

THE
PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION REPOSITORY.

1856.

ARTICLE I.

GOD'S UNIVERSITY; OR, THE FAMILY CONSIDERED AS
A GOVERNMENT, A SCHOOL, AND A CHURCH.*

BY THE REV. THOMAS V. MOORE, D.D., RICHMOND, VA.

THERE are two institutions that have come down to us from Eden, to perpetuate some of its purity and peace. The first is the Sabbath, that suspends, for a single day, the primeval curse of toil; that arrests for a time, the frenzied rush of our worldly life, to give man and beast a season of repose; that invades for a season the despotic rule of grasping avarice, and erects weekly to the eye of man, a memorial of the rest that he has lost on earth, and a foresign of the rest he may find in heaven. But as many are ignorant and many neglectful of this relic of Eden, another has been left, more constant and universal in its influence, a relic, unchanged by the flow of human things, unbroken by the fall, unharmed by the deluge, and untouched by the decay that has dissolved so many of the memorials of the mighty Past. This relic is the FAMILY.

Believing it to be the divinely appointed institute for the training of the young, and the neglect of its agencies to be the grand cause of juvenile delinquency at the present time, and the proper use of its discipline, instruction, and worship to be the desired remedy, we propose to consider this great educational institute, which, as the only one that God has made universal on the earth, we have ventured to term *God's University*, or the divinely appointed means for educating the human race, for time and eternity, in all those particulars not specifically assigned to the Church. We shall look at its general design, and then consider it under the aspects of a government,

* This excellent article was one of the "PRIZE ESSAYS ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY," originally published under the direction of the Managers of the House of Refuge, Philadelphia.—Ed.

ARTICLE VII.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF SYNOD OF VIRGINIA
ON THE SUBJECT OF EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. A. B. VAN ZANDT, OF PETERSBURG, VA.*

I. APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE.

AT the last meeting of the Synod of Virginia, held in Alexandria, in October, 1854, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted :

"Whereas there is a good deal of diversity of opinion in the Synod of Virginia, in regard to some of the views of the Board of Education, it is deemed expedient that there should be a deliberate and well-matured expression of our opinions on this whole subject; therefore,

"Resolved, That a Committee of five be appointed to consider the subject, and report to the next meeting of Synod. Rev. A. B. Van Zandt, D.D., Rev. Peyton Harrison, Rev. L. W. Green, D.D., Rev. B. M. Smith, D.D., and Rev. C. R. Vaughan, were appointed that committee."—*Minutes of Synod*, p. 140.

II. OBJECT AND DUTY OF THE COMMITTEE.

It is not inferred from the above, that the Synod designed their committee to embody in a report that "deliberate and well-matured expression of opinions," the deliverance of which the Synod "deemed to be expedient." From assuming such a task as this, especially in the face of the declaration of the "preamble," that "there is a good deal of diversity of opinion in the Synod," your Committee would naturally and justly shrink. It is believed to be the utmost that can be expected from the Committee, that they should present a distinct statement of the facts in the case, together with such recommendations and suggestions as may aid the Synod in coming to a united and satisfactory conclusion upon "the whole subject." With this view of the duty imposed by their appointment, the Committee feel the full weight of the burden and responsibility which has been laid upon them. As the Synod has omitted to designate the particular "views of the Board of Education" to which exceptions have been taken, we are left to ascertain from other sources the precise points of diversity. And as no one of those in opposition to the views of the Board is entitled to speak for the rest; and as, whilst they are

* The origin of this Report is explained in the document itself. The names of the Committee of the Synod are Rev. A. B. Van Zandt, D.D., Lewis W. Green, D.D., Benjamin M. Smith, D.D., Peyton Harrison, and C. R. Vaughan. Of this Committee of five, one (the Rev. Peyton Harrison), was providentially prevented from seeing the Report, and another (the Rev. C. R. Vaughan), did not concur in the Report. The names of the others were appended. The Synod approved the Report, and adopted the resolution at its close with but few dissenting voices. The Rev. C. R. Vaughan presented a protest, signed, we believe, by five others, which the Synod ordered to be answered. We have not seen either the protest or the answer.—Ed.

agreed in a general opposition, they are yet far from harmonious in regard to the points of dissent, and the grounds of their opposition, your Committee have no alternative, but are compelled to gather up these points from the scattered and voluminous publications which the controversy has elicited, or to enter at once upon "the whole subject" of the educational policy of our Church.

III. ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE CONTROVERSY.

It may aid our investigations, and disembarass the subject from some irrelevant issues, if we go back to the origin and trace the history of this controversy.

As early as 1839, the following Resolution was adopted by the General Assembly.

Resolved, That the Rev. Samuel Miller, Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, J. Addison Alexander, and James Carnahan, be a Committee to inquire whether any, and if any, what measures ought to be adopted for securing to the children and young people of our Church more full advantages of Christian education than they have hitherto enjoyed."

This Committee reported, in 1840, by its Chairman, Rev. Dr. Miller; and the Assembly, by a unanimous vote, "referred the Report to the Board of Publication, with a view to its publication." The Report thus referred closes with a series of thirteen distinct recommendations, of which the *third* recommends, "that every congregation shall establish one or more church schools, adapted to the instruction of children between six and ten years of age." "The teachers of these schools ought to be selected by the church session, and governed by rules formed by that body." The *fifth* of the series recommends "that there be established in every presbytery at least one grammar school or academy, and in the larger and more opulent presbyteries, more than one adapted for training youth in the more advanced branches of knowledge, and preparing such of them as may desire it for an introduction into college." "These institutions ought to be under the supervision of the respective presbyteries in which they are placed, and a Committee of ministers and elders appointed by each presbytery to visit them, and to watch over the whole course of instruction and discipline in them." The *sixth*, in regard to universities and colleges, recommends "that great care should be exercised in selecting those institutions in which moral and religious training will receive the most faithful attention." And under this particular the report proceeds to say that, "in several parts of our Church, academies and colleges have been founded by presbyteries and synods, and placed entirely under the direction of the judicatories which founded them. This, when it can be done, is a wise plan, and adapted more effectually to secure to our youth the advantages of thorough and unshackled religious training, than is possible upon any other plan."

The publication of the Report from which these extracts are taken, accomplished the chief end for which it was intended, viz., to

call the attention of the Church more directly to the subject. It came up again in the General Assembly of 1844, and the following resolution was adopted.

“Resolved, That Messrs. J. W. Alexander, S. B. Wilson, Hoge, Young, Boardman, and Montfort, be a Committee to consider the expediency of establishing Presbyterian parochial schools, and to report on the whole subject at the next meeting of the General Assembly.”—(*Min.* 1844, p. 376.)

At the next meeting of the Assembly, this Committee “reported, requesting longer time, and were continued. Messrs. Hoge and Montfort tendered their resignations, and Drs. Phillips and Snodgrass were appointed on the Committee in their places.” Meantime, the subject was under discussion in some of the lower judicatories; and the Synod of New Jersey, in particular, at their meeting in 1845, adopted an elaborate Report, prepared by a Committee appointed the previous year, and fully endorsing the views presented in the Report of Dr. Miller.

The Committee appointed by the General Assembly of 1844 finally made their Report, through their Chairman, Dr. J. W. Alexander, to the Assembly of 1846. This report discusses “the question whether it is desirable and practicable to institute schools connected with congregations, and under church authority, in the United States.” Though the Committee decline to mark out the details of any definite plan, yet their Report strongly argues for the affirmative of this question, at least so far as it regards the desirableness of such schools. Assuming the necessity of a religious education, it denies that this can be obtained in the state schools, and it broadly declares, “that next to the ministry of the word, and the instruction of the family, there is nothing which, under God’s blessing, promises so much for the sustentation of our covenanted truth, as schools, Presbyterian schools, thorough-paced and above board—such schools as shall, every day in the week, direct the infant mind, not only to a meagre natural religion, but to the whole round of gracious truth, as it is in Christ Jesus.” Candidly admitting the difficulties in the way of fully realizing this ideal of a school in many places, the Report yet contends for the principle, and its application, as far as possible. “Only grant,” it says, “the general principle of distinctive instruction in common schools, *under church care*, as a matter to be aimed at, and a new face will begin to be put upon the whole affair of education.” The Report concludes with a series of resolutions, the third of which is as follows:

“That the Assembly regard with great approval the attempt of such churches as have undertaken schools under their proper direction, as well as the zeal which has led individual friends of the truth to aid the same cause.”

Five hundred copies of this Report were printed for the use of the members, and its consideration postponed to a given day, when it was adopted, and ordered to be printed in the Appendix of the Minutes; and upon motion of Dr. J. C. Young, it was

“Resolved further: That the whole subject of the Report be referred to the Board

of Education, that they may, from time to time, report to the General Assembly any further action which may be needed, for extending through our churches a system of Parochial Schools."—(*Minutes of 1846*, p. 216.)

This is the first official connection of the Board of Education with the matter in hand. We pause, therefore, at this point in our historical sketch, to gather up into definite and distinct statements some facts in the case, which appear to have been sometimes overlooked, or misapprehended.

First. The attention of the Church was called to the great subject of a religious education for her children and youth, by a system of schools under the supervision of her appropriate judicatories, at an early period after the great disruption. It was in 1839 that the Committee was appointed, of which Dr. Miller was chairman; and, in 1840, the report, of which extracts have been given, was presented to the General Assembly, and ordered to be published.

Second. The Assembly proceeded in this matter with extraordinary deliberation. Four years elapsed before the second committee was appointed, and two years more before their report was presented; and when presented, in 1846, it was printed and put into the hands of the members, before it was finally debated and adopted.

Third. In adopting this latter report, with its resolutions, and the additional resolution of Dr. Young, the Assembly of 1846, distinctly and definitively, adopted the principle of denominational schools, under church supervision and control.

We deem it the more important to bring out this fact, because it has been elsewhere asserted, that, "in this report, the question of the prerogatives since claimed for the Church, as a party to education, are nowhere set forth; but an eloquent and able plea is made simply in behalf of the thing to be gained—religious education."* Without entering now upon the question, as to *what* "prerogatives" have been, or are supposed to "have been, claimed for the Church, as a party to education," it is very certain, from the extracts which have been given, that the report, at least, so far claims for the Church the prerogative of a party to education, as "*the principle of distinctive instruction in common schools, under church care,*" can make her a party; and so far from being only "an eloquent and able plea, simply in behalf of religious education," it is throughout a plea for "parochial schools," wherever their establishment is necessary and practicable. And what is meant by "parochial schools" is manifest from the definition of the report itself, viz.: "schools connected with congregations, and under church authority." So the report was understood by the Assembly. With this understanding it was debated and opposed by Dr. Breckenridge, and adopted by the Assembly. The language of the report itself, the accompanying resolutions, and the additional resolution of Dr. Young, leave no room for doubt upon this point—that the General Assembly of 1846

* Southern Presbyterian Review, January, 1855, p. 425. Article: "The General Assembly of 1854." By Stuart Robinson.

did clearly and fully adopt the principle of denominational schools, under church supervision and control.

Fourth. It is equally evident from the documents which have been quoted, that previous to this time (1846) the Board of Education had no connection whatever with this subject; and that Board became connected with it by the act of the General Assembly, referring the whole subject to the Board, with instructions to report, from time to time, to the Assembly, what further action might be needed for carrying out the principle already adopted, "for extending through our churches a system of parochial schools."

It follows, then, that so far as any "views of the Board of Education," referred to by the Synod in the appointment of this Committee, coincide with the distinctive principle enunciated by the General Assembly of 1846, it is not the Board, but the General Assembly, which is the responsible party. And to the extent thus indicated, it is unjust to that Board to charge upon it a departure from the principles of our church policy, and from the design and object of its original constitution; and the introduction of false principles, in carrying out the principle and obeying the instructions of the General Assembly, whose creature and servant it is. We have no wish to shield the Board behind the General Assembly, in any case in which its acts, or its utterances, have gone beyond the sanction of that authority, to which it is amenable. Nor, on the other hand, would we have the decisions of the General Assembly ignored, in discussing views of educational policy; or its responsibility for those "views" rolled off upon a Board—thus unjustly bringing that Board under suspicion—and disparaging those "views," by representing them as its offspring, more easily than could be done, if recognizing them as the matured deliverances of the supreme judicatory of the Church.

Keeping in view these ascertained facts, we now resume the narrative.

In obedience to the requirement of the General Assembly, as by the resolution of 1846 (already quoted), the Board of Education presented to that venerable body, in 1847, an elaborate "Report on Parochial Schools." This report embraced an extended argument in favour of a general system of parochial schools through our churches, and what was meant by "parochial schools" was clearly defined in the following particulars, viz.: "(1.) A school, under the care of the session of a church, (2.) designed for children, say from five to ten years of age; (3.) in which the usual branches of a sound elementary education are taught, (4.) with the addition of daily religious instruction from the Bible, (5.) under the superintendence of a Christian teacher." This definition fully accords with that adopted by the preceding Assembly, which directed the Board to report the "action" which might be needful for extending "a system of" such "schools throughout our church." They were to be "schools connected with congregations, and under church authority;" "Presbyterian schools, thorough-paced and above board; such schools as

shall—every day in the week—direct the infant mind not only to a meagre natural religion, but to the whole round of gracious truth as it is in Christ Jesus.”*

Discussing the “whole subject” which had been committed to them, the Board also suggest and urge, as a necessary complement of the proposed system, the establishment of Presbyterian Academies and Synodical Colleges, particularly among the growing population of the West. If the Board should be charged with going beyond their instructions, by introducing this feature of the proposed system, it must be remembered, that “the whole” subject had been referred to them; that the “whole subject,” as embraced in the reports of Dr. Miller and Dr. J. W. Alexander, and entertained by the Assemblies of 1840 and 1846, clearly included the whole series of institutions from the primary school to the college; and further, that the suggestions of the Board, in regard to these institutions, did not go beyond the principle of ecclesiastical supervision, which the Assembly had already recognized.

Without pausing now to notice the arguments, with which the Report of the Board sets forth the importance and necessity of the system contemplated by the Assembly of 1846, we briefly state the sum of their recommendations:

1. That the General Assembly should, in the first place, affirm their sense of the importance of a system of Christian Education, to be extended as far as possible throughout their congregations. The characteristic *principle* of the system contemplated would be religious instruction from the Word of God, in connection with sound intellectual culture: and the general *outlines* of the system would embrace primary schools, under the care of churches; academies, under the care of Presbyteries; and ultimately colleges, under the care of one or more Synods.”

2. That, for the purpose of a full discussion of the whole matter in all its bearings, the Assembly should call the attention of Synods and Presbyteries to this great subject.

3. That a committee be appointed in each Presbytery, to collect information in regard to the present condition of schools, &c.

4. That the Board of Publication be recommended to take into consideration the subject of school books, &c.

5. That the Board of Education be authorized to aid, with any funds placed at their command for that purpose, feeble churches, in prosecuting a plan of Christian Education.

These recommendations of the Board were all embodied, by a special committee, to whom the Report was referred, in a series of resolutions, which were *unanimously* adopted by the General Assembly. We quote, for our present purpose, the first three, and the fifth.

1. “Resolved, That the Report be committed to the Board of Education, in order that it may be printed and circulated among the churches.

2. “Resolved, That this Assembly do hereby express their firm conviction, that the interests of the Church, and the glory of our Redeemer, demand that imme-

* Report of J. W. Alexander. Adopted, 1846.

diate and strenuous exertions should be made, as far as practicable, by every congregation, to establish within its bounds one or more primary schools, under the care of the Session of the Church, in which, together with the usual branches of secular learning, the truths and duties of our holy religion shall be assiduously inculcated.

3. "*Resolved*, That this Assembly do hereby earnestly call upon all the Synods and Presbyteries under their care, to take the subject of Christian Education under consideration, and to devise and execute whatever measures they may deem most appropriate for securing the establishment of Parochial and Presbyterian schools in our bounds.

5. "*Resolved*, That this whole subject be referred to the Board of Education, and that the Board is hereby authorized to expend whatever moneys are committed to them for that purpose, in aid of the establishment of Parochial and Presbyterian schools."—(*Min.* 1847, p. 397.)

This action of the Assembly of 1847, is an advance upon the views expressed in the action of the preceding Assembly, only so far as the giving of those views a more definite form, and providing for their being carried into practical operation. The principle of denominational education by schools and academies, under ecclesiastical supervision, is fully recognized, and Congregations, Presbyteries, and Synods are called upon; the former, to make immediate and strenuous exertions to establish parochial schools; and the latter, to take the subject under consideration, and devise and execute appropriate measures towards the same end. And, meanwhile, the Board of Education is constituted the executive organ of the Assembly, in carrying out its views, and in aiding feeble congregations, by funds contributed for that purpose. This may be considered, then, as the inauguration of that educational policy, which, in different Reports and discussions, had been before the Church since 1840, and had received the distinct sanction of, at least, one preceding Assembly. So far as concerns the Board of Education, that Board does not appear, up to this point, to be chargeable with the introduction of any views, not entirely coincident with the views of the Church, as represented in her General Assemblies. Apart from the arguments with which it commends and urges the policy of the Assembly, this first report of the Board, presented in obedience to instructions, originates nothing, except certain suggestions, for *carrying out* principles already discussed and adopted. And, as to the views and suggestions of the Report as a whole, it is enough to say, that, by special resolutions, it was ordered to be printed, for circulation among the churches.

The machinery being thus set in motion, the Report of the Board for 1848, begins to record some of its earliest movements. Thirty-eight parochial schools had been established, at the close of the first year, within the bounds of twenty-one different Presbyteries; nine of these schools were aided by funds committed to the Board for that purpose; fourteen Presbyteries had taken measures for establishing Presbyterian Academies. The Report, again, argues at length in favour of the Assembly's plan of Education, but advances no new doctrines upon the subject, nor recommends any new features in its

general outline, but suggests that it should be at once completed, by making provision, also, for the establishment and aid of Colleges, having an ecclesiastical connection with the Presbyterian Church. The action of the General Assembly upon this Report, embodied in the following resolutions, is a distinct reaffirmation of the principles and policy adopted by previous Assemblies, and includes the Collegiate department, as an important part of the system :

"1. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly, believing that the children of the Church are a trust committed to the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ, and having confidence in the power of Christian Education, to train them, with the Divine blessing, 'in the way they should go,' do cordially recommend their congregations to establish primary and other schools, as far as may be practicable, on the plan sanctioned by the last Assembly—of teaching the truths and duties of our holy religion in connection with the usual branches of secular learning.

"2. *Resolved*, That this Assembly heartily approve of the plan of establishing academies or schools, male and female, under the supervision of the Presbyteries, for the purpose of securing a thorough education, religious and secular, to those of their youth who may desire to pursue branches of knowledge not taught in the Sessional schools.

"3. *Resolved*, That Colleges, as an integral part, and in their wide-spread relations to the best interests of society, a vitally important part of a complete system of Christian Education, demand the fostering care of the Church; and that the Board of Education be and hereby is authorized to assist in the promotion of the cause of Collegiate education, by means of any funds that may be given for that purpose."

The Church, having thus fairly engaged in the great work of Christian Education, and having committed to the Board of Education the executive part of that work, that Board would have come short of its duty, and been wanting in its well-established character for energy and zeal, if it had not conducted the enterprise with due vigour, and to the extent of its available resources. We are not, therefore, surprised at finding, in its Report for 1849, together with a record of increasing interest and activity on the part of churches and Presbyteries, a renewed appeal and setting forth of principles on the whole subject. In regard to the views of the Board, as here set forth, the only question which we would consider, at present, is in respect to their agreement with the principles already adopted by the General Assemblies of the Church. After a careful review of the document, we are not able to indicate any statement or principle at variance with the previous deliverances of the Assembly, and, in the following resolutions, we find a distinct approval and endorsement of the whole.

"The committee, to whom was referred the Annual Report of the Board of Education, recommend that it be approved and published under the direction of the Board, and commended to the careful perusal of all the churches, and they recommend the adoption of the following resolutions :

"4. *Resolved*, The Assembly again recommend to ministers and elders, the establishment of primary schools, academies, and colleges, in which our youth shall receive Christian and religious training.

"5. *Resolved*, To enable the Board to prosecute their important work, and to follow up the successes which God has given them in it, the Assembly would, and

hereby do, most earnestly request all their churches to contribute annually to their funds."

As the Church was now fully entered upon the work of general education, it began to appear that the operations of the Board were approximating that point, beyond which they could not be successfully carried on without some modifications of the plan on which they had been hitherto conducted. Accompanying the Report for 1850, the Board therefore submitted to the Assembly certain "suggestions towards improving its plans." These suggestions, the consideration of which was postponed to the next General Assembly, had reference to three points: 1st. The mode of giving assistance to those under the care of the Board; 2d. The conditions on which that assistance is to be given; and 3d. The class of persons to be thus aided.

In regard to the first point, it was proposed that the annual appropriations of the Board to those under its care should take the particular form of scholarships. The second point was a proposal to abolish the pledge for the ministry from young men in the colleges or academies. The third suggestion was, that aid might be extended, under suitable restrictions, to young men not having the ministry in view, or not even making a profession of personal religion. These modifications would necessitate another, which was also suggested, viz., that all collections and donations not specially directed should go into a common fund, to be appropriated at the discretion of the Board to either of the two departments of ministerial or general education.

The General Assembly of 1851, in its action upon these proposed modifications, authorized the Board to give their appropriations the title of scholarships, and to dispense with written pledges from the candidates for the ministry receiving its aid. It also authorized the Board to apply to the aid of suitable young men, other than candidates for the ministry, in academies and colleges, "*whatever funds may be thus specifically appropriated by the donors.*" These are the only modifications of the plan which the Assembly adopted. But it required the Board, as before, "to keep the contributions for candidates for schools and for colleges distinct from each other; but if no special direction is indicated, then the funds shall be appropriated to the education of candidates for the ministry."

We have noticed these "suggestions" of the Board and the action of the General Assembly upon them, because we believe that their discussion and the opposition they encountered has been influential in giving currency to the impression against the Board, of attempting a dangerous innovation, and assuming to itself the exclusive control of the educational interests of the whole Church. Proceeding upon this impression, questions have been discussed, as if they were new, and newly originated by the Board, upon which, in fact, the Assembly had already pronounced, before the Board had any official connection with the subject. But it is evident that the modi-

fications proposed by the Board were altogether of a practical kind, having reference to plans of operation, rather than to principles of policy. It is further evident that no modifications were adopted by the Assembly which altered the relation of the Board to the whole subject, or enlarged its discretionary powers.

The Report of the Board for 1852 contains a discussion of the question, "Who are the true parties in education? or who are the responsible agents in the work, and what their relative rights and responsibilities?" The main object of this discussion is "to vindicate the Church as one of the parties in education; but the general position taken is, that parents, the Church, and the State are respectively concerned in this great matter, each within its sphere." It is not our purpose to consider in this connection the truth or falsity of the doctrine thus advanced, but simply to remark, that as far as it regards the right and responsibility of the Church, it is the doctrine most clearly and emphatically assumed by every preceding General Assembly since 1846; for, most assuredly, if those Assemblies had not assumed the right and responsibility of the Church as a party in education, they would not and could not have proceeded to devise and inaugurate an educational system under the control of the Church. Apart from any verbal declarations, the action of these Assemblies is perfectly conclusive upon this point. All the documentary evidence cited in this narrative proves that every General Assembly since 1846 has assumed the duty, and therefore the right of the Church in her organized capacity, to provide the means of common school education, wherever necessary and practicable, under the supervision and control of synods, presbyteries, and sessions. If this is not endorsing "the proposition, the Church is a party in education," in the sense in which that proposition is set forth in the Report of the Board for 1852, it is difficult to say how it could be endorsed by any act or expression of the Assembly.

The Assembly of 1852, in its action upon this Report, adopted the following resolutions:

"3. *Resolved*, That this Assembly reaffirms its testimony in regard to the importance of establishing education upon a religious basis, as recommended by preceding Assemblies; and, viewing the Church as a party interested in education within its sphere, it invites its judicatories, according to their wisdom under their various circumstances, to see that the youth within their bounds have access to institutions of learning where the truths and duties of religion shall be assiduously inculcated.

"4. *Resolved*, That the Board of Education in its important departments of benevolent operation be recommended to the patronage of our churches, and that the Presbyteries and Synods endeavour to have its objects annually presented in such manner as may be deemed expedient, with a view to increasing the means of educating pious young men for the ministry."

In the action of the Assembly of 1853, after a preamble, which begins with the following statements: "The cause of education is a great and growing interest in our Church. The extension of this scheme beyond its original designation, so as to embrace the subjects

of parochial, academical, and collegiate education, makes it of vast importance; and the repeated sanction of the General Assembly to this enlargement of the object, and the growing conviction in our Church and country that religious education is mainly to be secured by denominational institutions, devolves much responsibility upon this Board:" and, in view of these facts, urges the duty of enlarged benefactions, we find the following resolutions:

"6. *Resolved*, That the Presbyterian Church has always been, and is now, in favour of the general education of the people; yet whilst the General Assembly cordially welcome and rejoice in all public or private efforts, not anti-Christian, which have this end in view, and which recognize the use of the Holy Scriptures; they still deem it important and necessary to adhere to and extend their own system of schools, academies, and colleges, as Christian institutions, whose purpose is to bring up their youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

"7. *Resolved*, That this Assembly renewedly recommend the objects of the Board of Education, in its various departments, to the patronage of the churches, in such form as each may deem best."

The General Assembly of 1854 reaffirms the decisions of former Assemblies, and defines the position of the Church upon this subject in the following resolutions:

"6. *Resolved*, That the efforts of the Presbyterian Church in behalf of schools, academies, and colleges, on a definite religious basis, and under her own care, have met with a success, important in present results, and hopeful for the future; and that these operations deserve to be continued and enlarged, with an entire friendliness to all other educational efforts, not positively injurious in their tendency; and especially that institutions under the management of members of our own Church, either privately or in corporations not subject to ecclesiastical supervision, in which religion is duly inculcated, ought to be regarded as entitled to confidence.

"7. *Resolved*, That the General Assembly, by affirming the Church to be one of the parties in education, and by acting on that principle in accordance with the practice of all the Reformed Churches, has never denied the importance of State co-operation in this great work, however defective it may be in some parts of the country; but, on the contrary, rejoices in the general enlightenment of the masses under the public school system, and hopes that all Presbyterians, besides supporting their own institutions, will continue, as heretofore, to be known as the sound friends of general education throughout the country, and as the advocates of the introduction of the Bible into the common schools."

Entirely coincident with these are the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of May last, "reaffirming its approval, so often expressed in former years, of the policy of the Board, in reference to the establishment of Christian schools, academies, and colleges." (Min., p. 273.)

We have mainly confined ourselves in this historical sketch, to the movements of the Board of Education, and the action of the General Assembly upon its successive reports, without any particular notices of the opposition encountered by the system of operations proposed and adopted. And we have thus traced the action of the Assembly, and the operations of the Board, from the first inception of the scheme, down to the present time, with two distinct objects in view: 1st, To ascertain the measure of responsibility which attaches to the Board, and to the General Assembly, respectively, for their introduc-

tion and maintenance of those principles and measures of educational policy to which exceptions have been taken;—and 2d, To exhibit the position which has been, and is now, occupied by our Church, as represented in its highest judicatory, upon this whole subject. We sum up this part of our report, therefore, in the following conclusions.

1. That the principle of denominational education, by means of schools, academies, and colleges, under the care and supervision of Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, was favourably entertained by the General Assembly as early as 1840; and in regard to the parochial schools, it was adopted by the Assembly of 1846, before the Board of Education had any official connection with the subject whatever.

2. That the whole subject was formally committed to the Board in 1846, with instructions to report to the Assembly from time to time, what action might be necessary for extending through the Church a system of parochial schools.

3. That in 1847, the Board was constituted the executive organ of the Assembly for receiving and applying any funds that might be contributed, for aiding in the establishment of parochial schools, and in 1848 it was authorized to do the same for Presbyterian and Synodical academies and colleges.

4. That both in 1847 and 1848, and in every year since, the Assembly has reaffirmed the principle of denominational schools under the care of appropriate judicatories, and in advocating that principle before the churches, the Board had only discharged its duty, as the executive organ of the Assembly, on this behalf.

5. That the true parties to any controversy, in regard to this general principle, therefore, are not the Board of Education on the one hand, and those who oppose it on the other; but these latter, and the Presbyterian Church, as represented by her General Assemblies for the last nine years.

We have been anxious to bring out these facts, because we conceive that a most unwarranted prejudice has been excited against the Board of Education, which, if unresisted, is calculated to have its effect, not only upon the issue of this controversy, but also upon the operations of the Board in every other department, by impairing the confidence of the churches in it. But in this summary of facts, we would also exhibit the true position, held through all these years, and now occupied by our Church, upon this whole subject,—and we find,

1. That the Church, as represented in the General Assembly, distinctly claims it to be her right, and her duty, under certain circumstances, to provide the means for the Christian education of her own children and youth, in schools, academies, and colleges, under the supervision of Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods.

2. That she never has claimed, and does not claim now, that the right to educate belongs to her exclusively, or that it is her duty to

establish schools and colleges under ecclesiastical control, wherever it can be done.

3. That in asserting her own right and duty, in the matter of education, she assumes no hostile or unfriendly attitude towards "other educational efforts, not positively injurious in their tendency,"—much less towards institutions under the management of her own members, in which religion is duly inculcated, though they are not subject to ecclesiastical supervision.

4. That it never was her design to enter upon a crusade against schools and colleges under State patronage, or to withdraw her members from all participation in their control, but would have them to exert their legitimate influence as citizens, in preserving the soundness and promoting the usefulness of those institutions, and maintaining the place of the Bible in them.

As it appears to your committee, then, this statement of the facts in the case reduces the whole subject to a single question, viz.: Has the Church, in claiming the right and the duty of providing, under certain circumstances, the means for the Christian education of her own children and youth, in schools, academies, and colleges, under the supervision of Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods, exceeded her functions? After a careful review of the whole controversy, this appears to be the point upon which the Synod is now to make its deliverance. We do not conceive that the Synod is called upon to pronounce upon any particular and isolated expressions, or paragraphs, which may be selected from the various publications of the Board of Education. Nor are we called upon, without an authorized statement of the facts, *pro* and *con*, to adjudicate upon any alleged acts of any of the officers or agents of the Board, in carrying out the educational policy of the Church. We are bound to suppose, that the views of the Board are best expressed in its last and fullest utterances, and if in these they disclaim positions supposed to be embodied in former expressions, we are bound to accept such disclaimers, and conclude, either that the previous expressions were infelicitous, or that our interpretation of them was incorrect. It may be, that in some of the reasonings and appeals of the Board as set forth in its reports, or other documents, there are certain things to which many of us would not assent, whilst yet we can fully accord with the general conclusions, and the principle of Christian education in schools under Church supervision, as endorsed by the repeated action of the General Assembly. It is to be regretted, if in any case, this principle has been pushed to an unwarranted extent, or by an excess of zeal, on the part of the Board or its officers, the policy of the Church has been made to bear an unfriendly aspect towards institutions not under ecclesiastical control. And in any well-ascertained instances of this sort, it is perhaps competent for the Synod to express its disapproval. But such exceptional cases do not necessarily vitiate the principle, as defined in the resolutions of the Gene-

ral Assembly, nor do they require us to repudiate an educational policy in which they are distinctly disavowed.

Approaching the question, then, from this point of view, we think there can be no great diversity of opinion in regard to it. The difference must lie between those who hold that the Church, in her organized capacity, has no rights or duties whatever in the matter of general education, and those, on the other hand, who hold with the General Assembly, that it is both her right and her duty, under certain circumstances, to provide for the Christian education of her own children and youth, in institutions under the care of her appropriate judicatories. Among these latter, there may be an honest difference of opinion, as to the circumstances which would justify the interference of the Church, and the extent to which her action should be carried, as well as the grounds upon which her claims should be rested. A perfect unanimity upon all these points is not to be expected, and any extent of candid Christian discussion, may not only be harmless, but highly advantageous. It is incidental to our present state, that upon many points of policy, concerning which we have not explicit and detailed directions in the word of God, we must be content with an agreement in general principles, sufficient for a practical co-operation.

We suppose that such an agreement does substantially exist. It is admitted on all hands, that the religious education of children and youth is imperative by the commands of the Great Head of the Church. It is admitted, also, that this end is best secured, when, besides the religious instruction of the family, the Sunday school, and the sanctuary, religion is also intermingled with the instructions of the day school. One of the most zealous opponents of the Board says: "We wish it, then, to be distinctly understood, we raise no issue with the Board of Education touching the value of Christian Education, or the propriety of seeking to secure it by the intermixture of religion with the secular course. It is not a question of objects, but of *agencies*; not of *ends*, but of *means*; not of moral or prudential propriety, but of ecclesiastical power."*

Now the object which the General Assembly, through her Board of Education, has in view, is that very "intermixture of religion with the secular course," which is admitted to be the best method for securing the great end, a Christian education; and will any man say, that the Church has no rights, duties, or powers in reference to that great end and object, the Christian education of her young? Is not that end inseparably connected with the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the earth? Does it not stand so intimately related to covenant obligations and covenant promises, as to be in fact, next to the preaching of the word, the great instrumentality for the perpetuity and extension of the Church? Has not the Church, in her organized capacity, direct powers and duties in the matter of those obligations which parents assume when they consecrate their children to God in baptism?

* Vaughan, p. 15.

Is not the Church bound, in fidelity to her Master and her mission, to see that the obligations thus assumed by parents are neither neglected nor violated? There will be no dispute about these points. And yet brethren ask, "What has the Church to do with the education of children?"* Why, she has this much to do, at least. She is bound to see that her members do faithfully discharge the obligations which they have voluntarily assumed to teach their children, and to have them taught in the principles and doctrines which they themselves profess. Now these brethren admit that this is best secured "by the intermixture of religion with the secular course." This is one of the points upon which they wish to be distinctly understood, as "raising no issue with the Board of Education." But they tell us, this should be done by the combined action of parents, "uniting as individuals to secure a school in which religion should be directly intermingled with the course of secular studies." Very well. Neither the Assembly, nor the Board, as we understand them, would object to this, but bids God speed to every such well-directed effort. But suppose in her inquisitions as to the religious education of her children and youth, the Church should find a community where the parents were incapacitated properly to instruct their own children, and unable to establish and sustain such a school, and thus reduced to the alternative of either suffering their children to remain uneducated, or of sending them to a school where religion is wholly excluded, or where doctrines and principles are taught and influences are exerted subversive of the faith;—has the Church no responsibilities, no duties in such a case? May she properly, and without transcending her commission, gather up and disburse the funds contributed by her scattered membership, for aiding struggling communities in erecting houses of worship, for providing a religious literature, and for sustaining pastors; but must she be expelled, as an intruding usurper, when she proposes, in like manner, to gather up and disburse the funds which her members are equally willing to contribute for the Christian education of such communities as we have described? Such a conclusion cannot possibly be maintained; and yet it is the conclusion to which we must come, if we decide that the Church has transcended her commission in the educational policy adopted by the General Assembly.

Two replies may be anticipated to this view of the case.

1. That the claim set up for the Church, is not simply the claim of a right to assist the weak, and supply the destitute, but that it is a claim to † "take under her control, the general interests of education, and supply the necessities of society in this great demand."

2. That even if confined to the more limited sphere of an actual necessity for aid, it is yet a claim which implies a control over education, which is not granted to the Church.

The first answer may be met by a reference to the position actually held by the Church, and so carefully defined by the successive resolutions of the General Assembly, as detailed in this Report. Recur-

* Vaughan, p. 36.

† Critic, Sept. p. 418.

ring, as in all fairness we are bound to do, to the last utterances, both of the Board and of the Assembly, we find the Board holding the following language in its Report for 1855. "The question is not whether the Church has an exclusive divine right to take part in public education, nor whether she is bound under all circumstances to exercise that authority; but simply whether she may lawfully *assist* in providing institutions to carry forward the religious education of her youth, when she deems that such institutions are required." And the General Assembly, in the 4th resolution on this Report, says:

"Resolved, That this General Assembly, in recommending the establishment of institutions under its own care, has never intended to depreciate truly Christian schools, academies, or colleges, under private, corporate, or State management, but cordially acknowledges, and welcomes them as copartners in a great work, and invokes the blessing of God upon their instructions."

If the claim of the Church is to be judged of by her own definitions, it is, then, not a claim to "take under her control the general interests of education, and supply the necessities of society in this great demand." And in regard to the control which she does claim, over the schools aided by the funds contributed for this purpose, it is no more than is incidental to the relation of benefactor and beneficiary; no more than is her right and duty, as the dispenser of funds committed to her as a sacred trust; no more than is actually necessary to secure the existence of *such schools* as the funds were contributed to establish and support; a control entirely coincident, in its nature and its grounds, with that which she exercises in the publication of books and the erection of churches, by the aid of her funds.

We presume that it is not expected that a Report like this, should enter into all the collateral questions springing out of this subject, or indeed that it should enter at length into the discussion of the main question. Our object has been, to narrow down the whole subject to a tangible issue, and we find that issue in the form already stated. Is the Church exceeding her commission, and entering upon forbidden ground, in gathering up and disbursing, through her appropriate agencies, the free-will offerings of piety and benevolence, in behalf of schools, academies, and colleges, under the supervision of her respective judicatories?

The affirmative of that question, as it appears to us, sweeps through not only the Board of Education, but the Board of Publication, and the recently organized effort for Church Extension; if indeed, in the rigorous application of the principle, it does not equally sweep through all her organized missionary efforts, whether in the home or foreign field. For, be it observed, the issue raised "is not a question of objects, but of agencies; not of ends, but of means; not of moral or prudential propriety, but of ecclesiastical power." Keeping in view the extent of the "ecclesiastical power" claimed in the department of Christian education, it seems to us, then, that to deny that this belongs to the Church, is equivalent to a denial of her right to put forth any organized efforts, in behalf of these other and kindred objects.

As we cannot come to that conclusion, but one other remains,

and that is, that whatever exceptions may be taken to isolated expressions, or particular arguments, in the publications of the Board, or of its friends, yet, the educational policy of the Church, as defined in the resolutions of the General Assembly, and the more recent explanations of the Board, is not justly liable to the opposition which, through misapprehension, it has encountered. Your committee would therefore conclude this Report, by recommending the following resolutions, which are respectfully submitted to the decision of Synod.

1. Resolved, That, as the aiding of candidates for the Gospel ministry, is the primary object for which the Board of Education was established, so it should also be the prominent one, in all the efforts and appeals of the Board, and in the contributions of the churches to its funds.

2. Resolved, That whereas the Board has been made the organ of the General Assembly, for aiding in the establishment and support of Christian schools, academies, and colleges, under the care of the judicatories of our Church, this object may also be commended as worthy of the enlightened liberality of those whom God has enabled and disposed to contribute to this special purpose.

3. That the supervision and control of educational institutions, by the courts of the Church, is not essential to the attainment of the great object, the religious education of our youth; and those institutions already established within our bounds, where sound learning is combined with Christian influence, should enjoy the confidence of our people, as unreservedly as if more formally connected with any of the judicatories of the Church.

4. Resolved, That whatever diversity of opinion may exist, in regard to certain of the views and arguments, advanced in former publications of the Board, yet in the educational policy of the Church, as defined in the resolutions of the General Assembly, and explained in the last Report of the Board, we find no ground for suspicion of the Board, or further controversy in the Church.

ARTICLE VIII.

ON THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE IN COLLEGES.

BY THE REV. THOMAS E. THOMAS, D.D.*

Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees, and fellow-citizens :

The Institution over which I have been called to preside, whose interests I have this day undertaken, in conjunction with my re-

* It may, perhaps, be necessary, on account of one or two allusions in the following pages, to say, that the author would by no means oppose the study of the Greek and Latin classic authors. He sees no inconsistency in the sentiments quoted, on page 89, from Sir William Jones. He only desires that the Sacred Classics may not be wholly excluded from a course of instruction, in which Pagan writings occupy a large and engrossing share of attention.

[This Address was delivered by Dr. Thomas, on the occasion of his inauguration to the office of President of Hanover College, Ind., in 1850. Dr. Thomas is now a Professor in the New Albany Theological Seminary.—ED.]