

AN

A D D R E S S

TO THE

MINISTERS, ELDERS, AND MEMBERS,

OF THE

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

IN THE

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ADDRESS.

AT a meeting of those Members of the last General Assembly, who had voted in favour of the resolution introduced by Dr. Miller, condemning the errors contained in Barnes' Notes on the Romans, held at Pittsburgh, in May, 1836, agreeably to a call through the Moderator, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to prepare and circulate a suitable publication on the state of the Church, and particularly on the two great subjects which had occupied the attention of the Assembly, viz: the Barnes' Case, and the Foreign Missionary Question.

In accordance with our appointment, as well as from a personal conviction of duty, and, we trust, under a proper sense of our high responsibility, we respectfully present the following publication to the candid, serious, and prayerful consideration of the Ministers, Elders, and Members of the Presbyterian Church, in these United States.

As introductory to our remarks on the topics to which we shall more especially direct your attention, we beg you to indulge us in two or three general observations; and we observe, in the 1st place, that the prosperity of the Church, and her efficiency in securing the great objects of her institution, depend, under God, on the purity of her faith. The Divine glory can be promoted, and the souls of men saved, only through the knowledge and obedience of the *truth*; Scriptural views of the perfections of Jehovah; of our own condition and character by nature; and of the way of life through Jesus Christ, lie at the foundation of all true religion; and hence the many solemn injunctions laid upon the Ambassadors of the Saviour to preach the truth; to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. Indeed, if these positions be not correct, and if it be a matter of no moment, *what* are the *principles* men hold, and the *views* they entertain, it may well be questioned, wherefore God should have given us a revelation of his will at all—why reveal truth, if it is not *necessary* that it should be embraced? But notwithstanding these views should, as we

think, command every man's approbation, one of the most alarming symptoms of declension in the Church, at the present day, is *indifference* with respect to the truth of God. Men do not seem to realize as they ought, the importance of the truth as Jehovah has revealed it. They pride themselves upon being extremely liberal on this subject. They will not quarrel with a man for not believing this doctrine and the other doctrine—with them, sincerity, zeal, and an outwardly blameless life, are sufficient evidences of piety. In fact, in the hearing of many, to talk of the importance of maintaining the truth and order of the Church—of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, is to incur their suspicion of your zeal and devotedness in the cause of God, if not to have them call in question your personal religion. Now this surely cannot be too much deplored. It is freely admitted that a mere speculative knowledge of the gospel is not enough. It is admitted, too, that it is good to be zealously affected in a good thing; and that there can be no true religion without zeal; but there may be zeal without knowledge, and God crowneth no man, except he strive lawfully. Mere sincerity, mere zeal, are not of themselves sufficient. If they were, the son of God would never have wrought a moral miracle in order to change Saul of Tarsus into Paul the Apostle; nor would that Apostle ever have uttered the language, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached, let him be accursed." Paul was a man of peace; a man whose bosom burned with love; a man zealous and untiring in his efforts for the salvation of souls; but with him, *truth* was paramount to every thing else; and accordingly he hesitates not a moment to imprecate the blasting curse of God upon him who should attempt to corrupt the *pure gospel of Christ*. The *truth* of God then, we repeat it, accompanied by the agency of his spirit, and not our notions of it, nor our zeal in propagating these notions, is that on which the prosperity of the Church, and her efficiency in securing the great objects of her institution, depend.

We observe 2d—That to the successful maintainance of the truth of God—to union of effort in its maintainance, creeds, confessions of faith, are indispensable. It is readily conceded that the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice—the ultimate standard by which every doctrine and every spirit must be tried. But it is well known that men interpret the Bible very differently, and that all the errorists that have ever disturbed the Church have professed to receive it as their text-book. The Arian, the Socinian, the Pelagian, and the Arminian, if you believe them, all find their several systems in the Bible—so that a simple profession of faith in the Bible it appears is a very vague matter; and something more definite and explicit is evidently necessary to ascertain the religious sentiments of men. In order to this, under the circumstances of the case, there must be a resort to the use of formularies containing

the leading and distinguishing doctrines of the Bible, expressed in language easily understood. In no other way amid the multiplicity of religious sects that exist, is it possible to know what are men's views of divine truth; and in no other way can that harmony in counsel and union in action which are necessary to the defence and propagation of that truth be secured. Accordingly the Church has never been without her confession of faith, her avowed creed.

In the early ages of Christianity, this confession, this creed, was contained in the declaration, that "Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God"—a declaration including in it much more than meets the eye of the superficial thinker—including in it that he was the Messiah, and of course the offices he sustained, the errand on which he came, and the condition of those on whose behalf he appeared; and in after times and as errors multiplied, men of faith and prayer seeking direction from on high, expanded their confession, their acknowledged creed, so as to meet the exigencies of their day. The Presbyterian Church as such, has her forms of doctrine, her confession of faith and catechisms, which constitute her public standards. We say nothing now of their excellence—of the character of those holy men of God who studied, prayed and laboured, to set in order the truths which they contain; nor of the kind providence of God in preserving them so long, and in permitting them to be handed down to us with his marked blessing upon their use—we say nothing of these things; but we would say, that on entering the Presbyterian Church, every minister of the Gospel is required solemnly to avow that the doctrines of these standards are the doctrines which he holds and approves—he is required to answer in the affirmative the following among other questions, viz:—
 "Do you *sincerely* receive and adopt the confession of faith of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?" Mark this language. It is not do you receive "for substance of doctrine"—"with considerable latitude of interpretation"—the confession of faith of this Church? Nor is it do you receive the "*system*" of doctrine which this confession teaches? It is more explicit still—Do you *sincerely* receive and adopt *the confession of faith* of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures? as containing the accredited principles of Christianity arranged in systematic order according to their mutual bearings and dependence? This is the simple, naked question—and were all who answer this question affirmatively to do so in good faith, sincerely and candidly, then would the name of *Presbyterian* be an intelligible and sufficient passport throughout our bounds—then, would a certificate of the fact, that an individual had before any Presbytery in the land received our standards, at once make us acquainted with his doctrinal sentiments, and commend him to our confidence—for we should then all "speak the same thing, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." But if, in answering this question, men

are not sincere and candid—if when they say they “*sincerely* receive and adopt *the confession of faith* of this Church,” they receive it merely as a “*system*” distinguished from, and in preference to other systems, and reserve to themselves the right of construing its language to mean something different from that which it has been uniformly understood to mean, then it is plain that we have no common standards—no bond of union—and that it is impossible to know what are the doctrines held by those who are nominally connected with us; which leads to our 3d general observation, viz:—That creeds, confessions of faith, to answer their true and legitimate purpose, must be *honestly* received. And *here* we are constrained to believe is one fruitful source of our present distractions as a Church, a lack of *honesty* in the reception of our standards. Some examine these standards with care—they compare them with the scriptures of truth on which they profess to be founded—they scan narrowly the language used in them, and having done so, they *sincerely* receive and adopt all the doctrines they contain. Without laying any claim to infallibility, or pretending to judge those who may differ from them, they proclaim to the world that the Confession of Faith of this Church is their confession of faith. They feel themselves solemnly bound, as by an oath, to adhere to this form of sound words, and to publish no doctrines either inconsistent or at variance with it. This course they pursue as *honest* men; and they are encouraged the rather to pursue it, because they find that all the boasted discoveries of new light—all the improvements in Theology so much talked of as corresponding with the improvements of the age, are, in reality, only the dark visions and exploded theories of former centuries. And, because, moreover, they find that no sooner are the men who have published these discoveries and improvements, and, in consequence, have trumpeted themselves abroad as far in advance of their generation, arraigned for the errors they have promulgated, than they immediately turn round and plead that they have taught nothing new, and undertake to defend themselves by quoting the standard writers of former centuries. There are others, however, who view this matter in a very different light, and who act a very different part. Although they have professed to receive our standards in the *same manner* with the class just referred to, they do not consider themselves bound by that act to receive all the doctrines contained in them; nor to construe the language in which they are expressed, in the sense in which it was manifestly employed by those who framed them. Their independent and gigantic minds are not to be trammelled by frame-works of faith that men have invented, and without any regard to the solemn vows which they have voluntarily come under, they publish to the world their unhallowed speculations—their crude and undigested theories. Instead of withdrawing in a peaceable and orderly manner from a Church whose formularies they have never honestly

adopted, they remain to destroy its unity and interrupt its harmony. Under the name and cloak of Presbyterianism they disseminate sentiments which lead directly to Arminianism, Pelagianism and Socinianism. These are the men who, in our judgment, have caused divisions among us—for we are a divided Church—as really divided as though we were called by different names and existed under different organizations. The schism has come already, and let those men who have come into our Church by professing to receive our standards, when, in fact, they did not believe them in their plain and obvious import, answer for it—for they are its authors. These remarks, it is painful, exceedingly painful, for us to make, but we are persuaded they are well founded. If any think them severe, it is our conscientious conviction, it is only the severity of *truth*; and we earnestly entreat those to whom they apply, to look calmly at this matter—to ask themselves whether the conduct which we charge, would not, in the case of worldly men, and in reference to associations for mere secular purposes, draw down the sternest rebuke of every man of integrity and honour.

Without any further general observations we proceed to the two great subjects mentioned at the commencement of this address, and 1st, the “Barnes’ Case,” as it is termed. It will be necessary to glance for a moment at the history of this case. In 1830, the Rev. Albert Barnes, being then a member of the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, and Pastor of the Church in Morristown, New Jersey, published a sermon styled “The Way of Salvation.” Shortly after this, he (Mr. B.) received a call to become the Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. In consequence of the errors contained in the sermon referred to, a minority of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, to which the Church calling Mr. B. belonged, opposed the prosecution of the call. They were, however, overruled, the call was forwarded, put into his hands, and accepted by him. The minority then insisted on their right to question him respecting his doctrinal sentiments previous to his reception and installation—in this, however, they were again overruled by a majority of the Presbytery, and he was received and installed. Of this procedure on the part of the majority, the minority complained to the Synod, and were heard before that body at their meeting in the following autumn, and the result was, the following resolutions were passed by the Synod:—

“1. *Resolved*, That the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in not allowing the examination of Mr. Barnes, in connexion with his printed sermon, previously to his reception as a member of Presbytery, and especially before his installation as pastor of the first Presbyterian Church, gave just ground of complaint to the minority.

“2. *Resolved*, That the complainants be referred back to the Presbytery of which they are members, with an injunction to that Presbytery, to hear and decide on their objections to the orthodoxy of the sermon of Mr. Barnes, and to take such order on the whole subject, as is required by a regard to the purity of the church, and its acknowledged doctrines and order.”

Subsequently to this decision of the Synod, the minority in the

Presbytery became the majority—a special meeting was called to comply with the order of Synod—and the following decision was had.—

“The Presbytery of Philadelphia, agreeably to the direction of the Synod at their meeting in Lancaster, having considered the sermon of the Rev. Albert Barnes, entitled the ‘WAY OF SALVATION,’ are of the opinion that it contains speculations of dangerous tendency, on some of the principal points in Christian theology, and ought not, therefore, to be sanctioned as expressing that view of the great truths of God’s word, which the Presbyterian Church has uniformly adopted, and which is exhibited in their authorized Confession of Faith.

“In stating the doctrine of *original sin*, the author employs a phraseology which is calculated to mislead, and which appears evidently to conflict with the spirit and letter of the standards of the Presbyterian Church.

“1. He denies that the posterity of Adam are responsible or answerable for Adam’s first sin, which he committed as the federal head of his race. Thus, p. 6, ‘Christianity does not charge on men crimes of which they are not guilty. It does not say, as I suppose, *that the sinner is held to be personally answerable for the transgressions of Adam, or of any other man.*’

“Although the word *transgressions* is here used plurally, yet it is evident from the whole tenor of this division of the discourse, that the prime sin of Adam, which constituted his apostacy from God, is meant. Again, he says, p. 7, ‘Neither the facts, nor any proper inference from the facts affirm, that I am in either case *personally responsible for what another man* (referring to Adam) *did before I had an existence.*’ And he explicitly declares, that if God had charged upon mankind such a responsibility, it would have been *clearly unjust*, vide p. 6. The doctrine of responsibility here impugned is clearly expressed, Confession of Faith, chap. vi. 6. “Every sin, both *original* and actual, being a *transgression* of the righteous law of God and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal.

“2. In accordance with the above doctrine, that mankind are not responsible for Adam’s sin, he affirms, p. 7, that ‘Christianity affirms the fact, that in connexion with the sin of Adam, or as a *result*, all *moral agents* will sin, and sinning will die.’ And then proceeds to explain the principle upon which the universality of sin is to be accounted for, by representing it to be the result of Adam’s sin, in the same sense, as the misery of a drunkard’s family is the result of his intemperance. Here it would seem, the author maintains that the same relationship subsists between every man and his family, as subsisted between Adam and his posterity; that the same principle of moral government applies to both cases alike, or in other words, that mankind hold no other relationship to Adam, than that of children to a natural progenitor.

“The public federal or representative character of Adam is thus denied, contrary to the explicit statement in the answer to the 22d Question of Larger Catechism. ‘The covenant being made with Adam as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity; all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation sinned in him, and fell with him, in that first transgression.’

“3. He declares, p. 7, that ‘the notion of imputing sin is an invention of modern times,’ contrary to Confession of Faith, chap. vi. 3, ‘They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.’

“4. In p. 5, he admits that his language on the subject of original sin differs from that used by the Confession of Faith on the same subject, and then accounts for this difference, on the ground of the difficulty of affixing any clear and definite meaning to the expression ‘we sinned *in* him and fell *with* him.’ This expression he considers, as far as it is capable of interpretation, as ‘intended to convey the idea, not that the sin of Adam is imputed to us, or set over to our account, but that there was a personal *identity* constituted between Adam and his posterity, so that it was really *our* act, and *ours only*, after all, that is chargeable on us.’

The whole of this statement is exceedingly incautious and improper. The language of the Confession of Faith on one of the cardinal doctrines is held up as obscure and unintelligible, or, if possessing any meaning, as expressing an absurdity. The framers of this confession are charged with the absurdity of maintaining the personal

identity between Adam and his posterity, when their language conveys no more than a federal or representative relationship. This whole view of the doctrine of original sin, is, in the opinion of the Presbytery, obscure, perplexed, fruitful of dangerous consequences, and therefore, censurable.

"The statements of this sermon on the doctrine of Atonement, are also, in the opinion of Presbytery, in some important features, erroneous, and contrary to the orthodox views.

"1. At p. 11, he says, 'this atonement was for all men. It was an offering made for the race. It had not respect so much to individuals, as to the law and perfections of God. It was an opening of the way of pardon, a making forgiveness consistent, a preservation of truth, a magnifying of the law, and had no particular reference to any class of men.'

"Here it is denied that the atonement had any special relation to the elect, which it had not also to the non-elect. But if it be true that the atonement offered by Christ, had no 'respect to individuals,' 'no particular reference to any class of men,' upon what principle can it be regarded as a satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of men? or in what proper sense can Christ be considered as a vicarious sacrifice? unless the atonement be a satisfaction for the sins of individuals, upon what principle can it open the way of pardon, make forgiveness consistent, preserve truth or magnify the law? The special reference of the atonement to a chosen people, in opposition to this view, is taught, Confession of Faith, chap. viii. 5. 'The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he, through the Eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father had given unto him.' Again, in answer to Question 44, Larger Catechism 'Christ executeth the office of a Priest in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people.' &c.

"2. At p. 11, he says, 'the atonement of itself secured the salvation of no one;' and again, 'The atonement secured the salvation of no one, except as God had promised his Son that he should see of the travail of his soul, and except on the condition of repentance and faith.' This language is incautious and calculated to mislead; as it seems to imply that the atonement of itself does not secure its own application, and, therefore, may, by possibility, fail in its design. It is improper to suspend its efficacy upon conditions, when the conditions themselves are the results of its efficacy, see Confession of Faith, chap. viii. 8, 'To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same; making intercession for them, in and by the word, the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey,' &c.

"3. At p. 10, he unequivocally denies that Christ endured the penalty of the law. 'He did not indeed, endure the penalty of the law, for his sufferings were not eternal, nor did he endure remorse of conscience; but he endured so much suffering, bore so much agony, that the Father was pleased to accept of it, in the place of the eternal torments of all that should be saved.' Here it seems to be inculcated that Christ did not satisfy the precise claims which a violated law had upon the sinner, but that he did what might be considered a substitute for such satisfaction; or it is implied that God remitted or waived the original claim, and accepted of something less. And that this is the sentiment of the author, is evident from his language, p. 11. 'Christ's sufferings were severe, more severe than those of *any mortal* before or since; but they bore, so far as we can see, only a very distant resemblance to the pains of hell, the proper penalties of the law. Nor is it possible to conceive that the sufferings of a *few hours*, however severe, could equal pains, though far less intense, eternally prolonged. Still less that the sufferings of human nature in a single instance, for the divine nature could not suffer, should be equal to the eternal pain of many millions.' Here it is affirmed that Christ was not *capable* of enduring that penalty which the justice of God had exacted of the sinner, that his sufferings bore a very distant resemblance to it, and by consequence, that the penalty of the law has been either relaxed or is yet unpaid, and that the justice of God has waived its original demand, or is yet unsatisfied.

"The whole of this language seems derogatory to Christ as an all-sufficient Redeemer; it judges of the human nature of Christ as if it were a common human nature, it leaves out of view the infinite support which the divine nature was capable of imparting to the human nature of Christ, and is very different from the view of this subject given by the framers of our standards, in the answer to the 38 Q. of L. C. 'It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the *infinite wrath of God*, and the power of death; give

worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience and intercession; and to satisfy God's justice,' &c. &c.

"In discoursing on human ability, the sermon contains expressions which do not seem to be well judged. In p. 14, it is said, 'it is not to any want of physical strength that this rejection is owing, for men have power enough in themselves, to hate both God and their fellow men, and it requires less physical power to love God than to hate him;' and on the same page he represents man's inability as solely in the will; and on p. 30, that men are not saved simply because they *will not* be saved. Here physical ability is represented as competent to the performance of a moral action, which is an improper application of terms, and human inability as resulting merely from the will, and not from total depravity, which is contrary to Confession of Faith, chap. vi. 4. 'From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions,' and Confession of Faith, chap. ix. 3. "Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation, so, as a natural man being altogether averse from that which is good, and dead to sin, is not able by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto."

"Still further, the language of the sermon, on the subject of conformity to the standards of the church, if sanctioned, would give to every individual, after adopting these standards, the liberty of dissenting from them as much, and as often, as he might desire. Thus p. 6, he says, 'It is not denied that this language varies from the statements which are often made on this subject, and from the opinion which has been entertained by many. And, it is admitted, that it does not accord with that used on the same subject in the Confession of Faith, and other standards of doctrine.' And again p. 12. 'The great principle on which the author supposes the truths of religion are to be preached, and on which he endeavours to act is, that the Bible is to be interpreted by all the honest helps within the reach of the preacher, and then proclaimed as it is, let it lead where it will, within, or without the circumference of any arrangement of doctrines. He is supposed to be responsible, not at all for its impinging on any theological system; nor is he to be cramped by any frame work of Faith that has been reared around the Bible.' This language would seem to imply, that an individual may enter the bosom of a church by a public reception of its creed, and continue in the communion of that church, although he should subsequently discover that its creed was not founded on the word of God. Whilst the liberty of every man to accept or reject any particular creed, is fully acknowledged by this Presbytery, yet they do deny, that any minister, whilst he remains in the communion of the Presbyterian Church, has a right to impugn its creed, or to make a public declaration that he is not bound by its authority."

"In fine, a *whole view* of this discourse seems to warrant the belief, that the grand and fundamental doctrine of justification, as held by the Protestant Reformers, and taught clearly and abundantly in the standards of the Presbyterian Church, is really not held, but denied in this sermon. For the imputation of Adam's sin is denied; and the endurance of the penalty of the law by Christ, is denied; and any special reference of the atonement to the elect of God, is denied; and the righteousness of Christ as the meritorious ground of our acquittal and acceptance with God, is not once mentioned, although the text of the discourse naturally points to the doctrine: and when it is considered that the imputation of Adam's first sin to his posterity, and the imputation of the sins of God's people to their surety Saviour, and the imputation of his finished righteousness to them, do all rest upon the same ground, and must all stand or fall together, and that it has been found in fact, that those who deny one of these, do generally deny the whole, and to be consistent, must necessarily do so, it is no forced conclusion, but one which seems inevitable, that the sermon does really reject the doctrine of justification, as held by the Reformers, and as taught in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms; that it does not teach as the answer to the question on justification in our Shorter Catechism asserts, that "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as *righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, and received by faith alone.*"

"It is not satisfactory, that the sermon says, that 'Christ died in the place of sinners;' that it speaks of 'the merits of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ'—of 'the love of Christ,' of 'putting on the Lord Jesus Christ,' of being 'willing to drop into the hands of Jesus, and to be saved by his merit alone,' of God, 'sprinkling on the soul the blood of Jesus, and freely pardoning all its sins,' since this language may be used, and is actually used, by some who explicitly deny that Christ took the law place of sinners, bore the curse of God's law in their room and stead, and that they are saved only by the imputation to them of his perfect righteousness.

“On the whole, the Presbytery express their deep regret, that Mr. Barnes should have preached and published a discourse, so highly objectionable, and so manifestly, in some of its leading points, opposed to the doctrines of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church; they earnestly recommend to Mr. Barnes, to reconsider and renounce the erroneous matter contained in his printed sermon, as specified in the foregoing decisions of Presbytery: and with a view to afford time to Mr. Barnes for reflection and reconsideration, in reference to the errors of his sermon, and for opportunity for such of the brethren, as may choose to converse freely with him on the subject, the Presbytery do suspend their final decision on the case, until their next stated meeting.”

At this meeting likewise, a committee was appointed to wait on Mr. Barnes.

“To communicate to him the result of the deliberations of this Presbytery in the examination of his sermon, and to converse with him freely and affectionately, on the points excepted to in that sermon; in the hope and expectation, that the interview will result in removing or diminishing the difficulties which have arisen in his case; and that they report at the next meeting of Presbytery.”

This Committee performed their duty, they saw and conversed with Mr. B., but were informed by him that he considered all the proceedings of the Presbytery in his case since the decision of the Synod as unconstitutional, and that, therefore, he could not receive them as a Committee. Their report was made accordingly to the Presbytery by whom the whole case was referred to the Assembly,—not however without having connected with it two or three complaints by which the Delegates from Presbytery to that body would be excluded from voting against the errors of the Sermon.

Of the unusual proceedings of the Assembly in the case, we say nothing. The following resolutions were passed:—

“1. Resolved, That the General Assembly, while it appreciates the conscientious zeal for the purity of the Church, by which the Presbytery of Philadelphia is believed to have been actuated, in its proceedings in the case of Mr. Barnes; and while it judges that the sermon by Mr. Barnes, entitled, ‘The Way of Salvation,’ contains a number of unguarded and objectionable passages; yet is of the opinion, that, especially after the explanations which were given by him of those passages, the Presbytery ought to have suffered the whole to pass without further notice.

“2. Resolved, That in the judgment of this Assembly, the Presbytery of Philadelphia ought to suspend all further proceedings in the case of Mr. Barnes.

“3. Resolved, That it will be expedient, so soon as the regular steps can be taken, to divide the Presbytery in such way, as will be best calculated to promote the peace of the ministers and churches belonging to the Presbytery.”

After all this had transpired, Mr. Barnes saw fit to publish, in his notes on the Romans, in a more expanded form, the same errors which he had previously published in his Sermon. The Rev. Dr. Junkin, for reasons which appeared to him, not only sufficient but imperative, and which he has published to the world, tabled charges against him before his Presbytery—and here without entering into the argument, or copying the reasonings of Dr. J. we simply introduce his charges, and the proofs he adduced.

“The Rev. Albert Barnes is hereby charged with maintaining the following doctrines, contrary to the Standards of the Presbyterian Church, viz: :

CHARGE I.

“That sin consists in voluntary action.”

Proof 1st. Notes on Romans, p. 249. “In all this, and in all other sin, man is voluntary.”

Proof 2d. Same work, p. 123. “There is no reason to believe that they [men] are

condemned to eternal death, or held to be guilty of his sin [meaning Adam's sin] without participation, of their own, or without personal sin, any more than that they are approved by the work of Christ, or held to be personally deserving, without embracing his offer, and receiving him as a Saviour."

Proof 3d, p. 192. "They (Jacob and Esau) had *done* nothing good or bad, and where that is the case there can be no character, for character is the result of conduct.

That the period of moral agency had not yet commenced.

Proof 4, p. 124. "As the work of Christ does not benefit the race unless it is embraced, so does not the reasoning of the Apostle lead us to the conclusion that the deed of Adam does not condemn unless there be some voluntary act on the part of each individual?

Proof 5, p. 118. "Men will not be held guilty unless there is a law which binds them, of which they are apprised, and which they voluntarily transgress."

That this doctrine is contrary to the standards of the Presbyterian Church, will appear by referring to Confession of Faith chap. vi. 5. "This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet *both itself*, and all the *motions thereof are truly and properly sin.*" 6. "Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal."

Lar. Cat. Quest. 27.—"The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come."

Shorter Cat. Quest. 19.—"All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever."

Con. chap. ix.—"1. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good or evil.

"2. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom and power to will and to do that which is good and well-pleasing to God; but yet mutably, so that he might fall from it.

"3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as a natural man being altogether averse from that which is good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

"4. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.

"5. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only."

CHARGE II.

"That Adam (before and after his fall) was ignorant of his moral relations to such a degree, that he did not know the consequences of his sin would or should reach any further, than to natural death."

Proof 1. Note p. 115. "If an inquiry be made here, how *Adam* would understand this [the threatening of death;] I reply that we have no reason to think he would understand it as referring to any thing more than the loss of life as an expression of the displeasure of God. Moses does not intimate that he was learned in the nature of laws and penalties, and his narrative would lead us to suppose that this was all that would occur to Adam. And indeed there is the highest evidence the case admits of, that this was his understanding of it. For in the account of the *infliction* of the penalty, *after* the law was violated, in God's own interpretation of it, in Gen. iii. 19, there is still *no* reference to any thing further. "Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return." Now it is incredible that Adam should have understood this as referring to what has been called "spiritual death" and to "eternal death," when neither in the threatening, nor in the account of the infliction of the sentence, is there the slightest recorded reference to it. Men have done great injury to the cause of correct interpretation by carrying their notions of doctrinal subjects to the explanation of words and phrases in the Old Testament. They have usually described Adam as endowed with all the refinement, and possessed of all the knowledge, and adorned with all the metaphysical acumen and subtlety of a modern theologian. They have deemed him qualified, in the very infancy of the world, to understand and discuss questions, which, under all the

light of the Christian revelation, still perplex and embarrass the human mind. After these accounts of the endowments of Adam which occupy so large a space in books of theology, one is surprised, on opening the Bible, to find how unlike all this is to the simple statement in Genesis. And the wonder cannot be suppressed that men should describe the obvious *infancy* of the race as superior to its highest advancement; or that the *first man*, just created, just looking upon a world of wonders, unacquainted with law, and moral relations, and the effect of transgression should be represented as endowed with knowledge which four thousand years afterwards it required the advent of the Son of God to communicate."

How contrary all this is to the Standards of the Presbyterian Church will appear by referring to

Con. chap. iv. 2.—"After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over their creatures."

Lar. Cat. Quest. 17.—"After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female; formed the body of the man of the dust of the ground, and the woman of the rib of the man; endued them with living, reasonable, and immortal souls; made them after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it, with dominion over the creatures; yet subject to fall.

20. "The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was, the placing him in Paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth, putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself, instituting the Sabbath, entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

22. "The covenant being made with *Adam*, as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity; all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in that first transgression."

Shorter Cat. chap. 12.—"When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death."

CHARGE III.

"That unregenerate men are able to keep the commandments and convert themselves to God."

Proof 1, 164, "*The carnal mind*. This is the same expression as occurs in verse 6, (*τὸ φρονήμα τῆς σαρκός*). It does not mean the mind itself, the intellect or the will; it does not suppose that the mind or the soul is *physically* depraved, or opposed to God; but it means that the *mind* of the things of the flesh, giving to them supreme attention, is hostility to God." "For it.—The word (it) here refers to the minding of the things of the flesh. It does not mean that the soul *itself* is not subject to his law, but that the *mind* of those things is hostile to his law. The Apostle does not express any opinion about the metaphysical ability of man, or discuss that question at all. The amount of his affirmation is simply, that the *mind* of the flesh, the supreme attention to its dictates and desires, is not and cannot be subject to the law of God. They are wholly contradictory and irreconcilable, just as much as the love of falsehood is inconsistent with the laws of truth; as intemperance is inconsistent with the laws of temperance; and as adultery is a violation of the seventh commandment. But whether the *man himself* might not obey the law; whether he has or has not ability to do it—is a question which the apostle does not touch, and on which this passage should not be adduced. For whether the law of a particular sin is utterly irreconcilable with an opposite virtue, and whether the sinner is able to abandon that sin, and pursue a different path, are very different inquiries.

Is not subject.—It is not in subjection to the command of God. The minding of the flesh is opposed to that law, and thus shows that it is hostile to God.

Neither indeed can be.—This is absolute and certain. It is impossible that it should be. There is the utmost inability in regard to it. The things are utterly irreconcilable. But the affirmation does not mean that the *heart* of the sinner might not be sub-

ject to God; or that his *soul* is so physically depraved that he cannot obey, or that *he* might not obey the law.

165. 8. *So then*—It follows, it leads to this conclusion.

“*They that are in the flesh.*—They who are unrenewed sinners, who are following supremely the desires of the flesh. Chap. vii. 18. Those are meant here who follow fleshly appetites, and desires, and who are not led by the Spirit of God.

“*Cannot please God.*—That is, while they are thus in the flesh; while they thus pursue the desires of their corrupt nature, they cannot please God. But this affirms nothing respecting their ability to turn from this course, and to pursue a different mode of life. That is a different question. A child may be obstinate, proud and disobedient; and while in this state, it may be affirmed of him, that he cannot please his parent. But whether he might not cease to be obstinate, and become obedient is a very different inquiry, and the two subjects should never be confounded.*** He [the sinner] is engaged in hostility against God; and if he does not himself forsake it, it will be endless, and involve his soul in all the evils of a personal, and direct, and eternal warfare with the Lord Almighty.*** The Holy Spirit is often represented as dwelling in the hearts of Christians; and the meaning is not that there is a *personal* or *physical* indwelling of the Holy Ghost, but that he influences, directs, and guides Christians, producing meekness, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, &c. The expression to dwell in one, denotes intimacy of connexion, and means that those things which are the fruits of the Spirit, are produced in the heart.”

Proof 2, p. 103. “*We were yet without strength.* The word here used (*ασθενων*) is usually applied to those who are sick and feeble, deprived of strength by disease. Matt. xxx. 38; Luke x. 9; Acts iv. 9, v. 15. But it is also used in a *moral* sense to denote inability or feebleness, with regard to any undertaking or duty. Here it means that they were without strength in regard to the case which the Apostle was considering; that is, we had no power to devise a scheme of justification, to make an atonement, or to put away the wrath of God, &c. While all hope of man’s being saved by any plan of his own, was then taken away; while he was thus lying exposed to divine justice, and dependant on the mere mercy of God; God provided a plan which met the case, and secured his salvation. The remark of the apostle here has reference *only* to the condition of the case *before* the atonement was made. It does not pertain to the question, whether man has strength to repent and believe, now that the atonement is made, which is a very different inquiry.”

The contrariety of this to the Standards, will appear by reference to

Con. chap. vi. 4.—“From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.”

Chap. xi. 3.—“Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as a natural man being altogether averse from that which is good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.”

4. “When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.”

Chap. x. 1.—“All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.

“2. This effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man; who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.”

Con. chap. xvi.—“1. Good works are only such as God hath commanded in his holy word, and not such as without the warrant thereof, are devised by men out of blind zeal, or upon any pretence of good intention.

“2. These good works, done in obedience to God’s commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith: and by them believers manifest their thank-

fulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the Gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.

"3. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. And that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure; yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.

"4. They, who in their obedience; attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from supererogate and to do more than God requires, that they fall short of much, which in duty they are bound to do.

"5. We cannot, by our best works, merit pardon of sin, or eternal life, at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom by them we can neither profit, nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins; but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants; and because as they are good, they proceeded from his Spirit; and, as they are wrought by us, they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.

"6. Yet notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him, not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unrepvable in God's sight; but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.

"Works done by unregenerate men, although, for the matter of them, they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others; yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner, according to the word; nor to a right end, the glory of God; they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God. And yet their neglect of them is more sinful, and displeasing unto God."

CHARGE IV.

"That faith is an act of the mind, and not a principle, and is itself imputed for righteousness."

Proof 1. p. 94, '*Abraham believed God.*' In the Hebrew, Abraham believed *Jehovah*." The sense is substantially the same, as the argument turns on the *act* of believing. The faith which Abraham exercised was, that his posterity should be like the stars of heaven in number. This promise was made to him when he had no child, and of course when he had no *prospect* of such a posterity. See the strength and nature of this faith further illustrated in verses 16—21. The reason why it was counted to him for righteousness was, that it was such a strong, direct and unwavering act of confidence in the promise of God. *And it.*—The word 'it' here evidently refers to the act of believing. It does not refer to the righteousness of another—of God, or of the Messiah; but the discussion is solely of the *strong act* of Abraham's faith, which in *some sense* was counted to him for righteousness. In what sense this was, is explained directly after. All that is material to remark here is, that the *act* of Abraham, the strong confidence of his mind in the promises of God, his unwavering assurance that what God had promised he would perform, was received for righteousness. The same thing is expressed more fully in ver. 18—22. When, therefore, it is said the righteousness of Christ is accounted or imputed to us; when it is said that his merits are transferred and reckoned as ours; whatever may be the truth of the doctrine, it cannot be defended by *this* passage of Scripture. Faith is always an act of the mind. It is not a created essence which is placed within the mind. It is not a substance created independently of the soul, and placed within it by Almighty power. It is not a *principle*, for the expression, *a principle of faith*, is as unmeaning as a principle of joy, or a principle of sorrow, or a principle of remorse. God promises, the man believes, and this is the whole of it. Beyond the mental operation, there is nothing in the case, and the word is strictly limited to such an act of the mind throughout the Bible. There is not a place that can be adduced where the word means any thing else than an act of the mind, exercised in relation to some object, or some promise, or threatening, or declaration of some other being. p. 95. 'remark (1) 'That it is evidently not intended that the act of believing, on the part of Abraham, was the *meritorious* ground of accept-

ance; for then it would have been a work. Faith was as much his own act, as any act of obedience to the law. (2) The design of the Apostle was to show that by the law, or by works, man could not be justified, Chap. iii. 28, iv. 2. (3) Faith was not that which the law required. It demanded complete and perfect obedience; and if a man was justified by faith, it was in some other way, than by the law. (4) As the law did not demand this, [faith 'confidence in God, see page 30;] and as faith was something different from the demand of the law, so if a man were justified by that, it was on a principle altogether different from justification by works. It was not by personal merit. It was not by complying with the law. It was in a mode entirely different."

How contrary this to the Confession of Faith is evident.

Con. chap. xiv.—"2. By this faith a Christian believeth to be true, whatsoever is revealed in the word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein; and acteth differently, upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith, are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace."

Lar. Cat. Quest. 72.—"Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and word of God; whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his righteousness therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.

73. "Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do always accompany it, or of good works that are the fruits of it; nor as if the grace of faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification; but only as it is an instrument, by which he receiveth and applieth Christ and his righteousness."

Mr. Barnes is also charged with denying the following doctrines, which are taught in the standards of the church, viz.

CHARGE V.

"That God entered into covenant with Adam constituting him a federal or covenant head, and representative to all his natural descendants."

Proof 1. p. 144. "From these remarks it is clear that the apostle does not refer to the man here from any idea that there was any particular covenant transaction with him; but that he means to speak of it in the usual popular sense; referring to him as being the fountain of all the woes that sin has introduced into the world."

Proof 2. p. 128. "The most common explanation has been, that Adam was the representative of the race; that he was a covenant head, and that his sin was imputed to his posterity, and that they were held liable to punishment for it, as if they had committed it themselves. But to this there are great and insuperable objections.

(1.) There is not one word of it in the Bible. Neither the terms representative, covenant, or impute are ever applied to the transaction in the sacred Scriptures, (2.) It is a mere philosophical theory."

Proof 3. p. 115. As quoted under charge II.

Proof 4. p. 120, 121. "A comparison is also instituted between Adam and Christ in 1 Cor. xv. 22—25. The reason is, not that Adam was the representative or federal head of the human race, about which the apostle says nothing, and which is not even implied, but that he was the first of the race; he was the fountain, the head, the father and the consequences of that first act introducing sin into the world could be seen every where. The words representative and federal head are never applied to Adam in the Bible. The reason is, that the word representative implies an idea which could not have existed in the case—the consent of those who are represented. Besides, the Bible does not teach that they acted in him, or by him; or that he acted for them. No passage has ever yet been found that stated this doctrine."

Proof 5. p. 128. (2) "Nothing is said of a covenant with him (Adam.) No where in the Scriptures is the term covenant applied to any transaction with Adam. (3) All that is established here is the simple fact that Adam sinned, and that this made it certain that all his posterity would be sinners. Beyond this the language of the apostle does not go; and all else that has been said of this is the result of mere philosophical speculation. (4) This fact is one that is apparent; and that accords with all the analogy in the moral government of God. The drunkard secures commonly as a result that his family will be reduced to beggary, want, and wo. His sin is commonly the certain occasion of their being sinners; and the immediate cause of their loss of property

and comfort, and of their being overwhelmed in wretchedness and grief. A murderer will entail disgrace and shame on his family."

How utterly opposed all this is to the Standards, will appear by reference to Confession of Faith,

Con. chap. vii. 1.—"The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him, as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.

"2. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of Works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience."

Con. chap. xix. 1.—"God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it."

Lar. Cat. Quest. 20.—"The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was, the placing him in Paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth, putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself, instituting the Sabbath, entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.

"22. The covenant being made with Adam, as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity; all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in that first transgression."

Shorter Cat. Quest. 12.—"When God had created man, he entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death.

"13. Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God.

"14. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

"15. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

"16. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression."

CHARGE VI.

"That the first sin of Adam is imputed to his posterity."

Proof 1. p. 10. "A melancholy instance of this [substituting theory for fact] we have in the account which the apostle gives (ch. v.) about the effect of the sin of Adam. The simple *fact* is stated that that sin was followed by the sin and ruin of all his posterity. Yet he offers no explanation of the *fact*. He leaves it as indubitable; and as not demanding an explanation in his argument, perhaps as not admitting it. This is the whole of his doctrine on that subject. Yet men have not been satisfied with that. They have sought for a theory to account for it. And many suppose they have found it in the doctrine that the sin of Adam is *imputed*, or set over by an arbitrary arrangement to beings otherwise innocent, and that they are held to be responsible for a deed committed by a man thousands of years before they were born. This is the *theory*, and men insensibly forget that it is *mere theory*."

Proof 2. p. 117. (3) "It comports with the Apostle's argument to state a cause *why* all died and not to state that men sinned in Adam. It would require an *additional statement* to see how *that* could be a cause. (4) The expression, 'in whom all have sinned,' conveys no intelligible idea. As men had not an existence then in any sense they could not then sin. What idea is conveyed to men of common understanding, by the expression 'they sinned in him?' The meaning of the expression, therefore, clearly is, *because* all have sinned all die.

"I understand it, therefore, as referring to the fact that men sin in their own persons, *sin themselves*—as indeed, how can they sin in any other way?—and that *therefore* they die."

Proof 3. p. 119. "The difference contemplated, Rom. x. 14., is not that Adam was an *actual* sinner, and that they had sinned only by *imputation*. For (1.) The expression to sin by imputation, is unintelligible and conveys no idea. (2.) The apostle makes no such distinction and conveys no such idea. (3.) His very object is different. It is to show that they were *actual sinners*; that they transgressed law; and the proof of

this is that they died. (4.) It is utterly absurd to suppose that men from the time of Adam to Moses were sinners *only by imputation*.

Proof 4. p. 119. "Death reigned; and this proves that they were sinners. If it should be said that the death of *infants* would prove that *they* were sinners also, I answer.—(a) That this was an inference which the *apostle* does not draw, and for which he is not responsible. It is not affirmed by him. (b) If it did refer to infants, what would it prove? Not that the sin of Adam was imputed, but that they were *personally* guilty and transgressors. For this is the only point to which the argument tends. The apostle says not a word about imputation. He does not even refer to infants by name; nor does he here introduce at all the doctrine of imputation. All this is mere philosophy introduced to explain difficulties; but whether true or false; whether the theory explains or embarrasses the subject, it is not needful here to inquire. (3) The *very expression* here is against the supposition that infants are intended, and that the sin of Adam is imputed to them. The doctrine of imputation has been, that infants were personally guilty of Adam's sin; that they 'sinned in him;' that there was a *personal identity* constituted between them and Adam, (see Edwards on Original Sin): and that therefore *his sin* was *theirs* as really and truly as if committed by themselves. Yet here the apostle says that those of whom *he* was speaking had *not* sinned 'after the similitude of Adam's transgression.' But if the doctrine of imputation be true, it is certain that they had not only *had* sinned after the similitude of his transgression, but had *sinned the very identical sin*. It was precisely *like him*; it was the very thing itself; and they were answerable for that very sin as their own. This doctrine, therefore, cannot be intended here.

Proof 5. p. 121. "Nor have we a right to *assume* that this [ver. 15.] teaches the doctrine of the imputation of the sin of Adam to his posterity. For (1) the apostle says nothing of it. (2) That doctrine is nothing but an effort to explain the *manner* of an event which the apostle Paul did not think it proper to attempt to explain. (3) That doctrine is in fact no explanation. It is introducing an additional difficulty. For to say that I am guilty of the sin of another in which I had no agency, is no *explanation*, but is involving me in additional difficulty still more perplexing, to ascertain how such a doctrine can possibly be just.

Proof 6. p. 127. "The word is *in no instance* used to express the idea of *imputing that to one which belongs to another*. It here either means, that this was *by a constitution of divine appointment* that they in fact became *sinners*, or simply declares they *were* so in fact. There is not the slightest intimation that it was by imputation."

Proof 7. p. 128. As quoted under V. p. 10.

How inconsistent all this is with the Standards, will be seen in

Con. chap. vi. 3.—"They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

"4. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions."

Lar. Cat. Quest. 22.—"The covenant being made with *Adam*, as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity; all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in that first transgression.

"25. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of *Adam's* first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called *original sin*, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions."

Shorter Cat. Quest. 18.—"The sinfulness of that estate, whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of *Adam's* first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called *original sin*; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it."

CHARGE VII.

"That mankind are guilty, i. e. liable to punishment on account of the sin of Adam."

Proof 1. p. 123. "There is no reason to believe that they are *condemned* to eternal death, or held to be guilty of his sin, without participation of their own, or without personal sin, any more than there is that they are approved by the work of Christ, or held to be personally deserving, without embracing his offer, and receiving him as a Saviour.

Proof 2. p. 127. "The word is *in no instance* used to express the idea of *imputing that to one which belongs to another*. It here either means that this was *by a constitution of divine appointment* that they in fact became sinners, or simply declares that they were so in fact. There is not the slightest intimation that it was by imputation. The whole scope of the argument is, moreover, against this; for the object of the apostle is to show not that they were charged with the sin of another, but that they were in fact *sinners* themselves. If it means that they were condemned for *his* act, without any concurrence of their own will, then the correspondent part will be true, that all are constituted righteous in the same way; and thus the doctrine of universal salvation will be inevitable. But as none are constituted righteous who do not voluntarily avail themselves of the provisions of mercy, so it follows that those who are condemned, are not condemned for the sin of another without their own concurrence, nor unless they personally deserve it.

"*Sinners*—Transgressors, those who deserve to be punished. It does not mean those who are condemned for the sin of another: but those who are violaters of the law of God. All who are condemned are *sinners*. They are not *innocent* persons condemned for the crime of another. Men may be involved in the *consequences* of the sins of others without being to blame. The consequences of the crimes of a murderer, a drunkard, a pirate, may pass over from them, and affect thousands, and overwhelm them in ruin. But this does not prove that they are blame-worthy.

Proof 3. p. 128. "Various attempts have been made to explain this. The most common has been that Adam was the representative of the race; that he was a covenant head, and that his sin was *imputed* to his posterity, and that they were held liable to punishment for it as if they had committed it themselves. But to this there are great and insuperable objections. **** (3) It explains nothing. The difficulty still remains. It is certainly *as difficult* to see how, in a just administration, the sins of the guilty should be charged on the innocent, as to contemplate simply the universal fact that the conduct of one man may involve his family in the consequences. (4) It adds another difficulty to the subject. It not only *explains* nothing, removes no perplexity, but it compels us at once to ask the question, how can this be just? How can it be right to charge the sins of the guilty on those who had no participation in them? How could millions be responsible for the sins of one who acted long before they had an existence, and of whose act they had no consciousness, and in which they had no participation?"

How can it be right for a person to advance such doctrines, who has professed to believe the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church? Read the following passages and then answer.

Con. chap. vi. 3.—"They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

"6. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal."

Lar. Cat. Quest. 25.—"The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of *Adam's* first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually; which is commonly called *original sin*, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

"27. The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world and that which is to come."

Shorter Cat. Quest. 13.—"The sinfulness of that estate, whereinto man fell, consists in the guilt of *Adam's* first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called *original sin*; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

"19. All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever."

CHARGE VIII.

"That Christ suffered the proper penalty of the law, as the vicarious substitute of his people, and thus took away legally their sins and purchased pardon."

Proof 1. "All the passages quoted under charges 6 and 7 are referred to here. If

the sin of the *first* Adam is not imputed to his seed, and they are not liable to punishment on account of it; then it evidently follows, that the sin of his seed is not imputed to the second Adam, and he punished on account of it.

Proof 2. p. 89, 90.—“In the plan of salvation, therefore, he has shown a regard to the law, by appointing his Son to be a *substitute* in the place of sinners; not to endure its precise penalty, for his sufferings were not eternal, nor were they attended with remorse of conscience, or by despair, which are the proper *penalty* of the law; but he endured so much as to accomplish the same ends as if those who shall be saved by him, had been doomed to eternal death. That is, he showed that the law could not be violated without introducing suffering; and that it could not be broken with impunity. He showed that he had so great a regard for it that he would not pardon *one sinner* without an atonement. And *thus* he secured the proper honour to his character as a lover of his law, a hater of sin, and a just God. He has shown that if sinners do not avail themselves of the offer of pardon, by Jesus Christ, *they* must experience in their own souls forever, the pains which this substitute for sinners endured, in behalf of men, on the cross.” Thus, no principle of justice has been abandoned; no claim of his law has been let down; no disposition has been evinced to do *injustice* to the universe, by suffering the guilty to escape. He is, in all this great transaction, a just moral governor, as *just* to his law, to himself, to his Son, to the universe, when he *pardons*, as he is when he sends the incorrigible sinner down to hell. A full compensation, an equivalent has been provided by the sufferings of the Saviour, in the sinner's stead, and the sinner may be pardoned.”

How opposite this to the doctrines of the Church.

Con. chap. viii. 4.—“This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake, which, that he might discharge, he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfil it; endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body; was crucified and died; was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption. On the third day he arose from the dead, with the same body in which he suffered; with which he also ascended into heaven and there sitteth at the right-hand of his Father making intercession; and shall return to judge men and angels, at the end of the world.

“5. The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father; and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.”

Chap. xi. 3.—“Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, in as much as he was given by the Father for them, and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for any thing in them, their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice, and rich grace of God, might be glorified in the justification of sinners.”

Lar. Cat. Quest. 49.—“Christ humbled himself in his death, in that having been betrayed by *Judas*, forsaken by his disciples, scorned and rejected by the world, condemned by *Pilate*, and tormented by his persecutors; having also conflicted with the terrors of death and the powers of darkness, felt and borne the weight of God's wrath, he laid down his life an offering for sin, enduring the painful, shameful, and cursed death of the cross.”

Shorter Cat. Quest. 25.—“Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.”

CHARGE IX.

“That the righteousness, *i. e.* the active obedience of Christ to the law, is imputed to his people for their justification; so that they are righteous in the eye of the law, and therefore justified.”

Proof 1. p. 28. (3) “The phrase *righteousness of God*, is equivalent to *God's plan of justifying men; his scheme of declaring them just in the sight of the law; or of acquitting them from punishment, and admitting them to favour.* In this sense it stands opposed to *man's plan of justification, i. e.* by his own works. God's plan is by faith. The word to *justify*, *δικαιωω*, means properly *to be just, to be innocent, to be righteous.* It then means to *declare, or treat as righteous*, as when a man is charged with an offence and is acquitted. If the crime alleged is not *proved* against him, he is declared by the law to be *innocent.* It then means to *treat as if innocent to regard as innocent;* that is, to pardon, to forgive, and consequently to treat as if the offence had not occurred. It does not mean that the man *did not* commit the offence, or that the law might

not have held him *answerable* for it; but that the offence is forgiven; and it is consistent to receive the offender into favour, and treat him *as if* he had not committed it."

"In regard to this plan it may be observed, (1) That it is not to declare that men *are* innocent and pure. That would not be true. The truth is just the reverse; and God does not esteem men to be different from what they are. (2) It is not to *take part* with the sinner, and to mitigate his offences. It limits them to their full extent, and makes *him* feel them also. (3) It is not that we become partakers of the essential righteousness of God. That is impossible. (4) It is not that *his* righteousness becomes *ours*. That is not true; and there is no intelligible sense in which that can be understood. But it is God's plan for *pardoning* sin, and for *treating* us as if we had not committed it, that is, adopting us as his children, and admitting us to heaven, on the ground of what the Lord Jesus has done in our stead. This is God's plan. Men seek to save themselves by their own works. God's plan is to save them by the merits of Jesus Christ."

Proof 2. p. 84, 85. "*Even the righteousness of God.* The Apostle, having stated that the design of the Gospel was to reveal a new plan of becoming just in the sight of God, proceeds here more fully to explain it. The explanation which he offers, makes it plain that the phrase so often used by him, '*righteousness of God,*' it does not refer to an attribute of God, but to his plan of making men righteous. Here he says, that it is by faith in Jesus Christ; but surely an *attribute* of God is not produced by faith in Jesus Christ. It means God's mode of regarding men as righteous through their belief in Jesus Christ. 'God has promised that they who believe in Christ shall be pardoned and saved. This is *his* plan in distinction from the plan of those who seek to be justified by works.'

"*Being justified.*—Being treated as if righteous, that is, being regarded and treated as if they had kept the law. The apostle has shown that they *could not* be so regarded and treated by any merit of their own, or by personal obedience to the law. He now affirms that if they were so treated, it must be by mere favour, and as a matter, not of right, but of gift. This is the essence of the Gospel."

Proof 3. p. 94, 95, as quoted under charge IV (7) and p. 96. "God judges things as they are; and sinners who are justified, he judges *not* as if they were pure, or as if they had a claim; but he regards them as *united by faith to the Lord Jesus, and in this relation he judges that they should be treated as his friends, though they have been, are, and always will be personally undeserving.* But if the doctrine of the Scriptures was, that the entire righteousness of Christ was set over to them, was really and truly theirs, and was transferred to them in any sense, with what propriety could the apostle say, that God justified the ungodly? If they have all the righteousness of Christ as their own, as really and truly theirs, *as if* they had wrought it out themselves, they are *not 'ungodly.'* They are eminently pure and holy, and have a claim, not of grace, but of debt, to the very highest rewards of heaven." p. 97. "*Unto whom God reputeth righteousness.*—Whom God treats as righteous, or as entitled to his favour in a way different from his conformity to the law. This is found in Psalm xxxii. And the whole scope and design of the Psalm is to show the blessedness of the man who is forgiven, and whose sins are not charged on him, but who is freed from the punishment due to his sins. Being thus pardoned, he is treated as a righteous man."

Proof 4. p. 127. *By the obedience of one.*—Of Christ. This stands opposed to the *disobedience* of Adam, and evidently includes the entire work of the Redeemer, which has a bearing on the salvation of men. Phil. ii. 8. He ——— became *obedient* unto death."

P. 21. "*Of God's righteousness.* Not of the personal holiness of God, but of *God's plan of Justifying men,* or of declaring them righteous by faith in his Son. Here God's plan stands opposed to their efforts to make themselves righteous by their own works."

How irreconcilable this is to our Standards is seen.

Con. chap. xi. 1.—"Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous: not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone: not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

"2. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith; but worketh by love.

"3. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's

justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as he was given by the Father for them, and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead, and both freely, not for any thing in them, their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice, and rich grace of God, might be glorified in the justification of sinners."

Lar. Cat. Quest. 70.—"Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which he pardoneth all their sin, accepteth and accounteth their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.

"71. Although Christ by his obedience and death, did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in the behalf of them that are justified: yet in as much as God accepteth the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded of them; and did provide this surety, his only Son, imputing his righteousness to them, and requiring nothing of them for their justification but faith, which also is his gift, their justification is to them of free grace.

"72. Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and word of God; whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his righteousness therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation."

Shorter Cat. 33.—"Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

CHARGE X.

Mr. Barnes also teaches, in opposition to the Standards, that justification is simply pardon.

Proof 1. pp. 28, 29, (already quoted, p. 17.) "The phrase *righteousness of God* is equivalent to *God's plan of justifying men: his scheme of declaring them just in the sight of the law; or of acquitting them from punishment, and admitting them to favour.*

2. "In regard to this plan, it may be observed (4.) It is not that *his righteousness becomes ours.* This is not true; and there is no intelligible sense in which that can be understood. But it is God's plan for *pardoning sin, and for treating us as if we had not committed it.*

3. p. 110. "*Being now justified.* Pardoned; accepted as his friends.

4. p. 124. "*Unto justification.* The work of Christ is designed to have reference to many offences, so as to produce pardon or justification in regard to them all." The comment on chap. v. 19. 'For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous,' is thus summed up, pp. 127, 128. "The sense of the verse is this: 'As in consequence of the sin of one, the many became sinners, without explaining the mode in which it is done; so the many became righteous in the mode and on the terms which are explained?' *Righteous. Justified. Free from condemnation.*

5. p. 182. "*It is God that justified.* That is, who has pardoned them, and admitted them to his favour; and pronounced them *just in his sight.*"

6. p. 217. "The moment a sinner believes, therefore he is justified; his sins are pardoned; and he is introduced into the favour of God."

The inconsistency of this with Standards is evident. See Con., Lar. Cat., Sh. Cat., and Scriptures quoted under charge ix, also Rom. vi. 16—13, 19. 1 Pet. i, 14—22.

The Presbytery decided that these charges were not sustained. They, at the same time, however, declare "that the Christian spirit manifested by the prosecutor during the progress of the trial, renders it inexpedient to inflict any censure on him." From their decision Dr. Junkin appealed to the Synod of Philadelphia. Here an unexpected difficulty arose from the unprecedented, and as we believe, highly contumacious conduct of the Presbytery, in withholding their records. But the Synod, after much deliberation, proceeded and issued the case, adopting, by a large majority, the following resolutions:—

"Resolved, 1. That in view of the proof presented to Synod, and of the whole case, the decision of the (Assembly's) 2d Presbytery of Philadelphia, in the case of the

charges of the said George Junkin against the said Albert Barnes, he and the same hereby is *reversed*, as contrary to truth and righteousness, and the Appeal declared to be sustained.

"2. That some of the errors alleged in the charges to be held by the said Albert Barnes are fundamental; and all of them contrary to the standards of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States; and that they do contravene the system of truth therein taught, and set forth in the word of God.

"3. That the said Albert Barnes be, and he hereby is, suspended from the exercise of all the functions proper to the gospel ministry, until he shall retract the errors hereby condemned, and give satisfactory evidence of repentance."

From this decision Mr. Barnes appealed, and complained of the various steps by which the Synod came to it. Such is the history of this case, and thus it came before the Assembly. Although, in the opinion of many, Mr. Barnes had no right to appeal, not having submitted to a regular trial before the Synod, and although the technical irregularities, connected with the case, were such that the Chairman of the Judicial Committee declared it might, with propriety, be remitted to the Court below, yet all difficulties and irregularities were overruled, and the Assembly took it up. Mr. Barnes read his appeal and complaint with the reasons of them, and was heard fully, in explanation and defence of his sentiments. He was understood by many as retracting most of his errors, and it was remarked that although the explanations and retractions were made in a very cautious and guarded manner, yet if they were committed to writing, the grounds of the prosecution would, in a great measure, be removed. Dr. Junkin was then heard in support of the charges he had preferred—and Mr. Barnes replied, under strong excitement, and with much bitterness against the prosecutor.—He now affirmed that he had made no retractions, and intended to make none, and repeated substantially, what he has published in the preface to the last edition of his notes on the Romans.

After a brief rejoinder from Dr. Junkin, the roll was called, to give the members an opportunity to express their opinions—and to our surprise and pain, the disclosure was now made that a majority of the Assembly were in favour of sustaining Mr. Barnes—some declaring that their own sentiments could not have been more exactly expressed; and others avowing that they differed from him only in having gone much farther than he, in what we consider departures from our standards. When the final question was put, "sustain or not sustain" the appeal and complaint, it was carried in the affirmative by a vote of 134 to 96.* Against this decision the following protest was entered:—

"The undersigned, members of the General Assembly, who were of the opinion that the appeal of the Rev. Albert Barnes should be sustained only in part, and that a modified decision should be made, beg leave to present to the Assembly this brief explanation of their views, and desire that it may be entered on the minutes, as their Protest against the course which has been pursued in this case.

"1. They explicitly declare, that in their opinion the refusal of the Presbytery to

* It will be recollected that in all votes connected with this case, the Synod of Philadelphia, were *out of the house*.

bring their records before the Synod, and of Mr. Barnes to appear and plead in defence when their objections had been overruled, was irregular and censurable; and that although the Synod acted in a manner that was questionable, and perhaps injudicious, in trying the appeal of Dr. Junkin, without the records of the Presbytery, and in the absence of Mr. Barnes, who had declined making any defence, yet this irregularity was not of such a nature as to annul their proceedings.

"2. They were of the opinion that the charges brought against Mr. Barnes by Dr. Junkin, were at least partly substantiated, and that on very important topics of the system of doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith and the Word of God; and that, therefore, the appeal could be sustained only in a modified sense, if at all on this ground, without an implied approbation of his doctrinal views.

"3. Further, they were of the opinion, that inasmuch as some of the charges were not fully, if at all sustained; and it may be doubted whether the Synod ought, as the circumstances of the case appeared to be, to have inflicted the censure of suspension; and Mr. Barnes, during the progress of this trial, exhibited some important alterations of his book, and made such explanations and disavowals of the sentiments ascribed to him, as were satisfactory in a considerable degree; the removal of his suspension might be deemed proper and safe; they were therefore willing, on this account, to concur in this measure; but did not desire to sustain the appeal in an unqualified sense.

"The undersigned therefore desire to place themselves aright, in the discharge of their official duty, before this Assembly, and the Church with which they are connected, and the whole Christian Church, so far as these transactions may be known; and cannot consent to be understood as giving countenance to irregular proceedings in the judicatories of the Church, or those who are amenable to them; or as overlooking erroneous doctrinal sentiments; or as desiring to exercise undue severity towards the appellant. And they cannot withhold the expression of their regret, that all their efforts to procure a justly modified decision, were defeated by the positions occupied by different and opposite portions of the Assembly, in regard to this case; nor will they conceal that they have painful apprehensions that these things will lead to extended and increased dissension, and endanger the disruption of the holy bonds which hold us together as one Church.

"Pittsburg, June 7th, 1836.

"James Hoge, Samuel Miller, N. Ewing, John McElhenny, John H. Van Court, Benjamin Ogden, Thomas A. Ogden, Francis McFarland, John M. C. Bartley, James Wharey, Samuel S. Davis, D. McMartin Jr., Samuel L. Graham, Evander McNair, John S. Galloway, Samuel Henderson."

If the proceedings had been arrested here the preceding vote would have determined nothing respecting the doctrinal views which are held in the Presbyterian Church—since some voted in the affirmative *purely* on constitutional grounds, believing that the Synod, under the existing circumstances, were not warranted in proceeding and issuing the case. But the proceedings did not end here. The following resolution was introduced by Dr. Miller, bringing the doctrinal question fairly, and in a form unembarrassed by questions of Church order, before the Assembly:—

"Resolved, That while this General Assembly has thought proper to remove the sentence of suspension under which the Rev. Mr. Barnes was placed by the Synod of Philadelphia; yet the judgment of the Assembly is, that Mr. Barnes, in his Notes on the Epistle to the Romans, has published opinions, materially at variance with the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, and with the word of God;—especially with regard to original sin, the relation of man to Adam, and justification by faith, in the atoning sacrifice and righteousness of the Redeemer. The Assembly consider the manner in which Mr. Barnes has controverted the language and doctrine of our public standards, as highly reprehensible, and as adapted to pervert the minds of the rising generation, from the simplicity and purity of the Gospel plan. And although some of the most objectionable statements and expressions which appeared in the earlier editions of the work in question, have been either removed, or so far modified or explained, as to render them more in accordance with our public formularies; still the Assembly considers the work, even in its present amended form, as

containing representations which cannot be reconciled with the letter or spirit of our public standards; and would solemnly admonish Mr. Barnes again to review this work; to modify still further the statements which have grieved his brethren; and to be more careful in time to come, to study the purity and peace of the Church."

This resolution was rejected by a vote, 122 to 109. Here we would simply ask how can those who are so far from being agreed walk together? How can conscientious men holding sentiments so opposite, honestly, and in good faith, adopt the same standards, and continue in peace under the same ecclesiastical organization? Against the decision of the Assembly, on this resolution, the following protest was presented. Others who had voted for the resolution doubtless would have signed the protest had they been present, but having left the Assembly their names were not added:--

"Whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, did by their vote on the 7th inst. reject a resolution disapproving some of the doctrinal statements contained in Barnes' Notes on the Romans—which resolution, especially under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the undersigned considered of high importance to the church with which we are connected, to the cause of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and to the just exhibition of his grace and truth; we whose names are subscribed, feel constrained, in the name of the great Head of the Church, solemnly to protest against said decision, for the following reasons; viz.

"1. Because we believe that the constitutional standards of the church, in their plain and obvious meaning, and in the sense in which they have always been received, are the rule of judgment by which all doctrinal controversies are to be decided. That it is the duty of the church to maintain inviolate her doctrine and order, agreeably to those standards; to bear her decided testimony against all deviations from them, and not to countenance them, even by implication. Yet in the above decision, there was, as we believe, a departure from our constitutional rule, a refusal to bear testimony against errors, with an implied approbation of them, and a constructive denial that Ministers of the Gospel in the Presbyterian Church are under solemn obligations to conform in their doctrinal sentiments to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

"2. Because the errors contemplated in the aforesaid resolution, do not consist merely, nor chiefly, in inaccurate or ambiguous expressions and mistaken illustrations, but in sentiments and opinions, respecting the great and important doctrines of the Gospel, which are utterly inconsistent with the statement of those doctrines, made in the Confession of Faith, and revealed in the Word of God. We sincerely and firmly believe that Mr. Barnes has denied, and that in a sneering manner, that Adam was the covenant head of the human race; that all mankind sinned in him as such, and were thus brought under the penalty of transgression; that Christ suffered the penalty of the law when he died for sin; and that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers for justification. These and similar doctrinal views we regard as material variations from our standards, as dangerous in themselves, and as contravening some of the leading principles of our system, such as man's complete dependence, and the perfect harmony of justice and grace in the salvation of the sinner.

"3. Because this expression of approbation of his opinions was passed after, as we believe, it had been clearly and sufficiently proved to the Assembly, that Mr. Barnes had denied these important truths, and had expressed opinions respecting original sin, the nature of faith, and the nature of justification, which cannot be reconciled with our standards; and after, instead of retracting any of his doctrinal opinions, he had declared expressly before the Assembly, and published in the preface to the last edition of his Notes on the Romans, that he had not changed, but held them still, and was determined to preach them until he died.

"For these reasons, and for the glory of God, that we may preserve a conscience void of offence, we request that this our solemn protest may be entered on the minutes of the Assembly.

"W. W. Phillips, J. McElroy, James Hoge, Samuel S. Davis, Francis McFarland, Joseph Smith, James McCurdy, Jacob F. Price, W. L. Brackinridge, H. M. Koontz, P. J. Sparrow, Robert Johnston, Joseph Harbeson, John H. Culbertson, W. P. Alrich, J. S. Wilson, T. C. Stuart, J. McClintock, Nathaniel Todd, Alexander R. Curry, George Anderson, James McFarran, John Bemiss, John M. C. Bartley, Samuel Mc-

Questin, William James, Ananias Platt, Duncan McMartin, Edwin Downer, H. M. Hopkins, James V. Henry, Russel J. Minor, William Marshall, James Lenox, Samuel Boyd, William Wallace, (N. Y.) Samuel Miller, B. Ogden, James Seabrook, Jacob Castner, Joseph Campbell, James Kennedy, John Stinson, Samuel Henderson, J. Coulter, Joel Stoneroad, N. Ewing, James Alexander, Joseph D. Gray, Robert Highlands, John Miller, J. Eaton, Robert Porter, Joseph McFarran, C. Velandingham, Alexander Write, R. Johnson, James Wilson, James Rowland, Archibald Hanna, John Elliot, William Wallace, (Lan.) Robert Smith, J. S. Galloway, S. Scovil, B. C. Swan, G. Bishop, William Dunn, M. G. Wallace, J. S. Weaver, Samuel Donnell, B. F. Spillman, W. A. G. Posey, J. S. Berryman, D. S. Todd, Lewis Collins, William Williamson, James Wharey, John McElhenny, Thomas Baird, E. W. Caruthers, Archibald McCallum, R. H. Kilpatrick, John S. McCutchan, T. A. Ogden, A. A. Campbell, John Ingram, S. B. Lewers, J. Le Roy Davies, Thomas L. Dunlap, Eugenius A. Nesbit, Gilbert T. Snowden, Horace S. Pratt, John H. Van Court, F. H. Porter, Thomas R. Borden, T. C. Stuart, John R. Hutchinson, David Morrow, J. H. Gray."

We come now to notice the most painful and humiliating part of the whole proceedings in this case—we mean the paper, purporting to be an answer to the above protest, prepared by Drs. Skinner and Allan, together with Mr. Brainerd, and entered on the Minutes by order of the Assembly. When the motion was made to have it entered on the minutes, a worthy brother from the South remarked, that we might as well say white was black—and we believe every candid man, who heard the declarations which were made during the deliberations of the Assembly on this question, or who will make himself acquainted with the sentiments which Mr. Barnes' has published in his Notes on the Romans, and compare them with the statements contained in this paper, will make the same remark. Thus we are told in the 1st place:—

"1. That by their decision they do not intend to, and do not, in fact, make themselves responsible for all the phraseology of Mr. Barnes; some of which is not sufficiently guarded, and is liable to be misunderstood; and which we doubt not Mr. Barnes, with reference to his usefulness, and the peace of the Church, will modify so as to prevent, as far as may be, the possibility of misconception."

Now, it is well known to all who were in the Assembly—that Dr. Skinner, who presented this paper as Chairman, did identify himself with Mr. Barnes, and declared that no man could have more accurately expressed his own sentiments—that he fairly represented the new school brethren—that if Mr. Barnes were condemned they would be condemned. He also asserted, that the notes on the Romans are in accordance with the sentiments of the New England divines generally; are approved by them, and among others by Dr. Woods, of Andover. Dr. Peters declared that he not only approved of the doctrines, but of the *language* employed by Mr. Barnes. "When I heard," said he, "of the sentence of his suspension I regarded it as a blow struck at one-half of the Presbyterian Church—I shall not vote to restore him on the ground of *toleration*; he has a *right* to be a minister in our connection; if any one is to be *tolerated* it is the prosecutor. Yes, Sir, the time has come when the question is, whether such men are to be tolerated in the Presbyterian Church. No, Sir, I do not even condemn his indiscretions. It is time to have the question settled, whether in this 19th century

we may exercise the liberty of using language adapted to the age." And yet, after such sentiments as these, (and this is but a fair sample of what was said by scores, except that it is more decorously expressed;) these men have the effrontery to enter upon the Minutes, when they knew it would meet the public eye, that "they do not intend to, and do not, in fact, make themselves," &c.

They say 2dly :—

"2. Much less do the Assembly adopt as doctrines, consistent with our standards, and to be tolerated in our Church, the errors alleged by the prosecutor, as contained in the Book on the Romans. It was a question of fact, whether the errors alleged are contained in the book; and by the laws of exposition, in conscientious exercise of their own rights and duties, the Assembly have come to the conclusion that the book does not teach the errors charged."

It appears to us that here is certainly *new light*, and that all the honor and immunities pertaining to a first discovery, belong to the writers of this document, together with those who gave it their sanction. For it is notorious, that the Notes on the Romans have been generally, and almost universally understood to teach New-Haven Theology. The opinions therein expressed have been spoken of, and advocated as the peculiar opinions of that school. From the day of their publication, it has been admitted, on all hands, that they were materially at variance with the standards of our Church. This is the view taken of them by the Biblical Repository, which is believed to express the sentiments of the Professors at Princeton. The Christian Intelligencer, a highly respectable religious paper, conducted by members of the Dutch Reformed Church, speaking of the Commentary of Professor Stewart, and the Notes of Mr. Barnes on the Romans, says: "Both are equally devoted to the New School Theology, in its extreme of the New-Haven School." The Watchman, published at Hartford, Connecticut, and edited by the Rev. Mr. Harvey, which is the organ of the East Windsor School, after speaking of Dr. Miller's remarks, (in reply to Dr. Skinner's assertion, that to condemn Mr. Barnes' book would be to stigmatize New England divinity,) viz; "That if we pass this resolution we shall certainly rejoice the hearts of hundreds of our New England brethren," uses the following language—"The remark of Dr. Miller is doubtless correct. We deny that the sentiments, contained in the book of Mr. Barnes, is New England divinity. Dr. Miller's resolution expressed precisely the views of many in New England. Mr. Barnes has stigmatized his own book, by introducing into it sentiments subversive of the Gospel, and it is a stigma, from which no apology of Dr. Skinner, nor vote of the General Assembly, will wash it clean." The following is the language of the Christian Examiner, (a leading Unitarian paper,) for March 1836 :—

"On the atone ment, our author's (Mr. Barnes') views are far in advance of those of the church to which he belongs. Though he maintains that Christ was in some sense 'a substitute in the place of sinners,' he denies a strictly and fully vicarious atonement, and makes the Saviour's death important chiefly as an illustration of the inherent and essential connexion between sin and suffering."

Again, page 70—

“On the subject of man’s nature, capacities, and duty, our author is sound and lucid. The idea of hereditary depravity he spurns as unworthy even a passing notice. He asserts, repeatedly, that men sin only ‘*in their own persons,—sin themselves,—as, indeed, how can they sin in any other way?*’ The imputation of Adam’s transgression he treats as a scholastic absurdity. Of the figment of Adam’s federal headship, and the condemnation of his posterity for partnership in his sin, Mr. Barnes says, ‘There is not one word of it in the Bible.’ ‘It is a mere philosophical theory; an introduction of a speculation into theology, with an attempt to explain what the Bible has left unexplained.’***

“In conclusion we would say, that, while our orthodox brethren publish and circulate, and receive with favour such books as these ‘Notes,’ we most cordially extend to them the right hand of fellowship, even though they refuse to return it. We regard them as fellow labourers with us for the overthrow of time-hallowed absurdities, for the cleansing of the Christian creed from ‘whatever defileth and maketh a lie.’ Calvinism is now a house divided against itself. It embraces, within its walls, two, not only distinct, but opposite sects; the one that of the friends, the other that of the enemies of free inquiry,—the one that of the votaries of reason, the other that of the blindfold recipients of a traditional faith. The house is tottering—is on the point of falling; and, when it falls, we confidently expect to receive into the citadel of liberal Christianity, and shall greet with a most hearty welcome, those, beneath whose well-aimed blows the walls of the old mansion are shaking, and its foundations crumbling.”

And even individuals of the majority, in the last Assembly, did not pretend that his views were in strict accordance with the Confession of Faith. In giving their opinions, they admitted, that in some respects, and on some points, he was diametrically opposed to those who receive the standards, in their plain and obvious meaning,—but they justified his departures—some on the ground that he had received the Confession of Faith, only *for substance, as a system*—(the ground by the way taken by Mr. Barnes himself)—and others, “because” as they said “they much preferred his method of representing these truths, and of explaining the language of our confession.” Such was the language of individuals, even in the majority of the last Assembly; but, notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding the opinions of respectable men, in almost every denomination in the land to the contrary, that very majority “by the laws of exposition” (new light laws it is presumed,) “come to the conclusion, that the book does not teach the errors charged.”

They say 3dly :—

“When the Assembly, by sustaining the appeal of Mr. Barnes, by a majority of 38; and by a majority of 67, removed the sentence of his suspension, and restored him in good standing to the ministry, it is not competent for the same judicature, by the condemnation of the book, to inflict on Mr. Barnes indirectly, but really, a sentence of condemnation, as direct in its effects, and as prostrating to his character and usefulness, as if it had been done directly, by refusing to sustain his appeal, and by confirming the sentence of the Synod of Philadelphia :—And what this Assembly has declared, that it cannot in equity do directly, it cannot, in equity or consistency, attempt to do indirectly.”

The term *competent* here must refer to the powers of the Assembly, under the constitution. Now we affirm, there is nothing in the constitution that forbids such a procedure. If there is, let it be produced; until this is done we shall hold that the Assembly were *competent* to pass the resolution offered by Dr. Miller. And we affirm farther, that the *general practice*, under the constitution, has been in favour of the course contemplated by the resolution in

question. Every one knows that nothing is more common, especially in difficult and complicated cases, than for the Court appealed to, after the question "sustain or not sustain" has been taken, to appoint a Committee to bring in a minute expressive of their views on the whole case—a minute that will deal out even-handed justice to all the parties concerned. If the appellant has been sustained, stating the precise ground on which he has been sustained, and at the same time, specifying what may have been worthy of approbation in the proceedings of the inferior judicatory; if he has not been sustained, giving the reasons of this fact, and also noticing whatever may be favourable in his cause. And the wisdom of this is apparent. Church courts often arrive at just results, through unjust means; arrive at a righteous verdict by trampling on constitutional law. Suppose an appeal taken in such cases. Are the members of the higher judicatory shut up to the necessity, of either letting the party arraigned escape his deserts, or of sanctioning by their vote the violation of Church order? By no means. The spirit of our book at least, provides, and general practice is in accordance with the provision—that the appellant, in the case supposed, if the Court see fit, shall have the benefit of the unconstitutional proceedings of the inferior judicatory; but, at the same time, the offence charged upon him shall be condemned. Now this is precisely what Dr. Miller had in view in offering his resolution. The Assembly had sustained Mr. Barnes, and Dr. Miller wished them now to condemn his doctrines. Neither in view of the constitution then, nor of general practice under it, can the position we are examining be maintained. It is utterly fallacious; and its fallacy lies in assuming, that because the appellant had been sustained, he must *necessarily* have been sustained on *all* the grounds of his appeal.

The assumption we have just been exposing, runs through both the 4th and 5th paragraphs of the paper before us, and imparts to them all their force, and we need not therefore dwell upon them.

But it is said 6thly :—

"So far is the Assembly, from countenancing the errors alleged in the charges of Dr. Junkin, that they do cordially and *ex animo* adopt the Confession of our Church, on the points of doctrine in question, according to the obvious, and most prevalent interpretation; and do regard it as a whole, as the best epitome of the doctrines of the Bible ever formed. And this Assembly disavows any desire, and would deprecate any attempt, to change the phrasology of our standards, and would disapprove of any language of light estimation applied to them; believing that no denomination can prosper whose members permit themselves to speak slightly of its formularies of doctrine; and are ready to unite with their brethren, in contending earnestly for the faith of our standards."

This is a most amazing declaration! Is it so, indeed, that the errors charged by Dr. Junkin, are not to be tolerated in the Presbyterian Church, even by those who have received and adopted our standards "only as a system," and "for substance of doctrine?" Is it so, "that they do cordially, and *ex animo*, adopt the confession of our Church on the points of doctrine in question, according to

the obvious and most prevalent interpretation?" What then is the cause of difference between us? About what have we been so long contending? Why talk of compromise—of toleration—of latitude of construction? What necessity is there for having the old adopting act of 1729 revived? Why do those who differ from us call themselves the *New school* party? Would that their preaching, and that their speeches, in defending Mr. Barnes, corresponded with this declaration! We must be excused, however, if, under the circumstances of the case, with our personal knowledge on this subject, we ask for something more than mere assertion, as proof of its truth. We must be excused if we express our fears that it is only a miserable attempt to deceive the Church and the world, as to the real sentiments of those, who, though in our Church, have no sympathies with us as Presbyterians.

But we are told 7thly :—

"The correctness of the preceding positions, is confirmed, in the opinion of the Assembly, by a careful analysis of the real meaning of Mr. Barnes under each charge, as ascertained by the language of his book; and the revisions, disclaimers, explanations, and declarations which he has made."

To follow the writers of the paper before us, in that "careful analysis of the real meaning of Mr. Barnes, under each charge" by which they have come to the conclusion stated, is altogether unnecessary. It would be to do little else than repeat what Dr. Junkin has already said with great ability. Presuming, however, that this address may fall into the hands of some who have not had access to his argument, we shall give the assertions of the writers of this paper, with respect to two or three of the charges, and also the language of Mr. Barnes, and ask every candid, honest man to compare them. They say:—

"In respect to the first charge, that Mr. Barnes teaches, that all sin is voluntary, the context, and his own declarations, show that he refers to all *actual* sin merely, in which he affirms the sinner acts under no compulsion."

Now ask Mr. Barnes himself what he teaches. He says, p. 249 of his Notes on the Romans,

"In *all this*, and in *all other sin*, man is voluntary."

Again, he says, p. 123 :—

"There is no reason to believe that they [men] are *condemned* to eternal death, or held to be guilty of his sin [meaning Adam's sin] without participation, of their own, or without personal sin, any more than that they are approved by the work of Christ, or held to be personally deserving, without embracing his offer, and receiving him as a Saviour."

Elsewhere he says,

"*Men sin in their own person, sin in themselves*, as indeed, how can they sin any other way."

They say :—

"In respect to the fifth charge, Mr. Barnes no where denies, much less 'sneers' at the idea that Adam was the Covenant and Federal Head of his posterity :—On the contrary, though he employs not these terms, he does, in other language, teach the same truths which are taught by this phraseology."

But what is Mr. Barnes' language? He says, p. 128, "various 'empts have been made to explain this—the most common has

been, that Adam was the representative of the race, that he was a covenant head, and that his sin was *imputed* to his posterity, and that they were held liable to punishment for it as if they had committed it themselves. But to this there are great and insuperable objections. 1st, There is not *one word of it in the Bible*. Neither the terms representative, *covenant*, or impute, are *ever* applied to the transaction in the Sacred Scriptures. 2d It is a mere philosophical theory." On page 120, 121; "a comparison is also instituted between Adam and Christ, in 1 Cor. xv. 22—25. The reason is, not that Adam was the *representative* or *federal head* of the human race, about which the apostle says nothing, and which is not even implied, but that he was the first of the race. The words *representative* and *federal head* are never applied to Adam in the Bible. The reason is, that the word *representative* implies an idea, which could not have existed in the case, *the consent of those who are represented.*"

On p. 117, in allusion to the language used in our Catechism, viz: "That the covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but also for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation sinned *in him* and fell with him in his first transgression;" he asks, in a sneering manner, "what idea is conveyed to men of common understanding, by the expression, they *sinned in him*?" But enough of this, let any honest unsophisticated mind ponder such language and then form its opinion of the man or men, who could say, "Mr. Barnes no where denies, much less 'sneers at' the idea that Adam was the covenant and federal head of his posterity." We repeat what we have already said, this paper presents the most painful and most humiliating part of the whole proceedings in this case, and most sincerely do we mourn, that Christian ministers should ever have written it.

It will be perceived, that hitherto we have said little of the *parties* concerned in this case, and we intend to say little. We have, however, our opinions, and we have no wish to conceal them. As it respects the party arraigned, it does appear to us, that no man can review the course he has pursued, without discovering the absence of that frankness and candour, that should always characterize the minister of the Gospel. We have his own authority for saying, that the sentiments he holds now, he held before he was licensed; and yet, though he knows and *admits*, that some of his sentiments are at variance with our standards, we find him making no objections to answering the solemn questions required of him on entering the ministry; nor is he to this hour, so far as we know, taking any steps to rid himself of obligations which he ought never to have assumed. The same trait of character is strikingly exhibited, when he first appears before the Presbytery of Philadelphia. It would have been an easy matter for him to have satisfied the minds of the Fathers and Brethren of that Presbytery; and we cannot but believe, that the *simplicity* which the Gospel

teaches, called upon him to do so. If we mistake not, his course has also presented an instance of self-confidence rarely witnessed. The man who, under the circumstances of his case, in view of all that had been done by Presbyteries, Synods, and Assemblies, in relation to his sentiments, can affirm, as he did affirm, in substance, if not in express terms, on the floor of the Assembly, that his views had not changed in regard to a single principle; that the alterations made in his books were confined entirely to phraseology; and that the sentiments he now holds he will preach until he dies—possesses, assuredly, no ordinary measure of self-reliance and self-complacency.

These things we are induced to say, because no ordinary efforts have been made to produce the impression, that Mr. Barnes is eminently distinguished by the various virtues that adorn the ministerial character, and thus a sympathy has been excited in his favour as a most *persecuted* individual, which has, as we think, turned aside the public mind from the real point at issue.

As it respects the prosecutor, great pains have been taken to hold him up to public odium and reproach; but we know him personally, and believe him to be an humble, modest, faithful, and devoted servant of Christ, in whom there is no guile; and we feel bound to say, respecting the part he has taken in this controversy, that, in our opinion, he has done the Church an essential service, and we are persuaded that the time will come, when she will feel her obligations to him, as to one of her most dutiful sons and ablest defenders. He has brought to light the system of error, which is fast taking the place of the system of truth taught in our standards, given it form, exposed the sophistry of the arguments upon which it rests, and pointed out its ruinous tendency in a masterly manner; and he has constructed an argument in support of the doctrines taught in our standards, founded on the word of God, which we believe to be unanswerable. And all this, he has, by the grace of God, been enabled to do. Mr. Barnes himself being judge, in the spirit of the Gospel.

And with regard to the Synod of Philadelphia, loud as has been the popular clamour against them, we believe, when all the circumstances, under which they acted, are duly considered, it will be found, that this clamour is without any sufficient ground. And though some of us, had we been members of that body, would probably have been in favour of a different course, and one of us, who was present, as it is well known, strenuously advocated a different course, still, we are persuaded, not merely that they were actuated by “a conscientious zeal for the purity of the church,” but looking at the embarrassments of the position in which they were placed, and the provocation that was given them by the doings of the Assembly’s Second Presbytery, it is to us matter of surprise that so little of human weakness and human passion is apparent in their proceedings.

We now proceed to notice very briefly the second great subject that occupied the attention of the last assembly, viz:—The Foreign Missionary question, its discussion by that Body, and their final decision upon it. It has long been the desire of many that we should engage in the work of sending the Gospel to the Heathen, in our *distinctive* organized character as a church. They have believed it to be a duty resulting from the command of the Saviour, “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” They have believed that the form of our government is peculiarly adapted to the accomplishment of this work.—That in no other way could we so effectually enlist the feelings and call forth the resources of our people in support of Foreign Missions.—That in no other way could we so greatly promote the best interests of our churches at home; the experience of other churches having clearly evinced that there is a re-action in this matter—that just about in proportion as they have engaged in sending the Gospel to others, they have themselves grown and flourished; and they have believed that consistency with our profession and fidelity to the truth, require us to embark in this work.—That if Presbyterianism is worth preserving among ourselves, it is worth imparting to others; and that, therefore, such steps should be taken and arrangements made, as would give us the opportunity of examining our missionaries, and of ascertaining their sentiments respecting the doctrines and government of our church, before they are sent abroad. Impressed with the belief of these truths, and under a solemn conviction of duty, the Assembly of 1835, passed the following resolution:—

“*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to confer with the Synod of Pittsburg, on the subject of a transfer of the supervision of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, now under the direction of that Synod; to ascertain the terms on which such transfer can be made; to devise and digest a plan of conducting foreign missions under the direction of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church; and report the whole to the next General Assembly.”

And at a subsequent period of their sessions, passed a second resolution in the terms following:—

“*Resolved*, That the committee appointed to confer with the Synod of Pittsburg, on the subject of a transfer of the supervision of the Western Foreign Missionary Society to the General Assembly, be *authorized*, if they shall approve of the said transfer, to ratify and confirm the same with the said Synod, and report the same to the next General Assembly.”

This committee attended to the duty assigned them and made the report which follows to the last General Assembly:—

“The committee appointed by the last Assembly on the transfer of the Western Foreign Missionary Society to the General Assembly, made a report, which was read and accepted, and is as follows, viz:—

“The committee appointed under the following resolution of the last General Assembly, viz. ‘*Resolved*, That the committee appointed to confer with the Synod of Pittsburg, on the subject of a transfer of the supervision of the Western Foreign Missionary Society to the General Assembly, be authorized, if they shall approve of the said transfer, to ratify and confirm the same with the said Synod, and report the same to the next General Assembly,’ beg leave to report,—That they submitted the following

terms of agreement to the Synod of Pittsburg, at its sessions last fall, and that it was duly ratified by that body, as will fully appear by its minutes.

"Terms of agreement between the committee of the General Assembly and the Synod of Pittsburg, in reference to the transfer of the Western Foreign Missionary Society.

"1. The General Assembly will assume the supervision and control of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, from and after the next annual meeting of said Assembly, and will thereafter superintend and conduct, by its own proper authority, the work of foreign missions of the Presbyterian church, by a board especially appointed for that purpose, and directly amenable to said Assembly.—And the Synod of Pittsburg does hereby transfer to that body all its supervision and control over the missions and operations of the Western Foreign Society, from and after the adoption of this minute; and authorizes and directs said Society to perform every act necessary to complete said transfer, when the Assembly shall have appointed its board, it being expressly understood that the said Assembly will never hereafter alienate or transfer to any other judicatory or board whatever, the direct supervision and management of the said missions, or those which may hereafter be established by the Board of the General Assembly.

"2. The General Assembly shall, at its next meeting, choose forty ministers and forty laymen, and annually thereafter ten ministers and ten laymen, as members of the board of foreign missions, whose term of office shall be four years; and these forty ministers and forty laymen, so appointed, shall constitute a board, to be styled, 'The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States;' to which, for the time being, shall be entrusted, with such directions and instructions as may from time to time be given, the superintendence of the foreign missionary operations of the Presbyterian church; who shall make annually to the General Assembly a report of their proceedings; and submit for its approval such plans and measures as may be deemed useful and necessary. Until the transfer shall have been completed, the business shall be conducted by the Western Foreign Missionary Society.

"3. The board of directors shall hold a meeting annually, at some convenient time during the sessions of the General Assembly, at which it shall appoint a president, vice-president, a corresponding secretary, a recording secretary, a treasurer, general agents, and an executive committee, to serve for the ensuing year. It shall belong to the board to receive and decide upon all the doings of the executive committee, to receive and dispose of their annual report, and present a statement of their proceedings to the General Assembly. It shall be the duty of the board of directors to meet for the transaction of business as often as may be expedient, due notice of every special meeting being given to every member of the board. It is recommended to the board to hold, in different parts of the church, at least one public meeting annually, to promote and diffuse a livelier interest in the foreign missionary cause.

"4. To the executive committee, consisting of not more than seven members, besides the corresponding secretary and treasurer, shall belong the duty of appointing all missionaries and missionary agents, except those otherwise provided for; of designating their fields of labour, receiving the reports of the corresponding secretary, and giving him needful directions in reference to all matters of business and correspondence entrusted to him; to authorize all appropriations and expenditures of money; and to take the particular direction and management of the foreign missionary work, subject to the revision of the board of directors. The executive committee shall meet at least once a month, and oftener if necessary; of whom three members, meeting at the time and place of adjournment or special call, shall constitute a quorum. The committee shall have power to fill their own vacancies, if any occur during a recess of the board.

"5. All property, houses, lands, tenements, and permanent funds, belonging to the board of foreign missions to be constituted by this agreement, shall be taken in the name of the Trustees of the General Assembly, and held in trust by them for the use and benefit of the board of foreign missions for the time being.

"6. The seat of the operations of the board shall be designated by the General Assembly."

The Assembly, instead of at once adopting this report and proceeding to carry its stipulations into effect, as we believe they should have done, after much discussion, referred it to a committee who were authorized to review the whole case and present it for

the consideration of the Assembly. The report of this committee is as follows:—

“The committee to whom was referred the report of the committee appointed by the last Assembly on the subject of a transfer of the supervision of the Western Foreign Missionary Society to the General Assembly, and also the overture from the Synod of Philadelphia, on the subject of foreign missions, report—That the attention of the last Assembly was called to the subject of foreign missions by the following overture, viz. on page 31 of printed minutes: ‘That it is the solemn conviction of this General Assembly, that the Presbyterian Church owes it, as a sacred duty to her glorified Head, to yield a far more exemplary obedience, and that in her *distinctive* character as a church, to the command which he gave at his ascension into Heaven—‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’ It is believed to be among the causes of the frowns of the great Head of the Church, which are now resting on our beloved Zion, in the declension of vital piety, and the disorders and divisions that distract us, that we have done so little—comparatively nothing—in our distinctive character as a Church of Christ, to send the Gospel to the Heathen, to the Jews, and the Mahomedans. It is regarded as of vital importance to the welfare of our church, that foreign as well as domestic missions should be more zealously prosecuted, and more liberally patronized; and that as a nucleus of foreign missionary effort and operation, the Western Foreign Missionary Society should receive the countenance, as it appears to us to merit the confidence, of those who cherish an attachment to the doctrines and order of the church to which we belong.’

“The Assembly feeling the force of the suggestions contained in this overture, and believing it to be their most important and appropriate work, to spread the Gospel throughout the world, adopted the overture in the form of a resolution, together with the following, viz.

“*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to confer with the Synod of Pittsburg on the subject of a transfer of the supervision of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, now under the direction of that Synod; to ascertain the terms on which such transfer can be made; to devise and digest a plan of conducting foreign missions under the direction of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church; and report the whole to the next General Assembly.’

“Thus it appears, that the proposition to confer with the Synod, and to assume the supervision and control of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, originated in the Assembly.

“At that time the Western Foreign Missionary Society was in a prosperous condition, enjoying the confidence and receiving the patronage of a considerable number of our churches, having in their employ about twenty missionaries, and their funds were unembarrassed. The committee having conferred with some of the members of that society, and finding that the proposition was favourably regarded by them, indulging the hope that an arrangement might be definitely made with the Synod, at their next stated meeting, by which the Assembly would be prepared to enter on the work at their present sessions, brought the subject again before the Assembly, when it was, after mature deliberation,

“‘*Resolved*, That the committee appointed to confer with the Synod of Pittsburg, on the subject of a transfer of the supervision of the Western Foreign Missionary Society to the General Assembly, be *authorized*, if they shall approve of the said transfer, to ratify and confirm the same with the said Synod, and report the same to the next General Assembly.’—p. 33.

“The committee thus appointed, and clothed with full powers to ratify and confirm a transfer, submitted the terms on which they were willing to accept it, to the Synod of Pittsburgh, at their sessions last Fall.

“The members of the committee not being present at the meeting of the Synod, and there being no time for further correspondence, the Synod, (although they would have preferred some alterations of the terms,) were precluded from proposing any, on the ground that such alteration would vitiate the whole proceedings, and therefore acceded to the terms of the transfer which were *proposed* by the committee of the Assembly, and solemnly ratified the contract on *their part*. Feeling themselves bound by the same, and trusting to the good faith of this body, they have acted accordingly, and have made no provision for their missionaries now in the field, for a longer time than the meeting of this Assembly, having informed them of the transfer which has taken place, and of the new relation they would sustain to this body after their present sessions.

“It appears then to your committee, that the Assembly have entered into a *solemn*

compact with the Synod of Pittsburg, and that there remains but one righteous course to pursue, which is to adopt the report of the committee appointed last year, and to appoint a Foreign Missionary Board. To pause now, or to annul the doings of the last Assembly in this matter, would be obviously a violation of contract, a breach of trust, and a departure from that good faith which should be sacredly kept between man and man, and especially between Christian societies—conduct which would be utterly unworthy of this venerable body, and highly injurious to the Western Foreign Missionary Society.

“The committee beg leave further respectfully to remind the Assembly, that a large proportion of our churches (being Presbyterians from conviction and preference,) feel it to be consistent not only, but their solemn duty in the sight of God, to impart to others the same good, and in the same form of it which they enjoy themselves, and to be represented in heathen lands by missionaries of their own denomination. They greatly prefer such an organization as this contemplated, and which shall be under the care of the Presbyterian church, and cannot be enlisted so well in the great and glorious work of sending the Gospel to the Heathen under any other. Already, with the blessing of the great Head of the church on the efforts of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, in this form of operation, has a missionary spirit been awakened among them to considerable extent, and an interest in the cause of missions been created never before felt by them. They have furnished *men* for the work, and are contributing cheerfully to their support in the foreign field.

“As one great end to be accomplished by all who love the Redeemer, is to awaken and cherish a missionary *spirit*, and to enlist all the churches in the work of evangelizing the world; as every leading Christian denomination in the world, has its own foreign missionary board, and has found such distinct organization the most effectual method of interesting the churches under their care, in this great subject; as such an organization cannot interfere with the rights or *operations* of any other similar organization, for the field is the world, and is *wide* enough for all to cultivate; as it is neither desired nor intended to dictate to any in this matter, but simply to give an opportunity of sending the Gospel to the Heathen, by their own missionaries, to those who prefer this mode of doing so, giving them that liberty which they cheerfully accord to others—your committee cannot suppose for a moment that this General Assembly will in this stage of the proceedings refuse to consummate this arrangement with the Synod of Pittsburg, and thus prevent so many churches under their care from supporting their missionaries in their own way. From this view of the case, they recommend to the Assembly the adoption of the following resolutions, viz.—

“1. *Resolved*, That the *report* of the Committee appointed by the last Assembly, to confer with the Synod of Pittsburg on the subject of a transfer of the Western Foreign Missionary Society to the General Assembly, be adopted, and that said transfer be accepted on the terms of agreement therein contained.

“2. *Resolved*, That the Assembly will proceed to appoint a Foreign Missionary Board, the seat of whose operations shall be in the city of New York.

Dr. Skinner (a member of the above committee) made the following counter report:—

“Whereas, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, has been connected with the Presbyterian church from the year of its incorporation, by the very elements of its existence; and whereas at the present time the majority of the whole of that board are Presbyterians; and whereas, as it is undesirable, in conducting the work of Foreign Missions, that there should be any collision at home or abroad; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That it is inexpedient that the Assembly should organize a separate Foreign Missionary Institution.”

The discussion of this subject in the Assembly took place, mainly on a motion made to postpone the adoption of the committee's report, with a view to take up the report of Dr. Skinner. The grand question, however was, “Shall we carry into effect the solemn contract with the Synod of Pittsburg, duly ratified and confirmed under the authority of the last Assembly;” or in other words, shall we, *as a church*, engage in the work of Foreign Missions?

This was opposed, on the ground that the Assembly had no *right* to engage in this work—that it would be *inexpedient*, even if they had the right, as the management of funds would secularize the church—that it would be *sectarian*, and strong apprehensions were expressed, that we should next have a Presbyterian Tract Society, a Presbyterian Sunday School Society, &c.; thus clearly showing, as we have already said, that these men have no sympathies with us, *as Presbyterians*, that they are willing to retain the *name* so long as it serves their purposes, but that they have no love to the *thing*. And finally, it was opposed on the ground, that it would be a violation of a supposed pledge given by a former Assembly to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; though strange as it may seem, it was strenuously contended by this same party, that one Assembly cannot bind another, and that, therefore, the Assembly of 1835, in their contract through their committee with the Synod of Pittsburg, had transcended their powers, and of course that contract was null and void.

On the other hand, the friends of this enterprise maintained that we had a *right* to engage in it—that this right was clearly implied in the great commission of the Master, to “preach the Gospel for every creature,” and in other parts of Scripture; and that the express language of our book was: “The General Assembly may, of their own knowledge, send missions to *any* part to plant churches,” &c. They maintained that if the management of funds by the church in her ecclesiastical capacity tended to secularize her members, the same cause must produce the same effect upon the members of voluntary associations; and that this argument, therefore, proving too much, was good for nothing. They contended that for us to embark in this work, *as a church*, was not *sectarian* but simply *denominational*, and that many of the denominations around us, in their separate organization, had already embarked in it with the happiest results. They shewed, by documentary evidence, that no pledge had ever been given by us on this subject to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; and they satisfactorily demonstrated, as we think, that the acts of one Assembly are at least morally, if not legally, binding on succeeding ones; and that therefore, the agreement entered into by the last Assembly, through their committee, with the Synod of Pittsburg, we were bound to fulfil. They urged still further, that no hostility was felt towards the American Board of Commissioners—that no interference with their operations was intended—that there was no wish to restrict those who preferred to act for and with that institution—that all that was designed was the liberty of doing, in our own way, what we were perfectly willing to allow others to do in their way. They stated their strong and insuperable objections to voluntary associations—that they were irresponsible bodies—that some of them were in fact close corporations, perpetuating themselves—that by the very

terms of their association they must send out men of every shade of religious sentiment, provided they are in good or regular standing in any ecclesiastical body—that having the control of a vast amount of funds, they were enabled to exercise an immense patronage which might be exercised for evil—whereas the Boards of the church were responsible to her, subject to removal by her, had it in their power to make themselves acquainted with the doctrinal views of their missionaries, and their whole proceedings could be, and were reviewed from year to year. And in fine, they pressed the consideration, that without the organization plead for, a large portion, probably more than one half of the Presbyterian church, could not be enlisted in the cause of Foreign Missions. But it was all in vain—they were dryly told by a leader, or rather *the* leader, on the other side, “that the question was one to be settled by a majority of votes;” and intimation was distinctly given that thus was yet to be decided the fate of our Boards for Domestic Missions and Education. The question was at length taken, and the prediction uttered a few years ago, “that voluntary associations would soon control our General Assemblies,” was found to be already fulfilled—106 voted in favour of the resolution to transfer the Western Foreign Missionary Society to the General Assembly and 110 against it. The following protest against this decision was presented :—

“The undersigned do solemnly protest against the decision of the General Assembly, whereby the report of the committee of the last Assembly, respecting the Western Foreign Missionary Society, was rejected for the following reasons; viz.

“1. Because we consider the decision of the Assembly in this case, as an unjustifiable refusal to carry into effect a solemn contract with the Synod of Pittsburg, duly ratified and confirmed under the authority of the last Assembly.

“2. Because we are impressed with the deepest conviction, that the Presbyterian Church, in her ecclesiastical capacity, is bound, in obedience to the command of her divine Head and Lord, to send the glorious gospel as far as may be in her power, to every creature; and we consider the decision of the Assembly in this case, as a direct refusal to obey this command, and to pursue one of the great objects for which the Church was founded.

“3. Because it is our deliberate persuasion, that a large part of the energy, zeal, and resources of the Presbyterian Church, cannot be called into action in the Missionary cause without the establishment of a Missionary Board by the General Assembly. It is evident that no other ecclesiastical organization, by fragments of the church, can be formed, which will unite, satisfy, and call forth the zealous co-operation of those in every part of the Church who wish for a general Presbyterian Board.

“4. Because, while the majority of the Assembly acknowledged that *they* had a Board which fully met all the wants and wishes of themselves, and of those who sympathized with them;—they refused to make such a decision as would accord to us a similar and equal privilege; thereby, as we conceive, refusing that which would have been only just and equal, and rejecting a plan which would have greatly extended the missionary spirit, and exerted a reflex beneficial influence on the Churches thus indulged with a Board agreeable to their views.

5. Because, to all these considerations, urged with solemnity and affection, the majority of the Assembly were deaf, and have laid us under the necessity of protesting against their course; of complaining that we are denied a most reasonable, and to us most precious privilege; and of lamenting that we are laid under the necessity of resorting to plans of ecclesiastical organization, complicated, inconvenient, and much more adapted, on a variety of accounts, to interfere with ecclesiastical harmony, than the proposed Board would have been.

Pittsburg, June 9th, 1836.

Samuel Miller, John Coulter, Robert Porter, A. R. Curry, J. S. Weaver, James Lenox, J. H. Symmes, Edwin Downer, H. M. Hopkins, Clement Velandingham, George Bishop, J. H. Gray, J. McElroy, David McKinney, P. J. Sparrow, E. W. Caruthers, Robert Johnston, G. W. Musgrave, S. G. Winchester, M. G. Wallace, F. H. Porter, R. H. Kilpatrick, Benjamin C. Swan, James McCurdy, Samuel S. Davis, H. M. Koontz, Samuel Boyd, David Morrow, John M. C. Bartley, J. Bemiss, Parly Curn, J. S. Berryman, William Wallace, Jacob F. Price, W. L. Breckinridge, J. Le Roy Davies, Thomas L. Dunlap, James V. Henry, Wm. Marshall, Joseph Nunno, J. Stonerod, S. L. Graham, John W. Cunningham, Orson Douglass, Archibald George, Wm. P. Alrich, Sylvester Scovel, Benjamin F. Spilman, N. Ewing, Charles Woodward, J. R. Sharon, S. B. Lewers, James McFarren, R. Highlands, Wm. W. Phillips, Alexander A. Campbell, Samuel Henderson, H. S. Pratt, Nathaniel Todd, Evander McNair, John Miller, William Wallace, (of Lancaster,) James D. Ray, Alexander Write, Jr., Archibald Hanna, John Elliott, Jacob R. Castner, John Stinson, Joseph Campbell, James Kennedy, David S. Tod, Ananias Platt, Johnston Eaton, William Williamson, John S. Galloway, John H. Culbertson, Joseph Harbeson, John H. Van Court, Archibald McCallum, Thomas A. Ogden, Thomas R. Borden, John R. Hutchison, John McClure, Isaac W. Snowden, James Patterson, Jr., Ellison Conger, James Alexander.

Now from this view of the discussion and decision by the last Assembly of these two great questions, it must be evident to every one, not merely that there is in our church a strong party who are opposed to her doctrines and institutions, but that this party begin to *feel conscious* of their *strength*. This is clear from many considerations, but from none more so than from their *boldness*. When prudent, cautious, cunning men, throw off the mask—when you see such men, in pleading the cause of a brother charged with error in fundamental doctrines, abandon the old mode of defence “its a mere difference of words”—“a little *explanation* is all that is necessary to the entire agreement of the parties,” and openly declare that “they approve not only of the doctrines” (taught) “but of the *language* employed”—when you hear them; in discussing a question of church policy, reply to the arguments of men venerable for their years and distinguished by their talents and station, “the question is one to be settled by a majority of votes”—you may rest assured such men *feel* that the days of their minority are over and that they have reached the years of manhood. In fact, survey the course of this party throughout the last Assembly, from their attempt, at its commencement, to place in the chair to preside over hundreds of Pastors, a man who has not held the pastoral office for ten or twelve years, down to the hour of its dissolution; survey their entire course, and you see little else than the insolence of conscious power, of supposed numerical strength.

It must be equally evident to every one, that whatever *strength*, whatever *power* these men have, they are *determined* to exercise at all hazards. Stronger evidence of this could not be given than that which has been furnished by the doings of the last Assembly. He, who ten years ago, would have predicted that at this day there would be found in our church, a party who would defend and sustain a man, who denied the doctrines of original sin, of federal representation in Adam, and of justification by faith in the righteousness of the Redeemer; a party that would refuse to us an ec-

clesiastical organization for the work of Foreign Missions, and that would threaten the annihilation of our existing boards—he who ten years ago would have uttered such a prediction, would have been regarded as at least partially insane. And yet, little prepared as the public mind was to expect such a party in the bosom of our church, and such acts of treason against her best interests, the existence of both is now a matter of history. We have then, not merely a powerful party in our church opposed to her doctrines and institutions, but a party who are *conscious* of their power, and are *determined* to exercise it all hazards.

And now the grand question is, what is to be done? Shall this party of foreign origin, and who in principle and feeling are opposed to our whole system of doctrines and government—this party, who have come in among us by stealth, and by the divisions and strife which they have produced, have brought our beloved denomination into reproach; shall this party be permitted to continue unmolested in the possession of what they have already gained, and unchecked in their advances toward further conquests? Shall those who have been reared in the Presbyterian church, or who have connected themselves with her, from a sincere attachment to her doctrines and order, stand quietly and contentedly by, while all that is valuable in either, is trampled in the dust? It cannot be! Fidelity to God, to his truth, to our children and to our children's children, loudly and imperatively forbids it. What then, we again ask, is to be done? Shall we go on a while longer, as we have been going for years past, biting and devouring one another, grieving each others hearts, weakening each others hands, undermining each others influence, and once a twelvemonth exhibiting ourselves as ecclesiastical gladiators, for the entertainment of the worldling, and to the humiliation of the godly? The honour of our Master, respect for ourselves, and a regard to the interests of righteousness and holiness, all cry out against such a course. Once more, therefore, the question returns, what is to be done? Fathers, Brethren, Fellow Christians, whatever else may be dark, this is clear, *we cannot continue in the same body*. We are not agreed, and it is vain to attempt to walk together. That those who we regard as the authors of our present distractions will retrace their steps, is not to be expected; and that those who have hitherto rallied around the standards of our church will continue to do so, is both to be expected and desired. In some way or other, therefore, these men must be separated from us.

At what time, or in what manner this is to be effected, it is not for us to say; nor will we now undertake, even to suggest. We would rather, for the present, solicit those whom we address, to have their attention turned to these points, to make them the subjects of their meditation, of their mutual conference, and above all, of their earnest supplication at a throne of grace, for divine direction, that the event painful in itself, may not be rendered still more

so, by the unseasonableness of its occurrence, or the mode of its accomplishment.

In conclusion.—To those who agree with us in the general views thrown out in this paper, we would say—be firm. Let not the temporary triumph of error, a triumph achieved through unrighteous means, dishearten you. “Honesty is the best policy,” and will always be found to be so in the long run—be firm then. We would say to you also—be wary. Suffer not yourselves to be imposed upon by *professions* of Orthodoxy, which are shown to be false by the *acts* of those who make them. Let not the cry of “peace,” “peace,” raised by men who have disturbed the peace of our church, by trampling on her purity, mislead you. We love peace, as much as do these men, but not peace at the expense of truth. And particularly we would say to you—abide at your posts. In a crisis like the present, for the sake of ease, for the sake of quiet, let no man seek a connexion with other ecclesiastical bodies, because by them sound doctrine is loved, and healthful discipline maintained. This were indeed an inglorious business, most unkind to those who have hitherto stood side by side with you in defence of the truth, and a criminal desertion of the church you have loved, and which, perhaps, has cherished you, in the hour of her need.

That the great Head of the church, under the smiles of whose benignant Providence, we have, as a denomination, been greatly prospered, but who, for our pride, and unfruitfulness, and backsliding, is now visiting us, may overrule all our difficulties and troubles, so as to promote his own glory, and the welfare of immortal souls, is the prayer of yours in the bonds of the Gospel.

W. W. PHILLIPS,
JOSEPH M'ELROY,
GEORGE POTTS,
JOHN BRECKENRIDGE,
FRANCIS M'FARLAND,
W. A. M'DOWELL,
JOHN M. KREBS,
HENRY RANKIN,
HUGH AUCHINCLOSS,
JAMES LENOX.