than the other. Foreign missionaries “exert their power in our name, and the product must be in as true and real organic connexion with us as a church organised by Presbytery or a Presbytery constituted by Synod.” The idea seems to be repudiated that just as soon as one church is organised and elders ruling and a teaching elder and deacons are ordained and installed, there is a germ there which might develope by a force *ab supra* and *ab intra* into the full-grown tree. It would be denied, we suppose, that so much being done, it would be conceivable that the missionary might even pass on beyond to found the Church in another region. The idea rather is that the foreign missionary must needs in all cases remain where he founds one church and gather others, and having ordained native pastors and evangelists, it is not for them through the force of a development from above and from within, but for him, exercising even synodical power (as it is said), to organise these churches and ministers into a regular Presbytery. He will “order” the Sessions to elect commissioners, he will “convoke” the ministers and elders, and he will “preside” until a moderator is elected. The evangelist abroad is stringently limited as to any power over Americans living there; but over the native brethren his authority is quite wide, and he looks to us, as he is described by our friend, very considerably like a prelatical bishop. But, as we are glad to know, an end is to come shortly to his power—the new Presbytery accedes to all his authority. And then that Presbytery “becomes immediately a member and constituent of the General Assembly whose evangelist brought it into existence.”

Now, with great deference, we feel compelled to say that much the larger portion of all this we are utterly unable to accept. In the *first* place, we must object to the representation of the immediate connexion with our Church of every product of the foreign missionary’s labors. The Church, it is emphatically declared, goes with the missionary and works through him. We accept

the latter but not the former statement. The foreign missionary is not *in* the Church but *outside* of it; he is, as Paul expressed it, "in the regions *beyond*," that is, beyond the ordinary bounds of the Church, beyond the settled church state. And this is the reason why we properly call him a *foreign* missionary, the reference being not so much to a political, or geographical, as to an ecclesiastical exterior. We have home missionaries in the Church or near church bounds, and we have foreign ones outside and beyond its limits. And in the *second* place, we must object to the representation of the dependence of the native churches and their pastors on the missionary. The necessary work to be done by the presbyterial evangelist, it is said, is "the formal creation of a particular church and no more;" but "the 'chief end' of the general evangelist's office is such a particular Presbytery as our Book defines." The idea is that the presbyterial evangelist exhibits as the product of his labors a particular church which is a constituent of the Presbytery; but the general evangelist glories in nothing less than a Presbytery as the product of his labor—a Presbytery which is a constituent of the Assembly, and in creating this Presbytery the general evangelist wields even synodical power. He is, indeed, a very high functionary—this general evangelist. Now we can see no such great difference between a presbyterial evangelist and an evangelist sent beyond the bounds of any Presbytery. Both are members of Presbytery, and neither is commissioned by the Assembly or has any specific relation to the Assembly except that the support of the one is provided by the Assembly's Committee, and that he is appointed to his field by that Committee, and is in a general sense by it controlled and directed there as well as supported. But we hold that there is a vital force and an all-comprehensive energy in every ecclesiastical germ, that is, in every particular church, that is planted by a foreign missionary. It is, indeed, at once "the parochial, intermediate, and general Presbytery of organic and complete Presbyterianism;" it is potentially the *whole Church*, perhaps, in that country and among that race. The particular church with its Session—that is the true and perfect seed, the germ which may develop into a great tree, for

where organised life is, there must and will be, through God's blessing, growth also. And so the missionary, it is very conceivable, may do well to pass on as soon as he has organised a single church with the Presbyterian polity complete. Just this did Paul and Barnabas when they preached and gathered a few converts in the different towns of Asia Minor—in each place they organised a little church, ordaining over it elders, and then they passed on. And when these little churches got some strength they reached forth their hands to one other and became one organic body—a classical Presbytery. Now we object to the dependence in which all these Presbyterian churches are represented as standing toward the general evangelist, so called. We do not admire the picture drawn of this evangelist ordering, convoking, presiding, disciplining both Sessions, elders, pastors, evangelists, as if he were a veritable prelate. We must say that the whole distinction drawn by our friend between what he calls the general evangelist and the presbyterial, and between the American evangelist and the native, smacks to our taste too much of the prelatie. And if this representation is to be accepted, then there is an end to our Presbyterian principle of the parity of all ministers, and in fact of all presbyters as such.

In the *third* place, we must object to the statement that the classical Presbytery which the general evangelist is to organise becomes “immediately a member and constituent of the General Assembly whose evangelist brought it into existence.” Because, *first*, this expression is unsuitable—the evangelist did not in any true sense bring it into existence. He was the Lord's humble instrument in converting believers and the Church's agent in organising them into churches, and his humble services were employed to help on the development that was to come *ab supra* and *ab intra*. He brought nothing into existence. And again, the General Assembly of the Church in the United States has no right to control nor yet to absorb these foreign churches. They are free-born. They do not belong to American Christians or Presbyterians any more than these belong to them. They do not come under “our Constitution” at all, as seems to be supposed. They do not belong to our denomination. And in our judgment

it is not desirable to have them directly connected with our Church, not yet to have those other Presbyterians in China, India, Africa, or any other country, who have been gathered and organised into churches by Presbyterian missionaries of any branch, connected in each case with the General Assembly which sent those missionaries forth. This position was taken in the report on the Hangchow Presbytery made to the Savannah Assembly; and whilst of course we are altogether liable to fall into mistakes, it is our belief that that position is generally accepted in our Church.

There is yet another position taken and urgently pressed by our friend, from which we are compelled very positively to differ. It concerns the questions, What is "the Mission?" "What is the relation of evangelists from our Church dwelling together for a time in the same city? What is the nature of their extraordinary power in such case—is it *joint* power, or is it *several* power? The answer given very emphatically is that their power is joint and not several. But it appears to us that the overwhelming objection to this view is its making the "Mission" to be a court of the Church, and a new kind of court at that. It is made to be a representative body with no churches to represent. It is made to be a Presbytery with no ruling elders present. It is made to be a government ruling through *clergy*. Each of these objections, it seems to us, has immense weight.

The argument which is expected to reconcile us to this unpresbyterian account of the "Mission," is, that if the power wielded in it is not joint then each evangelist's private opinion is an authoritative judgment, and these judgments will often be contradictory. But do not church courts pronounce contradictory judgments? If single evangelists differ about anything, it is "disorder of the deadliest sort" and "defeats the very end of the evangelist's office." But how then when the bodies of rulers who wield joint power differ from one another? We cannot see that there is "extraordinary confusion" upon the one plan, with none on the other. The truth is that Chinese Christians have the same rights to private judgment that American Christians enjoy, and neither individual missionaries nor a whole "Mission" must undertake to



make any laws which cannot be clearly deduced out of the Bible. It is the Word of God which is to have decisive weight, and not the opinions of one man or of a body of men.

It is said "these coevangelists having no ready-made distribution, must nevertheless make one according to unwritten law, *i. e.*, Presbyterian principles of church power." But we rejoice that they must not undertake to make a new kind of Presbyterian court essentially different from those set before us in Scripture. To do anything of that kind would not be "to create the Presbyterian Church, where never was one before." This new kind of court proposed to be created thus, it seems to us, would be a mere hybrid—the mongrel offspring of Congregationalism and Prelacy. These evangelists in regulating those affairs that are common to them as they stand related to the Executive Committee may well act as a "Mission" or as a "Station;" but neither of these can be in any respect identified with a Presbytery. Neither of them can wield any ecclesiastical power. The evangelist is sent forth to act under his individual responsibility, and he cannot merge that into the responsibility of any new sort of ecclesiastical court.

The reasons why jurisdiction must in the settled church state always be joint are founded in circumstances existing there and not abroad. As soon as the church is organised and settled on foreign soil, then and there all power of rule must be joint. Because the Church is a free commonwealth and is to be governed always by her chosen representatives. But the evangelist belongs to a different order of things. He has jurisdiction in his single hand, because where he has any right to be, there is no church organisation. In any city of heathendom whensoever the church is so far set up as to call for a joint administration of ecclesiastical rule, it is time for the evangelist to pass on to the regions beyond.

We confess that it appears to us rather strange that our friend did not take the ground that the ordination under consideration should have been performed by "the Mission." Inasmuch as that has created "the Presbyterian Church where never was one before," why might not the individual concerned have obtained a dismissal from his church as a member and from his Presbytery

as a candidate and put himself under the ecclesiastical authority and care of "the Mission in China." It is strongly insisted that all the extraordinary powers of general evangelists "must be administered by the Mission as a body;" that "when coevangelists preach the gospel in the same field . . . their power is to be wielded jointly in the same particular Mission;" and that this is "not a matter of expediency or privilege, but of vital Presbyterian principle," and that except in conformity with principles like this, which "lie back of our Book and back of these evangelists, they have no authorised existence." All right, then; but why was not this "Mission," composed thus of men each one fully competent to ordain, and acting on vital Presbyterian principles jointly, the very body to have ordained Mr. Painter? Surely, since any one of these general evangelists had full power to ordain a Chinese pastor or a Chinese evangelist, all four of them conjoining their high powers might have been able to ordain one American. Oh, but Mr. Painter was a candidate of Abingdon Presbytery, and moreover each one of the four evangelists in China was himself under jurisdiction to a Presbytery at home, for two of them belong to Louisville and one each to Harmony and Concord. It comes then to this, that in the former part of the paper of our respected brother "the coexistence of two identical jurisdictions is impossible," but in the latter part of it these members of Louisville, Harmony, and Concord are nevertheless to be controlled by a "Mission in China" which is to hold in its hand for joint administration all the high powers with which each of them was endowed by his own Presbytery.

JNO. B. ADGER.