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THE
ALBANY QUARTERLY,

EDITED BY

JAMES R. WILLSON & SAMUEL M. WILLSON.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

“ Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.”

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DR. WYLIE'S "ANIMADVERSIONS ON ALBANY
QUARTERLY" CORRECTED.

It is a noble principle which influences to cast the mantle of charity over another's infirmities, and to forbear opposition, when these can be done, without permitting truth to suffer. It is also a duty to prevent imposition from being practiced on others. The benign religion of Jesus inculcates such a principle and enforces such a duty. He, who diminishes the influence of the one, or brings disrepute upon the other, is to be both pitied and blamed. When a writer, for the sake of producing effect, calls the *profession* of these to his assistance, and yet shews, by the complexion of his remarks, that the *bare profession* is all to which he is then entitled, he stands before the public in no enviable light. These thoughts were suggested by the perusal of an article, in the July No. of the "American Christian Expositor," entitled, "Animadversions on the Albany Quarterly." The article is from the pen of the Rev. Dr. Wylie.

The *professed* object of the writer is to prevent "our people from suffering imposition, tending to mislead the judgment, paralyze the loveliest charities of the heart, and foster passions, that ought not to be indulged." Whether the effect has been produced by the Albany Quarterly, or by some other cause—the writer's own article evinces, that *his* judgment has been misled, *his* charities paralyzed and *his* passions fostered, to an extent, truly lamentable. My astonishment at the introduction into such an article of things totally unconnected with the Quarterly, was far more than equalled, by the pain experienced on seeing misrepresentations made, unusually harsh expressions employed, and by perceiving the spirit breathed, and the complexion borne, by the whole performance. The author's age, literature and *piety* should have taught him, that it is *one* thing to oppose a brother when he is to blame; *another* to endeavor to heap vilification and abuse upon his character: *one* thing to expose misrepresentations, *another* to attempt to destroy the reputation and high usefulness of a minister of Jesus; and *one* thing to counteract falsehood by plain statements of truth, *another* to seek to explain away stubborn facts, when their publicity gives uneasiness. The whole article, however, is in good keeping with other parts of the

writer's conduct towards the senior editor of the Quarterly for some months past. At a meeting of the Eastern Sub-Synod in April last, Dr. Wylie was chairman of a committee, that reported the draft of a pastoral address. The part of this draft, which *Synod rejected*, contained many personal allusions and opprobrious epithets. The following are specimens. "Let no aspiring Diotrefes goad you on to rashness." "Various illiberal attempts have been made to stamp as the ordinance of the devil the best government on earth"—"insinuations and foul misrepresentations of the prejudiced, pestilent, designing and ambitious"—"unprincipled and ambitious demagogue"—"disorganizing *new-light* pedlars"—"Judai-
zing teachers," &c. &c.*

On the rejection by Synod of this objectionable part, the minority published the whole, with notes appended. One of these notes (note B) brought to light, that the senior editor was personally alluded to, in such expressions as the above. In that note, quotations from a late publication of his are given, of which quotations it is said, "Amplly sufficient has been quoted to give a *definite location* to these and similar allusions of the address." It is also added "the mental alienation under which its (the publication's) author labors, divests him of all personal responsibility. And as this has now become notorious, there is little danger that the *ravings of insanity* will be mistaken for the expressions of truth and holiness." The employment, by a minister of Jesus, of such assertions, epithets and language, against another minister of that same Jesus, must cause the pious heart to sicken with poignant sorrow and bleed at every pore; especially as they both belong to the same branch of our Redeemer's church, and profess to be bound together by the same covenant-engagements. What must be thought of the man, who desired to obtain synodical sanction, to the insidious invective, which he had deliberately prepared against a brother? Leaving this to the judgment of the christian public, I proceed to a few remarks on the "animadversions." Believing, that they evidence an intention on the part of the writer, to injure the senior editor of the Quarterly, and finding from the effect produced,

* See rejected part of "Draft of Pastoral Address."

that they carry the antidote to their own poison, my remarks shall be brief.

The article opens with a reference to a *fabulous story*, in which the mountains were represented, as in labor, and at the time of delivery, a silly ("to be laughed at") mouse was brought forth. The impression intended to be made is, that after very great toil, on the part of the senior editor, a publication of trifling ridiculous character appears. The author of "Animadversions" knows full well, that no extraordinary exertion is requisite, on the part of that editor, in preparing what he intends for the public. The Albany Quarterly speaks for itself. The extent of its circulation and the continued additions to its subscription list, shew in what way it is "laughed at" by an intelligent, christian people. It is strange that *fourteen* pages of a religious magazine, "designed," as its *title* bears, "to promote the influence of sound principles and social order," for example, by publishing the *president's message* &c., should be occupied in endeavoring to write down, this "to be laughed at" production. We have read of the mountains laboring and bringing forth, but we have not read of any one *sufficiently silly to lay violent hands on the mouse*. Judging from the effort made by the author of "Animadversions," one would think he underwent more agony, in attempting to strangle the silly offspring at its birth, than had been experienced in bringing it forth. The reader, if he choose, may decide whether any precedent to the attempt at destruction, is presented in the following case. "The dragon stood before the woman, to devour her child as soon as it was born." Failing, he "cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood."

Much fault is found with the senior editor for presuming to commence the publication of a magazine, while the A. C. Expositor continued to be published. For this he is charged, indirectly, with dishonor, with a violation of plighted faith, and with adopting "the very convenient point in the ethics of some persons, that one party, without the consent of the other, can rescind a covenant." These charges are predicated on a pledge, given by members of Synod. How does this pledge justify the conclusion, that they become thereby a party for longer than

one year? Dr. Wylie admits, that “the responsibility to furnish out of their own pocket, the deficit of subscriptions — ceased at the end of the first year.” This was the very thing contemplated in the pledge.* Take its own words. “The several ministers and other members present were called upon to pledge themselves, for what number of the contemplated magazine they would be responsible.” Responsible for what? *To pay for* the number of copies, for which they respectively pledged themselves. Admitting Dr. Wylie’s view, however, does it follow, that every man was thereby prohibited from acting as an editor for the good of our church? Did Synod intend to establish a *monopolizing* publication, that would palsy the pen, and restrain the freedom of the press? Nothing was farther from their intention. In this age and country, such conduct or its advocates, will find few abettors. A history of the Reformed Presbyterian church has long been wanted. To give it is an arduous task. I rejoice, that when a man was found willing to undertake it, our people have, beyond expectation, given their countenance and their aid. I am also thankful to Dr. Wylie, in this respect, for his “animadversions.” They have increased the circulation of the Quarterly not a little. When will he write again?

Very disingenuously, the senior editor is charged with having desired the editorial department of the Expositor. “That Dr. Willson was extremely desirous to be the editor, was I believe, too obvious to be misunderstood.” This is totally incorrect. I know the whole history relating to the commencement of the Expositor. Dr. Willson introduced in presbytery, a resolution to petition Synod, to resuscitate the Theological Seminary, and establish a periodical. This was moved and carried with the understanding, that Dr. M’Leod was the contemplated professor and editor. With the same understanding, the petition was forwarded to Synod. Were I so minded, reasons could be stated, why Dr. Willson and other friends of Dr. M’Leod, undertook and carried forward these measures. Circumstances, then existing, explained the whole matter to those acquainted with them. But, says Dr. Wylie, “He was not able to refrain expressing him-

* It was stated by the mover and seconder in Synod, that the pledge was for one year only. Editors.

self thus." "Only let the magazine be located in Albany, and my congregation will incur all responsibilities for its support." Dr. Wylie quotes as though he remembered the language *verbatim*. Perhaps he does!! Had he charged his memory to the same extent, with the time when it was employed, and with concomitant expressions, he need not have drawn so mistaken an inference; nor loaned himself to the *enviable* task of misleading others. Dr. Willson was advocating the adoption of a report, in which Dr. M'Leod was named as editor. He was speaking of the influence, which the contemplated location (New York) would have in procuring support. He reasoned from what he believed his own congregation could effect, to what would be effected by one much larger. Whether he wished to influence his own appointment, after originating the business, with another intention, and when Dr. M'Leod had been already named in a report, the adoption of which he was then advocating, may be safely submitted to the judgment of any unprejudiced mind.

Again, Dr. Willson is represented as having acted without "any kindness and generosity," yea, in a way contrary to truth and justice towards Dr. M'Leod. This is intended for effect, and is uttered in that vague, and indefinite way, which prevents it, in any given instance, from being met. The magnanimous seek not such a shelter. Than Dr. Willson, no man has made more sacrifices, in the maintenance of his friendship for Dr. M'Leod. I might appeal to Dr. M'Leod himself, to every member of the late Northern Presbytery, to every member of the New York congregations, and ask, whether in trying times to Dr. M'Leod, to his congregation and to presbytery, Dr. Willson did not sacrifice even personal friendship, and cut of the supply received from one of the fountains of his temporal support, in standing by the man, to whom he is represented as shewing neither kindness, generosity nor justice. Dr. Wylie may insinuate, but they, who know the truth, will not believe the representation.*

* On the 24th inst., three or four months after the appearance of Dr. Wylie's "Animadversions," Dr. M'Leod took occasion, in the presbytery of which he is a member, to speak in strong terms of Dr. Willson's friendship and kindness to himself. On the same day there was occasion to read

Another *grave* accusation against the senior editor of the Quarterly is, that he reported part of the transactions of an ecclesiastical court, when minutes had been published "in the Synod's own magazine." Is it intended here *again* to assert the right of monopoly to that magazine? Must nothing connected with the contents of its pages be published any where else? Has Dr. Wylie learned, from the repudiated example of the New York legislature, to attempt the injury of a man, merely because he publishes his own writings, in his own way? It is a blessing, that the press is not in the hands of some men. Has any thing uncommon been done in this case? Do not editors of newspapers and magazines report such parts of the transactions of civil and ecclesiastical assemblies, as they think proper? Is not the same done in reference to business transacted in courts of justice? Concealment is not the motto of one, whose deeds will bear the light. But why did not the editor of the Quarterly "favor the public with the unprecedented rhetorical flourish, which proceeded from his own lips — when speaking of our confession and standards?"

He was insisting on the recognition of "our confession and standards" in the draft of a covenant, then under consideration. He adverted to the sentiment too generally prevalent, that these are of "Satanic origin." He challenged the most scrutinizing investigation. Let it be given, and, if found to be of such an origin; "let them," said he, "go to the devil, whence they came." The Dr. spoke earnestly — such is his manner. This, reader, is the "rhetorical flourish" said to have made so indelible impressions. Dr. Wylie forbore "mentioning it." Pure forbearance!!! And yet he talks *around*, it and of it, as something awfully dreadful. He knows, that had he presented it in its real light, the horror sought to be excited must have vanished. Whether this is a sample of the "insinuating detraction and murderous innuendo," of which he speaks in the next sentence, the reader will determine.

In reference to the delegation of the Philadelphia presbytery, Dr. Wylie complains of misrepresentation. The

part of Dr. Wylie's "Animadversions," which contains the representation spoken of above. Dr. M'Leod said, "I have already, on this morning, acquitted Dr. Willson of *all* that.

Quarterly contains the statement, that he contended for the admission of all the delegates offered, because the object of Synod was to increase its numbers. Nearly a whole page is occupied in giving what he calls "the truth of the whole matter" on this point; when he comes to precisely the same conclusion, stated in the Quarterly. But it seems, another argument was employed, which probably he wished to be stated also. In my opinion a favor was done to Dr. Wylie and others, by its omission. "The Philadelphia presbytery also contended, that the court had uniformly acted on this principle." If they did so contend, they contended for what was *not true*. At the first meeting after the organization, Synod did admit more members than were entitled to a seat, by the ratio of representation. The reason was, a misunderstanding by some, as to the time when the limitation was to take effect. The manner in which the extra members were admitted, was supposed to have settled, *forever*, the application of the constitution. Hence at the very next meeting, three ministers "are invited to take a seat as *consultative* members." Such members have no vote. One year after Dr. Wylie himself, and Dr. M'Leod were invited to a seat, and accepted of it, in the same way. At the next meeting three ministers sat, by invitation, in the same way. This, Dr. Wylie calls "their last meeting in Pittsburgh," at which he says, his principle was acted upon. He refers, I presume, to the case of Mr. Cooper. This gentleman had been delegated by his presbytery, in connection with two others. That presbytery was entitled to only two clerical and as many lay delegates — four in all. Though only one of the latter kind was present, Mr. C. was denied his seat. As Dr. Wylie and I are here completely at issue, I quote the following statement from the minutes of that meeting. "A paper was presented to Synod by Mr. Cooper, complaining of a mistake, by the presbytery to which he belongs, in relation to his appointment to Synod, whereby he was exposed to unnecessary expenses, &c. Referred to the committee on travelling expenses." This was but one day before Synod's adjournment. The only satisfaction obtained, was an allowance of his proportion of travelling expenses. This too *was* stated in Philadelphia. Dr. Wylie's assertion to the contrary notwithstanding. So far then, from being Sy-

nod's uniform practice, the principle never was acted on, except at the first meeting referred to above. Verily when a man contends for what is untrue, he should not find fault with another for not reporting his error.

Dr. Wylie quotes and contradicts the following statement: "there were three ministers and four ruling elders from the congregation of Philadelphia." The meaning evidently is, that within the bounds of that congregation, *seven* of the delegates resided. After all the blustering about "mistakes so palpable," "excited imagination," "unaccountable hallucinations," &c., the statement of the Quarterly is true. Dr. Wylie is pastor of that congregation. S. W. Crawford had relinquished his pastoral charge, and had been for months pursuing a *secular* employment in Philadelphia. J. H. Symmes was giving stated supplies, by presbyterial appointment, to part of Dr. Wylie's congregation and others. The *four* elders were all members of that *one* congregation. This too was in direct violation of an act of Synod.

Again the Quarterly states, "Synod however permitted four delegates from that presbytery to vote out of comity." On this the Dr. exclaims, "I appeal to the official documents of Synod—I appeal to the recollection of its members. Comity indeed! One of the Dr's men, it is true, graciously mentioned, that they would allow us seats out of courtesy. The proposal was indignantly spurned at the moment, and so frowned upon by various members, that it was heard no more." The Dr. appeals to the official documents of Synod. Thither he shall go. A single reference will shew an utter inaccuracy on this very business: "The committee recommend as most agreeable to christian comity, that no individual, approved by any presbytery, as a delegate to Synod, be at present excluded from his privilege on this floor."* Dr. M'Leod presented and Synod adopted this report. Was he that "one, of the Dr's men" spoken of? And was it the "proposal" in *his* report that "was indignantly spurned and so frowned upon?" Men should be cautious, lest an over anxious desire to criminate and contradict should betray the secret, that they act for crimination and contradiction's sake. Sometimes such appear ridiculous; at other times, worse.

* See report of that committee

Next comes the logical distinction between the terms *untouched* and *unhurt*, as applied to "the system of truth and the church's order." The Dr. is welcome to the credit due to the exhibition of dignity, given in his remarks on this subject. He is welcome too, to all, that his character has gained for veracity in another representation totally inaccurate. He says "the system of the church's order in the mode of ordaining elders and deacons was touched by the Dr. (Willson) himself, and roughly enough too by some of his partisans." The Rev. Messrs. Cannon and John Gibson were appointed, at a former meeting, to report on the proper mode of ordaining the above mentioned officers. They reported and their report was laid on the table. There it lies yet. Its simple reading is all that was said — all that an opportunity was given to say, on the subject, except as it was dragged in, by two or three men, to influence the decision on a motion for discontinuing a representative synod. Of these Dr. Willson was not one. There is no ground whatever for this allegation. It is like another in a preceding paragraph, where Dr. Willson and his partisans are represented as forging, from a "Report on our Civil Relations," "the case about voting from Coldenham," &c., a yoke of bondage, which they sought to wreath around the church's neck. The Dr. should tell us whom he means by partisans. Is Dr. M'Leod, who in his report, as above stated, made the proposal of "comity," one of them? Are Messrs. Cannon and Gibson — gentlemen above, acting as partisans of any man — of the number? Can he refer to the men, who had, in their hands, the "Report on our Civil Relation," Drs. M'Leod, Wylie, M'Master, and Black? Does he include the members of the Coldenham congregation, who sent up the "case about voting?" I will leave it to any unprejudiced reader of his article and mine, whether, to any others, the term in the cases referred to, is equally applicable. If however, in the use of the term, he intended none or only some of these; or if he intended others entirely, he will find, soon enough for his present policy, that those whom he thus stigmatizes, are men who think, and speak, and act, for themselves. He will find, that they, to whom it is presumed he had reference, are men who would disdain to act in such a character, even though

the boon presented were equivalent to the procuring of a lucrative secular employment or to ordination sine titulo.

MOSES RONEY.

[*To be continued.*]

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

(*Continued from page 21, No. 2.*)

It is always a delicate question and difficult case of conscience, to settle how the children of God are to shape their course, in relation to governments that openly dishonor the Lord their King. The saints, indeed, all know that they are bound "to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, and to give none offence either to Jew or Gentile, and to pray for the peace of the commonwealth, that in its peace they may have peace." But as the nation dishonors God, were it only by a want of conformity to the law of God, we may not "do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just," by entering into and partaking of the sins, which are chargeable on the whole nation in mass. Some say there are sins, it is true, but there is provision made for reforming them. May any man swear to that which is evil, because he is allowed in the oath to use efforts to reform what is wrong? Surely not. For on this principle, a man might join a band of robbers and swear to their constitution, binding himself to practice robbery, provided there were an article in the constitution of the den, that as soon as the majority should agree, they would abolish robbery. No sophistry ever imposed more grossly on the blinding conscience than this. What! swear to that which is sinful, with a view to reform the subject-matter of the oath! O, that men would ask themselves how this shameful trifling will appear at the bar of God!

To instruct the followers of Christ in their civil relations, and what they ought to do in performing their duty to God and man, several eminent writers have published books, in the United States, within the present century. We have selected a few of them. That of the very learned Dr. Wylie, now professor of languages in the University of Pennsylvania, we have placed at the head, because it is the first in chronological order, and good as an open and able testimony, "against the evils that ex-