

THE
PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

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I. CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS.¹

You have called me to the discharge of most responsible duty and exalted service in this honored school of sacred learning. I sincerely pray that your call and my acceptance may unite in being an outward expression of the mind of the Spirit and of the will of God in regard to the way in which Christ's cause may be served and his name honored by means of this institution. Having hope that such is the case, it will be the earnest and undivided effort of my life, so long as I remain in your service, to perform the duties of this high office to the best of my ability, ever seeking the needed wisdom and promised grace which Christ's servants may claim.

You have also informed me that a short time prior to my election the scope of the chair whose work is committed to my trust was so enlarged as to include the entire field of Christian apologetics. This, in my judgment, is a very important change, and it makes exceedingly useful modifications of the work pertaining to this chair possible. Its incumbent will now be in a position to deal with several great topics not embraced in the field of the relations of science and revelation; and he will at the same time be able to construe many things which emerge in the discussion of these relations under the category of Christian apologetics. In this way the work of this professorship may be made wider in its scope and more systematic in the treatment of its materials than was possible under its former designation.

¹ Inaugural address by F. R. Beattie, on the occasion of his installation as Professor in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., May, 1890.

1891, an act which hardly consists with the principles and precedents of our church. But time and space fail me for the mention even of all that the Assembly did. Enough to say that all the great interests of the church received most serious attention, and the spirit of missions at home and abroad was characteristic of the body. It was an earnest, conservative, and yet aggressive Assembly. Pleasant memories of the few days the body was in session will brighten the days to come. Apologies are seldom in place, but the writer of this sketch may be allowed to say to the brethren of the Assembly that he has been compelled to write *currente calamo*, and with little opportunity for the needful revision, of which there is so much "in the air." He could wish that so worthy an Assembly had found a more worthy chronicler.

C. R. HEMPHILL.

THE NORTHERN ASSEMBLY.

THE General Assembly which has just closed its sessions at Saratoga will be memorable in the history of the Presbyterian Church. The great question before it was that of revising the doctrinal statements of the Westminster Confession of Faith. This had been precipitated upon the church by the surprising action of the last Assembly, in transmitting to the Presbyteries an overture on the subject. Widespread and acrimonious discussion ensued, extreme utterances were made, the Confession of Faith was assailed by its plighted defenders in terms common to the Arminian, the Socinian, and the Pelagian. How was it that this portentous revolution suddenly threatened us? Who would have thought, two years ago, when the Centennial of Presbyterianism was celebrated in Philadelphia, that we would so soon find the foundations of our standards shaken? Three causes have contributed to this. First, the character of the reunion of Old and New School. Fifty years ago, the Presbyterian Church was rent in twain by a controversy, largely doctrinal. Some of the now current questions were then disputed. The reunion was effected, not on doctrinal lines, but in a burst of political enthusiasm. A great and reunited country, it was said, has been secured, and now there must be a great and reunited church to go in and possess the land. But at length politics has receded before doctrine, and the issue is forced upon it, whether the church is at one in its faith. It is not intimated that either of the former parties is responsible for this. Members of

each are found on both sides of the present question. But it is suggested that doctrine was lightly regarded in the reunion, and has now returned "to plague us." She avenges herself of our neglect.

The second cause of our present discontent is that the doctrines of the Westminster Confession have been allowed, in a measure, to drop out of sight. For thirty years they have not been, so generally as before, preached from our pulpits, or taught our children and youth in the family, the church, or the Sunday-school. A generation has grown up in ignorance of these distinctive truths; a generation which has been fed not upon the "strong meat" of doctrine, but on "milk for babes," and that not "the sincere milk of the word," but diluted with the turbid water of human opinion. The result is that the people reject solid food; they have lost robustness of digestion; they clamor for the sweetmeats of sentiment, the syllabub of frothy declamation, and the confection of anecdote; their appetite is weak as their digestion; they want nothing strong, but only what is soft and smooth and sugar-coated. These strictures are not applicable to all our congregations, many of whom "hear the word gladly;" neither is it true that all ministers have omitted doctrinal instruction. But the stream of tendency is towards this stagnant pool. Some of us have suffered ourselves to be insulted in our pulpits, in the presence of our congregations, by peripatetic, so-called evangelists, as they ignorantly and insolently heaped ridicule upon "dogma," by which term they contemptuously style the glorious doctrines of grace. Seeing our passive acquiescence, the people have come to despise doctrine, and the fear is felt that the church may be honey-combed with disbelief of the Calvinistic system.

The third evil influence is "the spirit of the age." This spirit is the "prince of the power of the air," the same spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience and unbelief. "It is remarkable," says Thornwell, "that, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, we have fallen on an age which corresponds in many particulars with the state of heathen speculation at the inauguration of the gospel. In the schools of Athens no subjects were too sacred for discussion, too profound for inquiry, or so sublime and mysterious as to awe the efforts of vain curiosity." At the same time the most flippant conceits, the most prurient gossip, and pleasures, whether refined or gross, were indulged in with unbounded license. The Epicureans and Stoics who encountered St. Paul are perpetuated still by two developments of modern civilization, the one luxurious, licentious, materialistic; the other skeptical, either cold and critical, or else ribald and scoffing.

Such an age is impatient of restraint on thought or passion, and, refusing to submit to God's word, brings all things to the test of its own crude opinions. But the present age has engendered a fouler brood than confronted Paul. The Athenian philosophers were strangers and open enemies of Christianity, while the most deadly of our foes are of our own household. It is not from avowed antagonists, but from secret traitors; not from opposition, but corruption, that the religion of Christ suffers most to-day. Calvinism, being the most stalwart form in which divine truth presents itself, must ever be the main point of attack and defence. If it can be dislodged from the faith of men, the overthrow of all weaker systems will be an easy task. Hence the spirit of the age, sensual and atheistic, masses its forces against this mighty bulwark. Faint hearts within the fortress tremble at the shout of its foes, and would yield to the challenge, "down with the blue banner." The Assembly of 1889 weakly gave way and precipitated the church into a controversy on some of the vital principles of its Confession. As reports came in that a large majority of the Presbyteries had declared for revision, the awful shadow of schism was projected upon our faith.

The General Assembly of 1890 will be memorable in history, because here the antagonistic forces first met on a broad field, and because the danger of "false doctrine, heresy, and schism" were, for a time at least, averted. The commissioners gathered with anxious hearts, some resolved to conserve the doctrinal standards in their integrity, others determined to relax the bonds of the Confession.

The first trial of strength occurred in the election of moderator. The anti-revisionists did not nominate one of their number, but contented themselves with dictating the choice of the other side. Next came the report of the committee appointed in 1887 and continued by the two subsequent Assemblies, "on methods of effecting changes in the Confession of Faith and the Constitution of the Church." The method proposed in this report seemed to the conservatives to make revision too easy; hence it was opposed by them, and thereupon occurred the longest and ablest debate of the sessions, (the speeches of Dr. R. M. Patterson and Mr. George Junkin, of Philadelphia, were notable), after which the report was sent back to the committee, enlarged by the addition of seven new members, among whom were several strong conservatives. This large committee of twelve reached a harmonious conclusion, and its report was almost unanimously adopted by the Assembly. The report declares: "That this church has always

emphasized doctrine as being the vital element in the body ecclesiastic, and that therefore changes or alterations in the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms should be made under greater restrictions than changes or alterations in the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship." In order to provide in definite terms the proper method of such amendments to the several standards, the committee recommended that an overture be transmitted to the Presbyteries for their action, proposing that alterations in the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship may be proposed by the General Assembly, but shall require the approval of a majority of the Presbyteries. Changes in the Confession of Faith are much more carefully guarded. The General Assembly may propose them, but they cannot be transmitted to the Presbyteries until considered by a large committee for a year, and acted upon favorably by the next Assembly. Two-thirds of the Presbyteries must approve, and the following Assembly must enact the same before the proposed alteration can become obligatory. The provision of the adopting act is, however, left in force by which two-thirds of the Presbyteries may propose changes to the General Assembly, which body may approve and enact the same. In case one-third of the Presbyteries propose an amendment it shall be obligatory on the Assembly to transmit the overture subject to the above provisions. This skilfully drawn report, by its several provisions, satisfied all parties. Macaulay says that the Act of Parliament dethroning James II. was so adroitly drawn that each clause gained votes; some by its reference to the king's violation of the statutes of the realm; others to "the instigation of the devil;" still others by an allusion to papal influence; while many scrupulous royalists were secured by the statement of the fact that the king had abdicated. Thus in the matter before us some were won by the two-thirds rule, others by the Assembly's proposing power, others by its enacting power, others by the intervention of a committee and the delay of two years and the action of three Assemblies, others by the shorter method of proposal by two-thirds of the Presbyteries and enactment by one Assembly, others by the power granted one-third of the Presbyteries to demand from the Assembly the submission of an overture, and others finally by the application of the majority rule to changes in polity. All opinions were merged in the result.

Revision proper came before the Assembly on the report of the committee to which were referred the answers of the Presbyteries

to the overture from the last Assembly. Dr. Patton was chairman, and presented a careful analysis of the vote, from which it appeared that while a majority of the Presbyteries were favorable to revision, a still larger majority was opposed to such revision as would touch the Calvinistic doctrines, and a large majority opposed to any revision whatever. These figures had a thrilling interest when read amid the profound silence of the Assembly, and have a permanent historical value—one hundred and thirty-four Presbyteries voted for revision; one hundred and thirty-seven voted against doctrinal revision, and sixty-eight voted no revision. Thus each side was in the majority, and each in the minority. Revisionists had a majority in one view, but were in the minority in another. The current in the Assembly was in the orthodox direction. It was curious to notice the desire of members to have their Presbyteries counted as opposed to impairing the Calvinistic creed. Once—but once—a venomous hiss ran through the body—like that of the sacred geese that guarded Rome. It was provoked by a supposed attack on Calvinism.

The great Presbytery of New York, which had for months posed before the church in so arrogant an attitude, occupied a very small place at the Assembly, while Princeton came to the front in the person of President Patton, who, in an Assembly comprised so largely of able and distinguished men, was "*facile princeps*." No man so commanded the attention of the Assembly, no one exercised such a controlling influence over its deliberations. He was opposed to revision, but yielded to the voice of the Presbyteries in favor of it, yet resolved if possible to restrict it to matters not affecting the integrity of doctrine. Some staunch conservatives were opposed to compromise. Dr. Patton took the responsibility of advocating it. Like some great commander on the eve of a decisive engagement, he pondered deeply, as with an old friend he paced to and fro in the streets of Saratoga during the hours of the evening, preparing himself for the crucial test of the morrow. Few knew of the conclusion he had reached, and when he stood the next morning on the platform before the crowded house, the suppressed excitement of the Assembly was painful. That moment and the words that would wing his thoughts, had an awful significance. They would conduct to harmony, or they would rend the church. Seldom has one man committed to him such power for good or evil. It was, perhaps, the supreme hour of his life. He was equal to the great occasion. His speech was a model of terseness, clearness, and force. He offered a compromise which all could accept without

sacrifice of principle, to-wit: That those opposed to revision should bow to the will of the majority of the Presbyteries in favor of some revision, and that those desiring revision should submit to the majority of the Presbyteries which had declared against altering the doctrines of the church. The effect was electrical and overwhelming; the whole mass of members and visitors was moved by a common impulse; round after round of applause burst forth; all felt that Scylla and Charybdis were both evaded at least for that voyage, and that the vessel was sailing in the open sea. Other speeches from both sides followed in the same conciliatory tone.

The measure as ultimately agreed upon provided for a committee composed of fifteen ministers and ten elders, to be called "The Assembly's Committee on Revision of the Confession of Faith," which "shall consider the answers of the Presbyteries to the overture from the Assembly of 1889, and report to the General Assembly of 1891 such alterations and amendments to the Confession of Faith as in their judgment may be deemed desirable." Thus much was conceded to the revisionists. Then followed the stringent instructions to this committee by which the conservatives guarded the safety of doctrine. They were given in these terms: ¹

"Whereas sixty-eight Presbyteries have answered 'No' to the question whether they desire revision, and sixty-nine Presbyteries of those answering 'Yes' have expressly said that they desire no change in the Confession of Faith to be made that impairs the integrity of the system of doctrine taught therein, therefore,

Resolved, That this Committee on Revision be, and hereby are, instructed that they shall not propose any alterations or amendments that will in any way impair the integrity of the Reformed or Calvinistic system of doctrine taught in the Confession of Faith."

This was unanimously adopted, the Assembly thereby affirming its adhesion to the present doctrinal standards. It is sought to break the force of this utterance by reference to the action in a "consensus creed." This is not a "new creed"; that project was buried out of sight by the votes of the Presbyteries, only ten of which favored it. There is no purpose of favoring a substitute for the Westminster standards, or an alternate creed, but simply a convenient statement by the Reformed churches of their common faith, for use specially in mission work. This is evident from the report of the Committee on

¹ A later examination of the replies of the Presbyteries shows that *ninety-two*, instead of sixty-nine, expressly ask that no change be made that will impair the Confession's system of doctrine.—Ed.

Bills and Overtures, the adoption of which constituted the action of the Assembly on the subject.

“Report on a Consensus Creed.—All overtures on a new and Consensus Creed shall be referred to a committee of nine, who shall invite the coöperation of the Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System to prepare a short creed containing the essential articles of the Westminster Confession, to be used as the common creed of these churches, not as a substitute for the creed of any particular denomination, but to supplement it for the common work of the church, especially in mission fields, and shall report to the next Assembly for its consideration, and that the Moderator of the Assembly be its chairman.”

Whatever may be said of the wisdom or practicability of this measure, and although extreme revisionists may regard it as a “sop to Cerberus,” the fact remains that the Assembly, in passing this measure, had in view, not the matter of revision, but of a closer union with those of its own household. At any rate, it may be consigned to the limbo where, in the opinion of some, revision is safely interred. One of the ablest anti-revisionists said publicly that while he disapproved of the appointment of the committee on revision, he would not oppose it for the reason that he felt sure nothing would come of it, because the committee, the Assembly and the church would never be able to agree on any particular terms of revision. Much more skeptical might one feel as to the agreement of all the Reformed Churches in any new formula. Some of them may decline to enter on the subject; negotiations between those consenting may be indefinitely prolonged, and finally end in their agreeing to do nothing. As the six famous physicians in consultation at the death-bed of Charles II. were unable to agree upon a prescription for his majesty other than “a glass of water,” so the learned doctors of this committee may unite only in a like limpid solution.

Dr. Henry J. Van Dyke, although strongly in favor of revision, but not of revision run mad, distinguished himself by his moderation, as well as by his trenchant power in debate. His amusing picture of “the revision train starting from Saratoga and stopping at Princeton for passengers, but not for refreshments,” was a little marred by the unexpected leap of Princeton to the conductor’s platform, and his cry of “show your tickets,” as well as by the loading of the train with Princeton ideas.

The mention of the honored names of Dr. Patton and Dr. Van Dyke transports me to “the times that tried men’s souls,” when I first knew them, and received kindness never to be forgotten. Entrusted

as they are, along with other wise men, with the future of revision, I do not doubt that they will add to their fame, and confer lasting benefits on the church, by confining alterations in the Confession of Faith to points which will not touch the doctrines they preach and love. They are skilful navigators, and though one may wish to spread too much sail, we feel safe while the other has his hand on the helm.

The Board of Publication was the innocent occasion of strife. A committee of five had been appointed by the last Assembly to act in conjunction with the Business Committee of the Board, and to report on the feasibility of its printing as well as publishing, and on other-wise cheapening production. The members of the special committee were supposed to be experts, but in fact only one of them had any knowledge of book printing or publishing, and he had failed of success, and is now earning his bread in a different business. It was intended that the two committees of the Assembly and of the Board should coöperate in the investigations in a friendly manner, and it was expressly ordered that they should make a joint report. Instead of obeying these positive instructions of the Assembly which appointed it, this committee of obscure and incompetent persons assumed from the outset an insulting attitude towards the Business Committee of the Board, which is composed of gentlemen of the highest character and of conspicuous business capacity. The latter were refused a full conference, and never saw the report of the special committee until it was presented to the Assembly, and scattered by the mails throughout the church. The members of the Assembly were button-holed and plied with malicious charges against the business management of the Board. Under the influence of these slanders the Assembly was prepared to accept the most damaging statements against one of its most useful institutions. It was a strange spectacle; a large number of the leading ministers and elders of Philadelphia were by this infamous report arraigned before the bar of the Assembly and denounced as incapable, if not dishonest. Had these charges been true, the Assembly should have felt shame and sorrow at the dishonor to the church. Instead of this, shouts of levity and derision welcomed the indictment. Even this report admitted that the book-keeping of the Board's business was most perfect and transparent. As soon as the Board could obtain a hearing, every charge was effectually disposed of, and the Board vindicated, while the authors of the libel were covered with confusion. Confident in its own integrity and efficiency, the Board requested the Assembly to appoint a committee, composed of eminent publishers and

other widely-known business men, which should investigate these charges. I venture the prediction, that they will not only be disproved, but that their reckless authors will be held up to the contempt of the public opinion which they have so grossly abused. I speak advisedly. It was demonstrated on the floor of the Assembly by a comparison of its books with those of other houses of the highest repute, that those of the Presbyterian Board are better and cheaper. Its periodicals are admitted on all hands to be superior to any others. The profits on them are very large. The books do not show so great a profit as yet, because the new style is in its infancy, and because of the limited market open to them. The denominational imprimatur excludes them from a wide circulation among other churches and the general public. When Presbyterians shall loyally sustain their Board, as do the people of other churches their book departments, the sales will rapidly rise to the paying point.

One of the large publishers of the country, who is familiar with the business of the Board, testified, that it is doing better, in a pecuniary aspect, than could be expected; that the church should be satisfied provided the Board kept out of debt; that for the past five years no publisher has made money unless he had a speciality. But the Board reports a profit last year of sixteen thousand dollars. The error is in looking at the publications of the Board as a financial scheme. A regard to the interests of the church requires it to publish many books which cannot be remunerative in dollars and cents, though highly so in more important respects.

Whatever criticism may be against the business department, nothing but praise was uttered of its missionary and Sabbath-school work. This is its great field of operations, and here it has marked success. Two-thirds of the profits of the business departments are annually contributed to this mission work. Last year these donations amounted to eleven thousand dollars. "Children's Day" is an interesting feature of the Board's work. This Board, instead of a deficit, as is the case with other Boards, shows a surplus. So far from fearing retraction, it is rapidly extending its agencies. It has one hundred and thirty-five missionaries already employed, and expects to add largely to this number. It organized last year twelve hundred and forty-eight Sabbath-schools, into which are gathered forty-seven thousand seven hundred and thirty-eight children, under the care of over five thousand teachers. Measures are taken to increase this work during the present year. In the strictures on the report of the partisan

committee, honorable exception should be made of Mr. W. H. Scott, who refused to sign the libels for which their authors are in danger of prosecution before the civil courts.

The Boards of Foreign and Home Missions were reported to the Assembly as suddenly plunged in great embarrassment. This serious condition is set forth in a circular-letter by the secretaries in these terms—

“The unparalleled falling off of gifts to both Boards towards the close of the (fiscal) year—a time when they have been accustomed to receive their largest amounts—took them wholly by surprise, and left them unexpectedly in their present embarrassed condition, the debt of the Home Board being \$80,000, and that of the Foreign Board \$60,000.”

“The simple fact is that two important Boards of the church, whose work belts the globe, are seriously crippled because of heavy debts carried forward from the year just closed.” It is difficult to account for this alarming state of affairs. That this great, wealthy, and liberal church should suddenly withhold its gifts from these two important and favorite branches of its work is a mystery. Several explanations are tendered. Some suggest “La Grippe,” which has laid its cold grasp on the pocket-books of the donors; others find a solution in the iniquitous “tariff bills” now pending in Congress. But the most probable cause is the revision agitation. The faith of the church has received a shock; its confidence in its ministers is shaken; doubt and dismay brood over it; paralysis has smitten it. The agencies of the church must suffer. Mutual trust is gone. Hence the fierce suspicions vented upon the Board of Publication, the mortal thrust at the Freedmen’s Board, by which the colored churches were virtually emancipated from its control, and allowed direct access to the other Boards, and the implied rebuke of several more of these agencies. To this cause we ascribe in part the failing fountains of sacred offerings.

Not only the Home and Foreign Boards suffer from this malign influence, but the income of most of the boards is reduced. From nearly all of them the lamentation is heard that the church no longer entrusts them with liberal contributions. What else could be expected from a church shaken to its foundations by doctrinal disputes? The revision controversy, as conducted up to the meeting of the Assembly, alarmed and disgusted the pious contributors from whom supplies had flowed to the Boards. When they saw the church tolerate ministers who renounced the system of truth which they were pledged to maintain; when they listened to the reckless ravings with which these

sacred doctrines were assailed; when they heard the pastor of a large metropolitan church declare that he had never even read the Confession of Faith, and that, if the Bible contained the doctrines of the Confession, he would tear the Bible to tatters; when they knew that a professor in a great theological seminary had for years attacked the Scriptures with the feline claws of a spurious criticism; when they perceived that there was not orthodoxy or courage sufficient in their Presbyteries to bring them to trial for heresy; when they caught the boastful shout of revisionists that Calvinism was doomed, is it any wonder that the springs of benevolence should fail in this arid desert?

The radical revisionists were balked of their purpose at the Assembly. The sword of Damocles, which they had hung suspended over the Confession, proved to be not the keen Damascus blade of truth, nor "the spear of Ithuriel which touched the toad that sat squat at the ear of Eve," but rather a blunted dagger or a clumsy rapier.

Whether the measure of orthodox success will restore confidence to the church at large, remains to be seen. She may "fear the gifts of the Greeks" and feel doubtful of measures in which revisionists acquiesced. This war is not ended. The present Committee on Revision may not agree on a report; two reports from it may be made to the next Assembly. This experiment of revision may not satisfy anybody. Fresh struggles may ensue. A long period of dispute and doubt may lie before the church. The radicals will doubtless put forth new efforts. About a hundred ministers annually come into the Presbyterian Church, mostly from Arminian churches. This number will be increased, while the hand of heresy within opens wider the door. They, too, may seek our fat livings, without deigning to glance at the Confession of Faith. Can it be that all this will revive the asphyxiated charities of the church? A preliminary test is ordered to be made by the recent action of the Assembly, viz.:

"That in view of the present emergency, a special collection be taken in all the churches on some Sabbath in June, if practicable; if not, certainly not later than October; and that all the undesignated subscriptions made at such time be divided equally between the Home and Foreign Boards."

The secretaries add: "Surely no argument is needed to enforce this recommendation."

One argument we believe to be needed, viz.: the assurance that agitation against the Confession shall cease. If the harmonious action of the Assembly be accepted by the church as the pledge of unity and

orthodoxy, a rich stream of contributions may flow in. On the other hand, if this be but a deceitful truce, during which the radicals are plotting schemes of renewed assault on the standards, an indignant church may still refuse its gifts. It does not help the zeal of Presbyterians to tell them that the Confession of Faith, on which their church has rested for two hundred and fifty years, is untrue to the Bible, unjust to God, and inimical to man.

Dr. Warfield, of Princeton, who worthily wears the mantle of his illustrious grandfather, Robert J. Breckinridge, made an able report on "Deaconesses," which elicited an animated discussion, and which was referred to the next Assembly.

Dr. Nicolls, of St. Louis, brought in a report on the proper methods of increasing the number of ministers, which raised the oft-mooted question of engaging the services of men as ministers, with less scholastic training. This matter also went over.

Dr. Herrick Johnson reported on the difficult subject of episcopal authority in the Presbyterian Church. The need has been long felt of some bond between vacant churches and unemployed ministers. The evils of the present method are glaring. The vacant churches are overwhelmed with "candidates." The unemployed ministers are driven to humiliating efforts to secure a field of labor. It would seem that the Presbytery is the custodian for both; but, in fact, it can do little for either. It has not the power of a Roman Catholic, or of a Methodist bishop; nor is it even the point of junction afforded by an an Episcopal bishop in this country. Whether anything can be done to remedy this defect is doubtful. The slight tenure of the pastorate, the restlessness of ministers and of churches, the "vacancies," and the "W. C.'s," are signs of the times. They indicate the levity, the unrest, the struggle of our age and country. According to this modern view, the minister is an "hireling," and preaching an amusement. With less provocation than the Athenians had for voting against Aristides, a congregation will demand a change of actors and scenery. Deeper than in external mechanism must be sought the power to effect the change in this direction which the report attempted to vindicate. When the preacher shall regard himself, and be looked upon by the people, not as a lecturer to entertain, but as the messenger of heaven to publish salvation, the present deplorable condition will have ceased to degrade the ministry, and to secularize the churches. Until then, the ambassador of God will continue to be supplanted by the purveyor of amusement, the question will still be asked at the close of

each sermon, "How did you like it?" and worldly-minded trustees will persist on "running the church on business principles."

There were other topics of interest broached at the Assembly, which the limits of this article exclude from notice.

This historic General Assembly concluded its sessions with a solemn religious service, which deeply impressed all present with a sense of fraternal unity, with fresh impulses of zeal, and with a more hopeful trust in God's gracious purposes towards the vast body of Christian people there represented.

When the excellent Moderator, Dr. Moore, uttered the words of dissolution, and the Assembly of 1890 expired, all felt that a page of history was turned on which were written words that are deeds, records that are facts, resolutions that are results. The memory of this Assembly will be long cherished in the Presbyterian, and even in other churches, for what it did, and for what it did not do; for what was said, and for what was left unsaid; for its loyalty to God, its fidelity to truth, its charity to man; for the friends it has won, and for the enemies it has made. *Salve et Vale.*

THOS. A. HOYT.