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REPLY

TO THE ATTACK OF

REV. R. J. BRECKINRIDGE, D.D., LL.D.,

UPON THE

LOUISVILLE PRESBYTERY,

AND

DEFENCE

OF THE

"DECLARATION AND TESTIMONY,"

MADE IN THE

SYNOD OF KENTUCKY,

OCTOBER 16, A. D., 1865.

BY SAMUEL R. WILSON,
PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LOUISVILLE.

LOUISVILLE:

HANNA & DUNCAN, PRINTERS, CORNER MAIN AND THIRD STREETS.

1865.

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REPLY AND DEFENCE.

MR. MODERATOR: It was said by those who introduced the business now before us, that it was not of their own seeking. If this be true of them, how much more truly may it be said of us. To myself at least, the position in which I am now compelled to stand, is both undesirable and unexpected. It is a position not of my own procuring, and which, had it been left to my own choice to decide, I most assuredly should have declined to occupy. Yet, since it is forced upon me, I am not at liberty to evade it, nor shall I shrink from the responsibility it involves. At the desire of the members of the Louisville Presbytery, who have been so unceremoniously dragged before this Synod, I am to say something in vindication of their action in the matter for which they are now arraigned. I can only wish their cause had been confided to abler hands; but it has not seemed to me that I could altogether refuse to speak in their behalf, as God may give me ability.

The Presbytery of Louisville has been brought before this Synod, not by their own purpose or consent, but upon the motion of others. It was not proposed by them to trouble the Synod with those matters, into which we have been so suddenly precipitated, by the motion now pending. At least it was not intended to press these matters upon the attention of this venerable body, in a manner so hasty and unpropitious as that in which they have now been forced upon us. And therefore, here in the very outset, we cannot but enter our most earnest protest against the unusual manner in which we have been placed, as it were, on trial at the bar of this Synod. I beg you to listen attentively to the reading of the paper offered by the gentleman on the other side of the house, (Dr. R. J. Breckinridge,) and consider how summary is that pro-



cess upon which we have been required to stand here and make answer for our very existence as a Presbytery. The Resolution is as follows :

"In making up the roll of the members of this Synod for the transaction of business, it is necessary to determine the ecclesiastical status of those office-bearers which constituted the majority of the Presbytery of Louisville at its late regular session, and a number of whom executed and published a paper styled the 'Declaration and Testimony,' which paper was endorsed and adopted by the majority of said Presbytery. In discharge of this duty this Synod adjudge and determine that said action by the majority of the said Presbytery endorsing and adopting said 'Declaration and Testimony,' and all such office-bearers, under the care and jurisdiction of this Synod as having executed and published it, or as shall hereafter do so, did and do each and every one, by said acts, ASSUME SUCH A STATE OF OPEN REBELLION AGAINST THE CHURCH, AND OPEN CONTEMPT AND DEFIANCE OF OUR SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY, AND IN SUCH CONTEMPT OF OUR FAITH AND ORDER AND ACTS AS TO RENDER EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM UNQUALIFIED, UNFIT, AND INCOMPETENT TO SIT AND ACT AS A MEMBER OF THIS OR ANY OTHER COURT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH."

Moderator, you have heard in that resolution, the heaviest charges that could be brought against a gospel minister, laid at the door of the Louisville Presbytery. Yes, I say against the Louisville Presbytery, not one of the least of the Presbyteries which compose this Synod. True, indeed, the author of that resolution does not use that form of expression, he says the "majority of the Presbytery," and has appeared very tenacious of his chosen form. Well, sir, that only aggravates the course of procedure adopted toward us, for it thus becomes a specific charge against individuals. It is not a proposal to bear testimony against erroneous doctrines or practices as prevailing in the Louisville Presbytery, but according to the showing of the gentleman, (Dr. B.) it is the arraignment of particular persons by name, and a proposal that without trial, their guilt being assumed, sentence shall be at once passed upon them, and immediate execution follow. The charges against "each and every one" of these persons are the being in "a state of open rebellion against the church;" in "open contempt and defiance of her scriptural authority;" and in "contempt of her faith, order and acts." The sentence proposed to be passed and executed, even upon the very threshold of your proceedings, is, that each and every one of these persons thus charged "is unqualified, unfit, and incompetent to sit and act as a member of this or any other court of the Presbyterian Church." Surely this is an extraordinary step, thus to attempt to hale to the bar of this house, the great body of a Presbytery, for acts done in open Presbytery; to put them upon trial, not as a Presbytery, but as individuals, and that with-

out attending to any of the forms, or assuming any of the responsibilities required by the fundamental law of the Presbyterian Church, in bringing process against a gospel minister. I mean the grave responsibilities assumed by one who undertakes to become the prosecutor of a minister. Read, sir, from your Book of Discipline, chap. v. sec. 7, "The prosecutor of a minister shall be previously warned, that if he fail to prove the charges, he must himself be censured as a slanderer of the gospel ministry, in proportion to the malignancy or rashness that shall appear in the prosecution."

An attempt has been made to justify this extraordinary procedure, upon the ground, as is alleged, that the action of those against whom it is taken, is itself extraordinary. We admit that extraordinary diseases require extraordinary remedies, provided ordinary means of cure will not meet the exigencies of the case. If the Presbytery have been guilty of an unusual and unwarranted procedure in the utterance of that document, on account of which it is proposed to deal so summarily with a portion of its members, and cut them off and cast them out of the church, then the objection which we make to the manner of bringing us here to answer to this heavy indictment, will necessarily lose much of its weight. But we deny that what we have done, is, in the circumstances, either unusual or unwarranted; but, as we shall presently endeavor to show, and have great confidence we shall be able to show, to your entire satisfaction, it is the ordinary, time-honored method by which the church from age to age has been purified from corruption, and has maintained her character as God's faithful witness for the truth.

The extraordinary nature of this procedure against which we protest, is made the more manifest since it was known, as we suppose from what has transpired in this house, that the very action of the Presbytery, which lies at the foundation of the resolution under consideration, was made the ground of a complaint to the Synod, by a member of the Presbytery, with the view of bringing the whole matter under your adjudication. Why then stop the business of the Synod *in limine*, with a question involving such vital and such widely extended interests? Why anticipate the regular course of proceeding under the complaint? Why ask a decision by this Synod upon the ministerial standing and character, now and hereafter, of so many ministers and ruling elders of the Presbyterian Church, upon a motion touching "the making up of the roll of the members of this Synod?" The course pursued by the

complainant (Dr. McMillan) has this advantage at least, of attempting to reach the merits of this case in one of the ways provided in your Form of Government, and Book of Discipline. It covers precisely the same ground with the resolution of the gentleman (Dr. B.), as the following extract sufficiently proves:

"The paper, presented by Rev. S. R. Wilson, D. D., and adopted by Presbytery, on the 2d inst., styled a "Testimony, &c.," and calling for a Church "convention," in order to reclaim an alleged "apostasy," or else set up an organization separate and distinct from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, I consider, incorrect in statement—heretical in doctrine—contumacious in spirit—schismatical in effect—and agitating in tendency."

There is a singular identity between these two papers, both contain the same charges substantially, the complaint using more words, but stating them with equal force and distinctness with the Resolution. The complaint, however, does not, like the Resolution, undertake to prescribe the punishment to be inflicted for the offenses charged. It comes, however, much to the same thing. For nothing can be plainer than this, that if the Synod should sustain the charges as affirmed in the complaint, the Presbytery must either retrace their steps, or be cut off in the regular and inevitable course of discipline. If we have uttered heretical doctrines, have solemnly set our hands to falsehood, and are promoters of schism in the body of Christ, then unless we repent of these sins our sentence cannot be at all doubtful. I wish just here and now to fix this fact firmly in the mind of every member of this Synod, for I am apprehensive lest some may think they can sustain the complaint as well founded, and yet stop short of the judgment which it is sought to have pronounced by the method of ecclesiastical court-martial procedure, indicated in the paper of Dr. Breckinridge. Let it be distinctly borne in mind, Moderator and brethren, that these two papers differ little more than in name, and when you shall have considered the one, you will in effect have decided the subject matter of the other. In what I have to say, I expect to have them both in view. Our answer to each, is one and the same answer. They rest upon a common foundation, are actuated by a common spirit, they aim at a common end. We expect to treat their contents as the same in the argument we propose to make, and to show the baselessness of the charges they prefer. And if we shall succeed in convincing you that the allegations in the Resolution of the gentleman (Dr. B.) are destitute of solid foundation, and that the action he proposes cannot be taken in truth and justice, then it

will be for the Synod to determine what shall be done with the complaint. For though we have felt called upon at the outset to express clearly our objection to the manner in which we have been arraigned, I am sure I speak the views and feelings of the Presbytery when I say, we are entirely willing to meet the issue as others have chosen to make it for us and for themselves. If, after having thus met it, this Synod should wish to try the issue over again, we shall not be careful to answer in the matter.

Mr. Moderator: It strikes us as not a little singular, that we *wicked* brethren of the Louisville Presbytery, who, we are told, have set ourselves to *fight out the rebellion over again*, should thus be singled out from all the other Presbyteries of this Synod, (though we may take it as rather an honorable distinction,) to be dealt with after such a fashion. Why call upon these brethren of the Ebenezer Presbytery, and the West Lexington Presbytery, to sit in judgment upon the Louisville Presbytery, when the records of those respective Presbyteries in evidence here, show beyond a question, that they are substantially "as deep in the mud as we are in the mire?" That torrent of reproach and wrath which has been poured upon us, ought, in justice and equity, to have been divided out and sprinkled upon all these brethren, who have condemned the General Assembly's acts, and refused to obey or execute its orders. It is not at all a marvel to me, that this call should come from the source or be made under the circumstances in which it has been made; but with all respect for this venerable body, I do marvel that it was entertained for a single moment, and not at once returned to the person who introduced it. I marvel that these brethren did not see, that the guillotine which was to come down upon our heads, would go up again and come down on theirs, unless they should get out of the way very quickly. Or can it be, that, by the sacrifice which it is demanded shall be made of us, it is supposed expiation will be effected for their offences, and thus they will escape the punishment they have incurred? And is this the source of that pain and agony of heart, under which, the gentleman has told us, he was constrained to bring forward this motion? Is this that even-handed justice—that scrupulous regard to what is fair and equitable, which again and again it has been solemnly affirmed has actuated this whole proceeding? Even-handed justice! to ask sentence of condemnation against a part of this body, and leave unquestioned and untouched those others who have done the same things; aye, sir, to propose that they shall

become jurors, judges, and executioners of their brethren, when they themselves are partakers of the same guilt! This indeed is the sort of justice that has much prevailed of late years; perhaps the justice with which the gentleman, (Dr. B.) is most familiar, but sir, the worst that I could ever wish might happen to him would be, that he should become the victim of his own principles.

The importance of the issue now made is manifest to every one. The thrill of interest which runs through the heart of this great people, is indicated by the assiduousness with which they have come to this place day after day, and watched your proceedings. It is no ordinary issue, and you know it, brethren. We knew it was no ordinary issue that we made, when we uttered that "Declaration and Testimony." One single fact now patent to us, shows that that paper is no ordinary paper, as to its bearing upon the great question upon which God in his Providence has brought us. We admit that it is a question of life and death, not to these poor bodies of ours, but to God's blessed Church; a question, according to the gentleman's statement, of the life of our souls; a question certainly, which takes hold upon the heart of this Christian people, because they know that if decided against the truth, on whichever side the truth may lie, the consequences, no one can predict.

The plea of extraordinary necessity has been set up here, in defence of that short and summary course proposed to be adopted, against the signers of the "Declaration and Testimony." To this plea a sufficient response might be made, by putting one necessity against another—the necessity of doing something, promptly and decidedly, to rescue the Church from threatened ruin. If the measures to which we resorted were extraordinary, we might reply, the condition of the Church was such, as in our judgment demanded just such measures. But now, Mr. Moderator, instead of the course taken by us for maintaining the truth of God against corruptions in the visible church, being in any proper sense extraordinary, it is the ordinary, and indeed almost the only way, in which the people of God have maintained a clear testimony for His truth against error, throughout successive generations. The testimony of the faithful witnesses of God against error and corruption, along the lapse of centuries, is that which sheds a line of glorious light over those centuries, otherwise darkened by the overshadowing and gigantic powers of this world; and of the corrupted visible church, inspired by the powers of darkness. I

need not dwell on so plain and simple a historical fact, with which every theological student but just entered upon his course, and every well instructed child in a Presbyterian family are familiar. The "witnesses for the truth" through the dark ages, were men of Declarations and Testimonies—men of Acts and Testimonies, like many brethren here—like the gentleman, who says that we are guilty of rebellion and contumacy for uttering this our testimony.

You probably thought it strange that I should put in here such an antiquated document as this, which bears the title, "*Memorial upon the present State of the Presbyterian Church, to be presented to the General Assembly to meet in Philadelphia in May, 1834.*" But sir, this Memorial is filled with declarations of error in doctrine, practice and discipline. You perhaps thought it strange when I read the "Act and Testimony" of the *minority* of the General Assembly, and others, issued at Philadelphia, May 27, 1834, addressed to the ministers, elders and private members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Now compare this with the title of the "Declaration and Testimony," and there is just as much difference between these two titles, and just as much difference between the contents of these two documents, as might be expected between two documents which shake hands across a period of thirty years, and as might be expected from the differences of the times, the errors and the emergencies which called them forth. And who were the Memorialists of 1833-4, and the "Act and Testimony" men of 1834-5? I find here the names of *R. J. Breckinridge! W. L. Breckinridge! J. L. Wilson! Samuel Cassey!* (who has signed his name to this "Declaration and Testimony," and is to be cut off for it!) and others of like courage and views of right. Is it not strange, sir, that one whose fame has rested to so great a degree upon the reputation of being the author of the "Act and Testimony" of 1834-5, should be the person of all others, with such hasty zeal, to call for an act of discipline against those who have adopted the "Declaration and Testimony" of 1865. With such an illustrious example before us, we may well exclaim "*Lord, what a feeble piece, is this our mortal frame!*" Human nature is indeed fallible, and we do not say that if we should live thirty years, we may not outlive our doctrines, and learn to persecute and prosecute men who shall thus testify for the faith. Yet, sir, it does seem strange, that gentlemen should arraign this Presbytery of Louisville, for doing the very same thing at Bardstown, that they did in 1834 in Philadelphia! Perhaps the longitude

makes the difference! Oh! if we had only lived in that enlightened "city of brotherly love"—that "loyal" city, and not in poor "secession" Louisville! I marvel, Moderator, that a man can be so blinded by the passion of the hour to those principles, for which, I really believe, under other circumstances some of them would die.

I wish, sir, to say something about the origin of this "Declaration and Testimony," because it has been attributed to such a source, and to such iniquitous purposes, as to make it necessary that we should glance for a moment at this matter. It is only necessary to point you to the acts of the Presbyteries who have reported their action upon the subject, and which compose the principal portion of this Synod, to show that it was the spontaneous outspeaking of the souls of men, who felt that they must speak, even though they should speak something that was not quite to the purpose, for the sake of God's truth and God's Church. All previous efforts, as that record of evidence that was read this morning shows, had been ineffectual to stay the progress of our church downward in the career, as we do most truly believe, of ruin. The protests in the Assembly of 1861, against the action of that body, the protest of this Synod, the protests of the Presbyteries, had no effect. Next year the Assembly went farther, and every succeeding year still farther, and the last year some of us thought she had quite gone over the precipice. The Niagara river is beautiful; it is as smooth as a silver lake; but put your bark upon it, and refuse to listen to the voice warning you from the shore that the rapids are at hand, and you will certainly plunge over the cataract. Your bark will go to ruin, though you may sing songs to yourself, and deride him who lifts the warning voice. Thus there is such a thing as the accumulating of sin, until the last sinful act brings with it the punishment of all that precedes. So has it been with our beloved Presbyterian Church. Warned from year to year she continued to go on in her downward course. And when a few of us stood up in the Assembly at Pittsburg, and said, "Brethren, stop! stop!" we were derided and almost put out of the house without ceremony, as heathen and publicans. Still hoping that she had not yet taken the final plunge, and that perhaps, the great Head of the Church would help us to stem the torrent, and make safely fast to the shore, we uttered our "Declaration and Testimony." And, sir, we are to die for it; I much mistake these brethren if they will not die for it. No matter who penned it—no matter who proposed it, or published it—this is the origin of it. We may

be mistaken—we may be blinded, but that sir was truly the object and origin of this “Declaration and Testimony.”

As to our right to do this thing, it is sufficient just to remind you of the evidence I have brought here from the History of the Presbyterian Church itself; to recall you to the Acts and Monuments in Foxe’s Book of Martyrs; to the witnesses in the dark ages, to the Testimonies of the Confessors of old Scotland, and the lives and deaths of such men, as the Erskines, Gillespie, Donald Cargill, and others. Is there a minister, is there a ruling elder here, who will say that we had no *right* to utter this testimony? Why, it is one of the glories of that “Act and Testimony” of 1834, brethren of the eldership, that your names outnumber, by long lists, the names of the ministers. Will you of the eldership, who can look back and see God’s ruling elders, like the illustrious Argyle, going to the scaffold for the Crown and Covenant of Jesus Christ, say that we had no right to utter this testimony? Some will answer, “You had the right, but we are afraid you spoke a little too sharply.” Well! perhaps the disease needed it; but will you condemn us merely because we were a little sharp, and because you may think we put the probe a little too deep, when you confess that the wound was festering?

It seemed to me that, in the argument which occupied the afternoon of yesterday, however the *tone* might be changed the *tune* was the same. Schism and secession and rebellion—rebellion, secession and schism. This movement is meant to divide the churches. Such is the outcry rung in your ears. It has often been said that history repeats itself, and I think it does; at all events I think it is going to repeat itself now. The outcry against the “Act and Testimony” of 1835, was just as it is in the present instance. “Schism,” “schism,” “schism.” I hold in my hands a volume of pamphlets containing “*Letters addressed to the members of the Presbyterian Church under the care of the Synod of Kentucky,*” by my much esteemed friend and brother, Dr. William L. Breckinridge, and issued (strange to say) at Danville in 1835. Its object was to defend the “Act and Testimony,” and on the very forefront is a defense against this charge of schism. I wish you to see in what an outspoken, manly, old-fashioned Presbyterian way he meets the charge against *his Testimony*, that it was the result of a *conspiracy*, the offspring of a *caucus*, and was intended to promote *division in the Church*. These charges came from diverse quarters, even from Princeton itself. As to the charge of “caucus,” the answer which he makes is, that the meeting out of

which the "Act and Testimony" grew, was a public open meeting. And on this point let me say, that if it had been gotten up amongst a few, before public notice was given—if it had been gotten up by a "caucus," if you please, in a cave amongst the hills of old Pennsylvania, it would not have hurt the thing a bit, it might have been all the better, indeed, if the military had been abroad and on the hunt of these witnesses, as in the days of Claverhouse, and there were danger lest their "Act and Testimony" would be strangled in its birth by the strong arm of military despotism.* So that if it were true that our "Declaration and Testimony" had been prepared and signed in a secret caucus, there might be in these days of Martial Law, very good reasons for such a course; and this ought to give it all the more potency, when it was known, that the moment it saw the light its signers were liable to be seized by the strong hand of military power, upheld and encouraged perhaps, by patriotic ecclesiastics.

As to the charge made against the authors of the "Act and Testimony" that they designed to promote a division of the Church, here is the answer of Dr. Breckinridge:

"But if you call it schism, honestly and fervently to love the form of sound words which we have received, to pray and labor for the extension of our church upon rational and scriptural principles, and to wish that they would be gone from her bosom who reject her doctrines, who have destroyed her peace, who have corrupted her purity and are retarding her prosperity—then am I a schismatic—and as David replied to the scoffings of the daughter of that false hearted king, who had corrupted Israel, 'if this be vile, I will yet be more vile than thou.' * * * My opinion is that if the errors which prevail in our church be not driven out, it will be divided, it ought to be divided. * * * Believing like a good Republican, in the honesty of the people, I trusted that this measure (Act and Testimony) so far from mutilating the body in those members which are uninjured or curable, would result, by the blessing of God, in the sloughing off of those parts alone, which were rotten beyond hope of recovery. No, brethren, we deprecate division. We are laboring to avert the necessity of such a measure. I confess that when I contemplate the condition of our beloved church, I am sometimes filled with despondency. But such melancholy forebodings as often force themselves upon me, I would not indulge. * * * I would trust first in God and then in you, that all will yet be well. * * * I would trust that our gracious Father, by the instrumentality of His people will save this branch of His church. But brethren, if so, you must examine this subject, you must see the posture of affairs, you must feel the danger, and the remedy is at hand."—LETTER I.

"It affords me no satisfaction to behold such a mass of corruption.

* It was stated in Synod, by Rev. Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, that it was first adopted by a committee, who met in a *Grave Yard*, somewhere in Philadelphia, the chairman sitting on the tombstone of old John Ross, the author of a Greek Grammar, written in Latin, &c.

Would to God, that it could not be found in all our borders. * * * But it is of no avail to close our eyes against the evils that abound, and that are thickening upon us. As well might the mariner stop his ears against the howling of the tempest and yet hope to be saved. As well might the trader shut his books and forget his impending bankruptcy, and yet hope to prosper in his business. * * * I believe it is yet in the power of the people, under God to save this beautiful and sacred fabric. Rally then in earnest around the truths which we all profess to love, but which so many have trampled in the dust. Lift up from their degradation and plant firmly where they ought to stand our dishonored and precious standards. * * * There have been glorious prospects opened before our church, but these must all be blasted, and its hope must perish, unless its purity be restored. We must come back to the standards which have been forsaken, and those who will not; who like the vagrant prophet, are wandering in some other track, and fleeing from God's truth, must be seized in whatever ship they may have sought a passage, and be hurled overboard, that thus they may hush the roarings of the storm, which their own madness has gathered. Yes, brethren, Jonah's delinquencies have invited the storm, and Jonah's punishment must appease it. We, (and I mean to include all of you who are sound) we who have been *falsely* accused as the authors of this uproar, have no right to permit the system of truth which we love, to be destroyed. We will become guilty only when we fold our hands and let the wanderer dream on, and let the beautiful vessel perish. May God give us grace to quit ourselves like men?"—LETTER II.

Mr. Moderator: Let any candid man read this and compare it with what we have said in the Declaration, and then say, upon his conscience, whether the charge against us, is not as utterly without foundation as it was against the gentlemen in their day. Of course two such papers, springing out of the necessities of the times and drawn by men living a generation apart, would differ in phraseology and in the particular views expressed, according as the errors to be met and the circumstances and emergencies of the times might differ; but if their spirit and intent are not the same, then I do not understand in what language it could be expressed and am incapable of using it with accuracy. Sir, we accept and adopt substantially as our answer to the *false* accusation of schism and being the authors of this uproar, the answer of Dr. W. L. Breckinridge to the same charges made against those who prepared and published the "Act and Testimony" in 1834.

It is charged that this movement is in the interests of secession and the rebellion, though rebellion and secession, we are told, are dead. Solomon says "a living dog is better than a dead lion," and I suppose upon that principle, if we are acting in the interests of secession, we are the maddest fools that ever lived. Why, the gentleman had better have brought in a motion that this Synod ask the court to institute an inquest of insanity in our behalf. He ought to have dealt with us as

gently as with a sick man out of his head. There never was anything more preposterous. Rebellion and secession dead and we come in, in this solemn way and at the time when we uttered this testimony, run the risk of a very summary process to settle the question, and all, as the gentleman has said, for a dead and rotten thing. I can hardly trespass upon your patience to argue the question after that showing. But then, this charge of being in the interest of rebellion, is an old charge; and again we see that history repeats itself. The persecutions of God's people have almost uniformly been made just in this way. Brand a man as a heretic, and then mix it up with the cry of sedition, and the Provost Marshal's guards will be available. Here is a book—Rutherford's *Lex Rex*—that was burned by the common hangman; its author was pursued into his grave like a hunted sparrow; and yet here it stands the great repository, not merely of ecclesiastical liberty, but of the foundation principles of civil liberty. And, sir, why was he hunted? He was advocating the liberty of God's Church, and the Crown Rights of Jesus, and because he advocated the liberty of God's Church he was pronounced seditious—and sedition, in the gentleman's vocabulary, means secession. And what was his response to this charge? You shall hear it, and you may accept it as ours:

"Who doubteth, Christian reader, but innocency must be under the courtesy and mercy of malice, and that it is a real martyrdom to be brought under the lawless inquisition of the bloody tongue. Christ, the prophets, and apostles of our Lord, went to heaven with the note of traitors, seditious men, and such as turned the world upside down; calumnies of treason to Cæsar were an ingredient in Christ's cup, and therefore the author is the more willing to drink of that cup that touches His lips, who is our glorious Forerunner; what if conscience toward God, and credit with men, cannot both go to heaven with the saints, the author is satisfied with the former companion, and is willing to dismit the other. Truth to Christ cannot be treason to Cæsar, and for His choice He judgeth truth to have a nearer relation to Christ Jesus, than the transcendent and boundless power of a mortal prince.—*Preface to Rutherford's Lex Rex.*

Yes, we are to go to judgment and execution at the hands of this Synod, on the ground of our being secessionists, because we allege that Jesus Christ is sole King in His Church, and that Cæsar cannot touch his ark without bringing down his lightnings of wrath; and that Cæsar is the sole judge in his own kingdom, and the church cannot touch his rights without bringing Christ's judgments upon her—and that is the principle this book maintains and defends in so masterly a manner, that no answer could be found to it but the stake and the gibbet.

A leading motive of the eagerness and the Brevity in uttering this "Declaration and Testimony," was the conviction of the fearful extent to which the church, in its ministry and courts, had gone from the truth and the liberty with which Christ has endowed his commonwealth, and from that purity without which she ceases to be the spouse of Christ; and the firm persuasion that nothing would meet the demands of the crisis but a call that could not fail to be rousing. There had been protests and dissents—a resolution here and there, saying very little—men hardly speaking above their breath; fatal compromise papers had been passed, until they had become tiresome as well as inoperative; and we thought that when we spoke, the trumpet should give no uncertain sound. Some of us, had lifted our voices against these errors, at the beginning, clearly and unequivocally; but the most seemed to shrink back. They said, "we agree with your sentiments, but the time has not come to utter them." We waited and waited to hear these watchmen upon Zion's walls sound the alarm, that the enemy was coming in like a flood, until we began to think that the watchmen themselves were gone to sleep; and so, some of us became persuaded that we ought to lift a warning voice such as would arouse the church. And therefore we spoke plainly and unequivocally. And now there are many, very many ministers and elders and private members in all parts of the church, who still say "we agree with every principle you have affirmed and we admit there is great danger, but there are some harsh expressions in the Declaration." Are there none in the acts of the General Assembly? Are there none in the gentleman's speech? God sent Jeremiah to sound an alarm in the ears of backsliding Israel; read his testimony and warnings, and see if there is anything harsh in them? Read the controversy in Elijah's time. Read Isaiah. Brethren, it will not do to condemn this paper, because there are in it some terms that you would not have used. No doubt, if Dr. Breckinridge or the author of the celebrated Stanton Memorial had written it, it would have been full of the milk or oil of human kindness! We designed to make ourselves heard; we designed to wake up these brethren in Danville, who, the war being over, were liable to go to sleep, and leave the church to go to ruin.

It was remarked on the other side of the house, that the points were infinite. And it seemed to me, whatever might be defective in the declaration and testimony, which we are endeavoring to bring you to see in the light in which we see

it, that was as high a compliment to its contents and its importance as could possibly have been paid, even though it was not intended. Yes, the points are infinite, and they are of infinite importance. In this view I shall proceed with the argument I designed to make upon this subject.

And I observe, in the outset, that this is not a question of mere strife about words to no profit. It is no mere contention between persons alienated, perhaps, by feelings that we ought not to indulge; or whether alienated or not, divided one from the other by the causes which separate professing Christian men in this world. This is not a question to be settled by quibble, by jest, by an *ad captandum* appeal to popular passion. No sir, it is a question to be settled by proof. It is a question to be settled by argument, real substantial argument, that shall address itself to the understandings and the consciences of men. And, though I feel conscious of my own inability to do justice to the matters before us in either of these points of view, it shall be my aim to deal with them as in this light. Whatever may seem to have a personal application on my part, will arise from the fact, that I have been preceded in such a manner in this discussion, as that it is impossible to do justice to the truth, without sometimes appearing to be personal, or making a personal application in what I say.

This "Declaration and Testimony" is addressed to "the Ministers, Ruling Elders and members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States." It contains an introduction, it contains a declaration of facts, it contains a statement of errors, it bears testimony against those errors, it assigns certain reasons for this testimony, it lays down principles which it affirms to be scriptural and fundamental, it seeks to arouse the church to a just sense of the ruin with which she is threatened, and it then proposes certain measures in order to eradicate the errors which are alleged to exist, and to maintain the principles which are affirmed to be according to the Word of God and the Constitution of the Church.

The introduction opens in these words:

"BELOVED BRETHREN:—The occasion upon which we address you is one of no ordinary interest to the Church of our Lord Jesus. For several years past, that Church in this country has been departing farther and farther from both the spirit and the plain letter of her commission, to 'preach the Gospel to every creature,' and her charter as a 'Kingdom not of this world.' The Presbyterian branch of the Church—that which we stand immediately connected with—for which our fathers labored, and suffered and prayed; and whose doctrine and order we have loved above all things else on earth, sadly disappointing our most sanguine hopes, and recreant to her principles and ancient testimonies, has essay-

ed to take the lead in this grievous departure from the faith and practice enjoined by her King and Head, and solemnly professed in her confession and catechisms and symbols Step by step she has gone away from the old paths, despite every warning and entreaty addressed to her by those who have still remained faithful, until we have reason to fear, it will be in vain to attempt to bring her back again to the way of truth from which she has departed.

Thus, in the very forefront of this document there stands, as you have heard, an expression of a feeling of attachment to the church universal, and to the Presbyterian Church in particular—which, unless it be assumed, as it does seem to me to have been assumed, that those who have made this declaration are hypocrites of the deepest and darkest dye, must show, that at least we were acting under a profound attachment to the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the church of our fathers. That it was a moment of profound interest to our Church, and that she had reached a point in her history of no ordinary importance, no one on the opposite side of the house, I presume, will at all call in question. And unless we are to be regarded as the most insincere of men, it must be admitted, that in this movement we were actuated by a conviction of the imminent danger which threatened our Church, and a love for those principles upon which she was founded, and from which, we believed, she had grievously departed. But to put this beyond all question, we go on to say farther :

“ It is, therefore, under a deep conviction of the imperative call made upon us, to bear a clear and unequivocal testimony against this departure of the Church from her ancient faith and order, that we have drawn up and do now publish to the world this solemn DECLARATION and TESTIMONY, that so we may acquit ourselves of all complicity, with that subversion of the Law of Christ's Kingdom and surrender of the Crown Rights of Zion's King, on account of which, the name and honor of our Lord are this day everywhere blasphemed. If we can do nothing more than clear ourselves from the guilt of so great a crime, we shall have thereby secured ourselves from a participation in its punishment. Yet, by the blessing of God upon our efforts in this behalf, we shall not despair of so rallying the faithful friends of a Pure and Free Church, around the Banner which God has given us 'to be displayed because of the Truth,' as to be able to defeat in great measure the schemes of those, who seem by their acts to be saying, concerning the beautiful and holy temple of our fathers, 'Rase it, rase it even to the foundation thereof.' ”

Now, Mr. Moderator, this is a specimen of the manner in which we open up that Testimony, which you are told, has for its object to divide the Church. Here is the first stone in the foundation of that formidable fortress of schism and sedition, which it was represented to this Synod as about to be erected by the Louisville Presbytery, from which the Presbyterian Church might be assailed and her unity destroyed. But, sir,

is the representation true? Has it even the shadow of truth to give it plausibility or credence? Most assuredly it has not.

Having indicated the motives and aims by which we were governed in the adopting and uttering of our Testimony, we proceed to specify the errors against which we feel constrained to bear witness. And to what we have affirmed respecting these errors, the evidence of their widespread existence, their nature and the principles to which they are antagonistic, I solicit a careful attention. For it is upon the validity or invalidity of what is here asserted on all these points, that the decision of this whole question must rest, if that decision is to be according to truth, and not the mere verdict of passion and prejudice.

The first error which is alleged to exist, and against which we testify, is "*the assumption on the part of the Courts of the Church, of the right to decide questions of State policy.*" In proof of this assertion, we have cited you to documents duly authenticated—they have been laid upon your table, and some of them read in your hearing—the acts of Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies. It would have been only too easy, had a little more time been allowed us, to have accumulated this evidence. But it seems to me enough has been given to satisfy this body upon that point.

In special, and as conclusive proof of the assumption charged, we have cited the first opening Act of the General Assembly of our Church, the Spring Resolutions of 1861. It is this act which lies at the foundation of all others, the germ, the *proton pseudos* of all those errors, which we complain of as having subsequently been endorsed, sanctioned and made law in the Church by its Supreme Judicatory. And in this, our judgment of that act, many then concurred who seem since to have become advocates of the same errors. In support of our views, we cite here from a protest against the passage of the Spring Resolutions, at the head of which stands the name of Dr. Hodge. We do not cite that paper because Dr. Hodge's name is at the head of it; that is a mere accident. The probability is, that he wrote the original draft of that protest; and when a man writes the original draft of a protest, it is usual for his name to stand at the head of it. We cite it to show, that the opinions held in 1861 by the 58 brethren who signed that protest drawn up and presented by Dr. Hodge, are precisely those which are set forth in this "Declaration and Testimony;" and that, instead of being the leaders in "rebellion"

against the church (if this be rebellion,) these leaders anticipated us by five years, and some of these are brethren whom I believe are now on this floor. One of them, (Dr. W. C. Matthews,) I understand to be in the attitude of an enemy to this "Declaration and Testimony" because it is rebellious against the Church. How will that gentleman meet his own protest? Will he condemn us in 1865, for doing and saying what he did and said in 1861?

In this declaration we say, that the Assembly has "assumed" the right to decide questions of State policy. What do the protestants say? They say "that the Assembly does decide the political question, to what Government the allegiance of Presbyterians as citizens is due, is undeniable. This *political* question which agitates and divides the country, is not a question which this Assembly has a right to decide. This is a matter clearly beyond its jurisdiction." "That the Assembly does not only decide the political question referred to, but makes that decision a term of membership in our Church is no less clear. In our judgment, in so doing they violate the constitution of the Church and usurp the prerogative of its Divine Master." Mark that! "*Usurp the prerogative of its Divine Master!*" Mark well these pregnant words; let them fasten upon your memories and sink down into your hearts. Such are the utterances of Drs. Hodge, and Backus, and MATTHEWS, and HAWTHORN, and CHEEK, and Harbison, and their fellow protestants. And sir, what more have we said, what more could we say than this, that the Assembly had decided questions of State policy, and by so doing had *violated the constitution of the Church, and USURPED THE PREROGATIVE OF JESUS CHRIST HER HEAD!* Sir, is this a light thing to usurp Christ's power and authority in His kingdom? Is it a small matter? Is it something that can be allowed to stand, and the Church not be scathed and withered for it by the judgments of her offended Lord? What greater crime can we charge against the Pope of Rome himself, than this, that he has usurped the prerogative of Christ? And yet this is the charge which was made by these brethren in 1861, for merely reiterating which, they now arraign us as rebels against the Church and the State, and as acting in the interest of schism and secession. Nay more, this Synod is asked to declare the Presbytery of Louisville outlawed and outcast, for testifying against that which, as you have heard in the record read, the Synod itself in 1861, solemnly pronounced *contrary to the constitution of the Church and to the word of God!* And all this was said right in the face of the

General Assembly itself. Did the Assembly cite these brethren and say that they were unfit to sit any longer in the church courts? Have they turned Dr. Hodge out of Princeton as a secessionist and schismatic? I have never heard of their doing any thing of the kind.

We cited this Protest, not because it proves anything in itself, but because we wished to show, that the opinions which we have held back from uttering for five years, had been solemnly affirmed in the face of the General Assembly, by almost three times as many persons as have signed this "Declaration and Testimony." Now, we say, as honest men they ought publicly to renounce what they have affirmed, or put their hands and seal to at least the first article in this declaration. Any thing else is unjust toward other men, and inconsistent with fidelity to the Master.

But did the General Assembly deny that it had undertaken to decide questions of State policy, as was, and is charged against it? Not at all; the fact was admitted, and the *right asserted*, to decide such questions. The Assembly made answer to the protest of Dr. Hodge. It was said the other day, that a want of courtesy, or something to that effect, prevented our allowing this answer to be read just at that particular time. We had our own way in which we proposed to manage this matter, and we did not wish this answer read at that time, because we did not want to occupy the time of the Synod with that, which we intended to bring forward, in connection with the proof in support of our declaration of errors.

I read now a few sentences from this answer: "That the action of the Assembly has political as well as moral bearings is readily admitted." * * "If ever there was an occasion when political questions rose into the sphere of morals and religion, the present circumstances of our beloved country are of that character." * * "The protestants deny the right of the General Assembly to decide to what Government the allegiance of Presbyterians as citizens is due. Strictly speaking, the Assembly has made no such decision. They have said nothing respecting the allegiance of the subjects of any foreign power, or that of the members of our mission churches in India or China, or elsewhere, who may hold connection with our denomination. The action complained of relates solely to American Presbyterians, citizens of these United States." *

* "We regard the action against which these protests are levelled, simply as a faithful declaration by the Assembly, of Christian duty towards those in authority over us; which adds

nothing to the terms of communion already recognized. Surely the idea of the obligation of *loyalty to our Federal Government* is no new thing to Presbyterians."

Here then, is a clear and explicit assertion of the *right and duty* to do all, and more, than the framers of the protest alleged; all that is charged in this Declaration. Here is a solemn enunciation, that the Assembly has a right to decide to what government the allegiance of a citizen is primarily due; and to make her decision as to what constitutes loyalty, authoritative as a condition of membership in the church. Nor, the right once claimed and conceded, is there any good reason why it should be limited to political affairs in the United States. The Assembly is as much bound to determine the question of allegiance for the members of the church in China, where a rebellion has been raging now for many years, as for our members in Kentucky or in Texas. Once this right admitted, and its application is unlimited as the world itself. All political questions have "moral bearings." Rebellion against the "powers that be," in China, one of the oldest, longest established and most peaceable governments in the world, is not less a crime, certainly, than rebellion against "the powers that be" in America. And why then should not the Assembly refuse to "recognize as good Presbyterians, men, whom with the approval of Christendom," the Emperor of China "may soon execute as traitors?"

Moderator, I need not press this argument further. Enough has been said to show that the right we deny has been claimed in its broadest extent, and that the claim rests upon a tissue of fallacies, which, if admitted as true, must change the whole character of our Church. Indeed, already has this claim been pushed to such an extent, that its recognition as legitimate, is to-day made a condition of good standing in the ministry and eldership of the Presbyterian Church.

The second error against which we have borne our testimony is, *that the Church, as such, owes allegiance to human Rulers or Governments.* Now, to show, that we are still following, and not leading other brethren, in the opinion that this erroneous doctrine has been propagated in the Church, I will read to you a paragraph from a protest, presented in the Assembly of 1862, and admitted to record, against the adoption by that body, of a paper of Rev. R. J. Breckinridge on the State of the Country. This protest is signed by A. P. Forman, C. D. Campbell,

JOHN L. McKEE, Henry R. Tunstall and Jacob Johnson. This is what they say :

"The idea seems to underlie the paper adopted, that the Church owes allegiance to the State, for it speaks of "loyal Presbyteries and Syneds," "loyal Church," &c. The citizen owes allegiance to the State, and is bound to uphold and maintain the civil government; but the Church, as such, owes allegiance only to the Lord Jesus Christ; his kingdom is the only kingdom she is bound to uphold—hence she can be loyal only to her own King."

Why it would seem almost, as if the person who drew up this Declaration, had quoted from this very protest, for the language is as nearly identical as is the sentiment of the two utterances. "*Allegiance or loyalty*," says the Presbytery, "*in respect to human governments, is alone predicable of persons as citizens; the Church owes her allegiance alone to Jesus Christ, who is sole King of Zion.*" And this is the true doctrine. These brethren said it in 1862, though some of them seem unwilling to affirm it now in 1865. But what becomes now of the charge that what we declare is a novelty, when we are simply echoing the words of protest which were first uttered by brethren three years ago? We give them the honor of it; we have no ambition of leadership, but are glad to follow in their steps, and to join our testimony to theirs against that error, which is still persisted in.

"The Church, as such," we say—that is the congregation of God's elect people—elect outwardly, and including the elect inwardly, constituting the whole Catholic Church, or any particular portion of that church, "owes allegiance, and allegiance can be predicated of it, *only* with respect to the Lord Jesus Christ and his laws." For instance—to make it plain, if I can, for this is perhaps the most vital point of all—you cannot say that the Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church owes allegiance to any human government. Transfer its members to China, amid the raging storm of revolution there, and they can sit down and worship the Lord Jesus Christ, according to His commandments, and do all the acts of a Church of Jesus Christ, and not utter one word in regard to which is right, whether the established government or those in rebellion against it. They could separate themselves totally from the whole question, whether it be a justifiable or an unjustifiable revolution. Upon any other principle, Christianity would have been stopped at the very threshold of the nations of the world; for at the very outset, its ministers encountered, all over the world, revolution upon revolution, Kingdom against Kingdom,

~~State against State, and people against people.~~ The Apostles would have had to stop at the boundary of every province and kingdom, in order to settle first, the question whether the revolutions then going on were justifiable or not, and to determine the question of the allegiance, of converts to Christ, to the respective conflicting powers. You see at once that it would have worked havoc in the church then; and surely not less now.

I would say here upon this point, that as I understand the matter, Jesus Christ, as a man, was never a citizen, in the proper technical, political sense of that term, in any country. He was a subject—not, as Paul was, a citizen of Rome—and having the right to appeal to Cæsar from the judgment of an inferior civil tribunal. I suppose I am right, for if Jesus had been a citizen, and Pilate had known this fact, (as the governor who sat judging Paul, knew concerning the Apostle,) that Jesus was a Roman citizen, the rude soldier who struck Him on the cheek with his mailed hand, would no more have ventured to do it, than he would have dared to strike the Emperor himself. Nor would Pilate have dared to command that He should be scourged. It is therefore, a profound mistake, to say that Jesus Christ paid tribute as a citizen, to Cæsar. I ask for the proof, from any passage in the Gospels, that Christ ever paid tribute to any human government at all. I do not say that he did not; no doubt he would, if it had been exacted of him. But the passage which is quoted to prove that he paid such tribute, refers to the poll-tax due to the temple service. And the whole force of what passed in that colloquy between Christ and Peter, and the collectors of the temple tribute, is incidentally, a splendid argument for his deity. "Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, then are the children free." As if He had said, "I am the Son of the Lord of the Temple; I belong to the royal household, and therefore, I am under no obligation to pay this tribute." "But lest we offend them," &c. Now, then, you see to what this argument brings us. Is not Jesus Christ, so to speak, the embodiment in himself of the Church, of which he is the Head, and which is His body? Is He not the Alpha and the Omega of it all? And if *in this character* he owed no allegiance to any earthly Prince, and was a citizen of the world, as He was the Son of man, is it not a fair deduction, a legitimate, and even inevitable conclusion, that the Church which represents him and is his Bride, stands in

this respect, as independent, as does her Lord and Husband?

“ We testify against the sanction given by the Church, to the perversion of the teachings of Christ and His Apostles, upon the subject of the duty of Christians, as citizens, to “ render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s,” and to “ be subject unto the higher powers.” I expected when we were about to enter upon this argument, to be put to all my knowledge, and all that I could do in the matter, with the assistance of these brethren here, to get rid of an argument, I had expected to hear made, to show that these Scriptures had not been perverted; but I am happily relieved, Mr. Moderator, for it is charged, as I understand, in the argument of the gentleman, (Dr. Breckinridge,) that the doctrine we condemn is the true doctrine, and that what we hold is the doctrine of anarchy. That our conception of civil government, as set forth in our interpretation of these passages of Scripture, is simply this, that the highest perfection of human government is ANARCHY. Well, sir, I have to say, that if our conception of human government is anarchy, it has remained for the party, which the gentleman represents, to realize that idea. We hold the doctrine; he holds the practice. We have stated the problem; he and his party have worked it out. God in His Providence, has not given us the power to attain our conception of civil government. But He has permitted these gentlemen, and those with whom they are associated in Church and State, to accomplish that, which, according to the statement, we have conceived. God kindly divides the labors of this world; He permits one to initiate an idea, and another to work it out in actual life. Sir, as I have been accustomed to view it, *the highest perfection of anarchy is Martial Law*. I regret that I am under the necessity, by the very state of the case, of so frequently—too frequently, perhaps in the judgment of some—repeating that unpleasant expression; but as I was saying, I concur with what I understand to be the opinion of some of the wisest jurists of the present and of the past, whose writings I have had opportunity to consult, and who hold that Martial Law is the *end of all law*. It is lawlessness, embodied in the lowest commander of a corporal’s guard, and in the Chief Magistrate who has buckled on his sword, and put on his crown and helmet. If I am mistaken in this opinion, it will require others than the party represented on the other side of the house, to set me right. Their dicta has no authority with me on that subject, until they produce something from those who have been, not the advocates of despotism, but the advocates of

those ideas of human liberty, which are embodied in our natural conceptions, and confirmed, as far as God's word teaches upon the subject, in the rights and liberty which he has given to His Church. Until there shall be adduced from some such source something to controvert our views, I must be pardoned, if I do not bow down to the statements, assertions and sophistries of those, who falsely accuse us of maintaining principles of anarchy, when they themselves are really the subverters, both in principle and practice, of all law and liberty; as has already been shown, and as I shall yet more fully prove.

In the argument of the gentleman (Dr. B.), respecting the Church and the State, amongst some things not clearly stated, this proposition was distinctly laid down and maintained: "That the State knows nothing of private judgment, and that in the State there are crimes but not offences, whilst in the Church there are offences but no crimes." Is this so? Are there not misdemeanors, high-misdemeanors and offences punishable by the civil law? Are there not also crimes to which penalties are attached? Now turn to the Book of Discipline, and let us see if the Church knows nothing of crimes: "When a judicatory enters on the consideration of a *crime*, or *crimes* alleged," etc. "In case of a minister being supposed to be guilty of a *crime* or *crimes*, at such a distance from his usual place of residence, as that the *offence* is not likely to become otherwise known to the Presbytery to which he belongs," etc. "An *offence* is anything in the principles or practice of a church member, which is contrary to the word of God," etc. So far is the distinction claimed, from existing in fact, that just the reverse is true. The Church knows of nothing except *sin* or *sins*—*crimes* against God. Hence, in the Book of Discipline, as you see, the terms crimes and offences, are interchangeable. What is not a sin, the Church has nothing to do with. The State may make a thing a crime, which God has not made a sin; and the State may make a thing an offence, which God has not made a sin. The State may hang a man for what it has made a crime, and the Church would baptize him, and canonize him for that, for which he was hung. On the other hand, the State knows nothing of sin. It does not deal with men for sins, but for crimes; and crimes are made such by the code of criminal law. It deals with men for offences and misdemeanors; and offences and misdemeanors are made such by the civil law. If I understand the matter, it is somehow so. I would willingly sit at the feet of such gentlemen, learned in the law, as I see here before me, and be corrected, if I am

in error. But, I repeat, unless I am profoundly wrong, the precise reverse of what was stated in the proposition referred to, is true, as respects the Church, whatever may be true in respect of the State. Well, that statement seemed designed, somehow, to make good the other, "that the State knows nothing of private judgment." But the gentleman (Dr. B.), did not go on in his argument. If his premises were true and well-founded, he ought to have stated the whole conclusion, to-wit: that the Church could know nothing of private judgment. Because, if the State, according to the position of the gentleman, endowed with power absolute from God, can know nothing of private judgment in regard to these merely human laws, and the crimes and offences under them, much more can the Church, endowed with authority as absolute as that of the State, from the King of kings, know nothing of private judgment in regard to matters that are made sin by the law of Christ. She must stand the vicar of Jesus Christ, in regard to sins, offences, crimes in the Church, as the magistrate stands vicar of Jesus Christ, or of God in the State. With such an argument as that, all you have to do, is to put the double head upon the monster, and you have the Apocalyptic beast, seen by John—the monster seen by Daniel, stamping under his feet and devouring the people. If I thought the proposition were true, I would wish God quickly to fulfill his promise, and wind up these governments, both ecclesiastical and civil. But, is it true? If it is, then all this testimony goes for nothing; all we have said, is profound falsehood; all that we have affirmed here, is, as the gentleman claims, worthy of unmitigated condemnation. Now I affirm, as a contrary proposition, that the State is founded upon private judgment, that it exists by virtue of private judgment, that it is free just in proportion as the executive power, the minister of the people, allows to the people freedom in their private judgment, that that freedom attains its highest perfection, just in proportion as those who have this right, are capable, by their moral perceptions, by their intellectual endowments, and by their educational opportunities of exercising a sound private judgment. I state the proposition, and I will be glad to see it controverted fairly, and if it is false, I will give it up. I can not, I am sure I ought not now to detain you in arguing it particularly. You can see in a moment where we go to if it be denied—to an absolute despotism in its worst form. You can see, too, how fully we are warranted in affirming, that to bring the Scriptures, such as we have referred to here, to support a proposition like that

maintained by our opponents, is to make Christianity the tool of tyrants, and its teachings the bulwark of unlimited arbitrary power. I would, by the grace of God, die with Sydney, or Hampden, or Emmet, before I would subscribe to the proposition of the gentleman. He may cut me off from this Presbytery; yes, sir, he and his associates may carry me to the guillotine, and I would rather die with a Madam Roland upon the gibbet, by my proposition, than to die amid kings and courtiers, and the shouts and hallelujahs of the whole Roman Empire, at the feet of a dead and deified Cæsar.

No, Moderator, the gentleman (Dr. B.), has admitted all and more than we ever expected. We are glad that he has been frank enough to acknowledge the position. He has enunciated the doctrine of that party in the Presbyterian Church, which he is here to represent and defend, and to carry rough shod over the rest of us; that the Chief Magistrate of this Republic is so immaculate, so exalted, clothed with such unlimited power, that we belong to him, not merely that he may use our bodies to stop bomb-shells and minie-balls, but that he may use our souls to carry out whatever he is pleased to decree. It is a splendid conception; it is a most honest and noble acknowledgment of the conception and of the devotion of that party to an absolute military despotism; for you can not carry out that conception, unless the country is bound around, and bound together, not by these iron rods of the railroad, carrying peaceful intercourse and bounteous commerce, but by serried ranks of hirelings, to enforce this doctrine, that the State knows nothing of private judgment.

But if the State knows nothing of private judgment, what becomes of private judgment in the Church? Where are we? I leave you to reflect upon that other part of the proposition, which is a necessary conclusion from the premises; because, as I showed you in the passage of Scripture (Heb. xiii: 17,) heretofore cited in evidence, the terms in which authority is given, and power is vested in the hands of God's rulers in the Church, are the same that are employed in respect to the authority of the civil magistrate. If the Word of God says in the State, "Let every soul be *subject* to the higher powers," the Word of God says in the Church, "*Obey* them that have the rule over you, and *submit* yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." And, indeed, if the right of private judgment be such a dangerous thing in the State; if it imperil the welfare of the citizens, for whose welfare I used to think governments were intended, the State

having to do with things that are only *temporal*, then, surely the Church of Rome is right, when she says it is a dangerous thing for the people to read the Bible and think for themselves, because they are liable, thereby, to become schismatical and separatists; they are liable to become "witnesses for the truth"—to sign "Declarations and Testimonies;" and that, to the great peril of popes, and cardinals, and bishops, and priests, and Jesuits of all sorts. Very well; if it be true, I must, notwithstanding all this, accept the proposition; but then I would accept it with this understanding, that by the grace of God, I would rather they would let me depart from this world, than keep me here under any such government, or any such doctrine as to what government is, or what the relations of the citizen are to the government, or what the duties of a Christian as a citizen, or the authority of the Church over the Christian.

The fourth thing against which we testify is, "the action of the Assembly on the subject of slavery and emancipation in 1864, and as confirmed in '65." In that action the Assembly, we allege, has laid itself justly liable to the charge of disingenuousness.

Now, how do we make this charge good? In 1845, the Assembly declared that they could not sanction the doctrine respecting the institution of slavery, which was then known as the Abolition or Anti-slavery doctrine, and which has since received its embodiment in those forms and acts, with which we have become but too familiar; that they could not sanction that doctrine, since enunciated in 1864, "*without contradicting some of the plainest declarations of the Word of God, and charging the Apostles of Christ with conniving at sin, introducing into the Church such sinners, and thus bringing upon them the curse of the Almighty.*" And further, that Assembly (1845) declared, that should they affirm the doctrine, which the Assembly has now most solemnly declared and enforced, it would be, '*to dissolve itself,*' and "*abandon the organization under which by the Divine blessing it has so long prospered.*" Here, then, is the ground upon which this testimony rests.

The Assembly of 1864, declare, that it is an unwillingness of the human heart to see and accept the truth, against the prejudices of habit and interest, which led men in our church, heretofore, and leads them still to hold to the doctrine which, in 1845, it was declared had been taught by Christ and his Apostles. An *unwillingness to see*—that implies moral obliquity of the deepest kind—an unwillingness *through preju-*

dice and habit to see and admit the truth. What truth? To admit as true, the very contrary of what they had taught us from 1845 to '64, as being the true doctrine as found in the Scriptures! Well, if we could not be converted so quickly, they ought to have been a little patient with us. If we cannot change our opinions, with the same facility that some others seem to be able to change theirs, lay it to the account of our weakness rather than our wickedness. I confess that I cannot unlearn so quickly, what I have been taught by that venerable body, as it used to be, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. But this is not all, they go still farther.

This institution—this relation of master and servant—this *American slavery*, (for they were talking about American slavery, and it is the merest figment and quibble, that a child can see through, to pretend that *slavery in the abstract* was what they meant, when they said that it was sanctioned by Christ and his Apostles,) this institution they pronounce in 1864 an evil and a guilt, and condemn it as a sin, and affirm it to be the root of rebellion, war, and bloodshed, and the long list of horrors which follow in their train. Mr. Moderator, it has seemed marvellous to me, that those in our church who have so gone back on the ages—gone back on their own footsteps, many of them—should tell us in one breath, that the government under which it had pleased God, for almost a century, to permit us to dwell, and in the sunlight of which he had allowed us to bask so pleasantly, was the best government in the world; and in another breath tell us that this institution, which was an inherent element in it, which was more truly the cornerstone of it, than of any other government that I know of, that has been or would have been—that this institution is the root of rebellion, and that out of it sprung all those horrors, that have become such fearful, real horrors. How is it that, on the one hand they charge that we, whom they stigmatise as secessionists, struck the dagger at the heart of our country and wished to destroy the *best government in the world*; and then turn around and tell us, that this government was founded in an iniquity and a crime and sin, the root of all that is abominable and hateful? What logic is this? I would modestly suggest, that those gentlemen appoint one of their number, to write us a new treatise on logic; they have got as much light on that subject, as they have on some others, and we who adhere to these old things are certainly much in the dark. God's blessing was upon us above all nations; with this guilt

and evil, the root of all bitterness, of all wrong, of all hateful things—this sin at the very heart of the nation, and as we are told, permeating Church and State. Yet God smiled upon us as He never smiled upon any people, other than His own chosen people in the land of Judea; and suddenly he turned His smiles to wrath, because of this sin! I cannot understand it; and not being able to understand it, we are compelled still to think, that it was not slavery—the institution thus smiled upon so benignantly, and so potent in its influence upon our country, its prosperity and its power—which was at the very foundation of the Republic, and without which, these United States, this best government in the world, could not have been formed—I say we cannot think that this institution was the cause of these horrid things, which have come upon us; and we are compelled to believe that, the Assembly in 1864 and '65, disingenuously kept out of view and directly contradicted, their former scriptural testimonies on this subject. We cannot therefore, submit to these decisions, and if we are out of the Church, brethren, it is because, as the Assembly said in 1845, *it has dissolved itself*. According to its own showing, it has no authority over us, for according to its own showing it has violated the compact, upon which the church organization was based; and consequently our church is re-membered to its original elements. We as a Presbytery, you as a Synod, have all the powers competent to any church court; every church session has all the powers competent to a court of Christ. The Presbyterian Church, *confessedly*, is dissolved; and I ask upon what principles of justice, equity, or truth, it is demanded that you should cut us off and drive us as culprits from the church, for standing by that which the Assembly has said? The very authority which is invoked against us to-day, as much as in them lies, has dissolved the church itself. We will try to restore it; we will try to rebuild it; we will try to lift up its columns again and *save* it from utter and irretrievable ruin. Aye, sir, if we cannot do anything better, we will, to use a figure of the great Milton, go all about the country, and gather up the scattered limbs—the bleeding limbs of our beloved church, and we will, if God shall help us, put them together again; and then we will ask Him to send His good Spirit from on high and breathe new life into this our reunited, restored, resurrected church. We will work miracles.

“We testify against the *unjust and scandalous contradiction* of their own recorded testimony and the well known facts, in regard to the labors of the Presbyterian Church and ministry

for the Christianizing of the slaves of the South, and the preaching to them of the Gospel of Christ."

I shall pass this very briefly unless it should be called in question in the future, and require to be more fully confirmed. I simply cite in proof, because it is a plain, pointed proof, the Report of the Freedmen's Committee. The attention of brethren was called to it in the last General Assembly. In this report, adopted by the General Assembly, elaborately argued in that body, and confirmed, as they thought, by the testimony given in the discussion, they say this: "The colored people are almost without exception desirous of gospel privileges. *Pure Presbyterianism could not be given to them while in Slavery*, since it was not possible for slave elders, teaching or ruling, to sit by the side of their masters in church courts. *This very incompatibility of the two systems showing that both cannot be scriptural.*" Now, Moderator, on this spot, in this State where the institution has existed before it was a State, in the presence of a Rice, of a Cameron, of a Wilson, of a Clelland; in the presence of the host of godly ministers who have preached throughout this State—in the presence of the cloud of witnesses at the right hand of God—if any man should say that a pure Presbyterianism could not, whilst slavery existed, be preached to these people—I ask you, sir, if it would not be just and within the limits of propriety, for me to pronounce the assertion a *libel* upon our beloved church and upon the memory of God's servants, who were giants in their day? Had there been an opportunity to debate these matters in the Assembly with that fulness, fairness, and freeness that there ought to have been, I should have said in the presence of that Assembly, to the author of this report, that there was a purer Presbyterianism preached to these slaves before he was born, than he will ever preach if he lives to be as old as Methuselah. And I would have said what you would have added. amen to, if you had been there, and I wish you had.

"We testify against the doctrine widely taught in the church and even countenanced by the Assembly, that the acts and deliverances of the courts of Christ's Commonwealth, may properly be based upon and shaped in accordancce with the ordinances and laws of State Legislatures; the orders and proclamations of military chieftains, and even the results of popular votes given at the elections."

In proof of this we refer you to what is contained in the deliverance of the Assembly in 1864, on the subject of slavery and the state of the country, to show you, that that deliver-

ance was shaped, not in accordance with the teachings of God's Word, but with what was the determination of the Congress of the United States and the supreme executive. I might have said simply the Supreme Executive, because the Senate and House of Representatives were merely the recorders of his opinions and determinations. Our Assembly took these for the ground of their decision. Then we cite you to that, which was connected with the very first step in the adoption of the Spring Resolutions. It appears from the debates on these resolutions, and from the affirmations boldly and boastingly made by members of that Assembly, that their final passage was largely promoted, against the previous feeling of the Assembly, by telegraphic despatches from Washington City—one of them coming from the Attorney-General and the other from Secretary Chase—as to what the Government at Washington wished the Assembly to do, in order to strengthen the hands of the Government in putting down the rebellion. It is only necessary, in order to show that I speak by the record, to cite you to the debates in that Assembly, uncontradicted, from which it uncontrovertably appears, that this is the position in which our church stood in 1861. In 1864, it was proposed upon the floor of the Assembly, in view of the fearful calamities which were afflicting our country, that a day of *humiliation* and prayer should be appointed; and that was changed (see how thorough a change) to a day of *thanksgiving* and prayer, because those upon the floor of the Assembly, who controlled its action, said, that to pass a resolution calling for humiliation, would discourage the Government in its efforts to put down the rebellion. And further, that the fact of such a day having been appointed, would be carried out by the steamer, and have a bad effect abroad. A total change from a fast day to a feast day, actuated by such considerations! Surely, to say nothing more, such action is founded in an utter misconception of the import and design, of fasting and humbling oneself before God. Is not the very design of such exercises, to encourage and strengthen the spirit? And when the mightiest men of old went forth to battle, did they not spend whole nights in vigils and fastings? If the Government at Washington, had understood the matter in its proper spiritual import, as certainly the Assembly ought to have understood it, the wish would have been for a fast not a feast. But be this as it may, the Assembly acted upon the principle we allege, and it is a false and most pernicious principle.

The next point, which is made in this paper, is in these words: "We testify against the doctrine that the will of God as to the duty of the Church and of His people, is to be learned from *particular providential events, and that the teachings of the Scriptures are to be interpreted by these providences.*" The evidence in support of this allegation, that the Church—not merely the General Assembly, though we cite at once and primarily to the deliverances of that body—but the church at large, has given utterance to and sanctioned this doctrine, is embodied in the Testimony. I need not detain you with reiterating it, but shall confine myself to saying a few words, in reference to this exceedingly important and much misunderstood subject; a subject which, it appears to me, is constantly involved in obscurity in the minds of God's ministers and people, and yet, error in regard to which, entangles, not only in great perplexity, but is liable to lead to great wrong-doing. It has been said, and we admit it, that God reveals His will perpetually; and yet at the same time, it must be admitted on the other hand, that God has revealed His will completely. The question before us is, whether God's will, as revealed in the Written Word, is our rule of duty, or God's will as revealed in acts of Providence, from day to day. You see at once, in the mere statement of these apparently contradictory propositions, how easy it is to becloud the minds of men, and to mislead them, by using the same words, as if they meant the same things when applied to different subjects; whereas they bear a very different sense according to their application. This particular method of observing a subject, this sort of sophistry, has been very much exhibited on the other side of this house during these discussions. We have "the *will* of God revealed" and "the *will* of God revealing," as if these two things were the same. Now, here lies the root of all the difficulty. We affirm in this Testimony, that the only infallible rule of faith and practice, is His revealed will, as completely given to us in the Holy Scriptures; and we affirm that the will of God, as revealed in the course of the development of His providential government, that is, His divine purpose, is never the rule of duty; and that our Assembly and the Church, have erred, in that they have presumed to base their action, and have required others to base their action, in reference to important matters of duty, upon God's will of purpose as made manifest in providential events; and have left out of view, and so far forth, abandoned God's will of precept, as it is contained in the infallible Word; and we pronounce this a profound, fun-

damental and fatal error. But to show that we are all wrong in thus judging, it was said—not exactly affirmed, in distinct and definite language—but so as not to be misunderstood, ‘that the providential occurrences from day to day, which develop God’s secret will, are a rule of duty.’ In support of this statement a certain case (that of David), recorded in the Scriptures was referred to, in which we have an inspired interpretation of a providential event, and that inspired interpretation was made a rule of action. It was argued therefore, that God’s will disclosed in His providence was a rule of duty. Therefore, the conclusion was drawn, that uninspired interpretations of particular providences, are rules of duty. I think there is a great deal more in the conclusion than there is in the premises. But, let us look a little at the instance cited. God declared that the child of David should die. That looks like a very plain, unequivocal declaration of the Divine purpose, and what was intended by the circumstances of the child’s sickness. Yet David fasted and prayed, and said: “Peradventure God may spare the child’s life.” Now, so emphatically do the Scriptures teach us, that God’s will of purpose is not our rule of duty, as that we find David, in the case in which God declared that He purposed the death of his child, nevertheless setting himself to fasting and prayer, upon a peradventure that God may repent Him of the evil. Thanks to the gentleman, his illustration suits us admirably. The inspired interpretation of Divine providence referred to, confirms the doctrine we testify for, and condemns the error we testify against. It is manifestly, said the General Assembly, the will of God that the church should now condemn slavery as a sin. It is manifestly the will of God, that adherence to and cordial sympathy with the doctrine, that slavery, (the relation of master and slave as it exists in this country,) is a sin, a guilt and an evil, should, now be made a term of communion. This Divine direction in our duty, say they, is manifested in the existence of rebellion, the Proclamation of the President, and in the success of our armies in subjugating to our power the Southern States. Now, one objection to this doctrine is, that the providences were not quite developed; and therefore, the rule of duty could not be plain. For the Proclamation itself exempted certain States and parts of States, as for example, the State of Kentucky, where the institution of slavery still legally exists. Who does not see at once, the folly of this thing. As Providence is a perpetually accumulating revelation of the Divine will, it is never completed; and, therefore,

you cannot tell what that will be, until you reach the ultimate fact. How the interpretation of passing events, given in 1864, has already been blurred and blotted; how the profound error committed, in assuming to declare God's will, has already manifested itself, can readily be seen by any one, who will look fairly at the actual state of this question of emancipation, and the status of the negro population of our country. And then consider how mysteriously the providence of God, arrested the late Chief Magistrate of the country upon the very threshold of what seemed to be, the completion of that one idea, which had absorbed so much of his thought, and upon which, I have no doubt, he had set his heart, more than any other thing. Immediately, however, these same gentlemen step in, and interpret this mysterious providence! I have never attempted it; I never will attempt it. It remains for the future—aye, sir, for the judgment day, to solve this mystery, that our President should die, yes, die by the hand of an assassin, upon the threshold of the accomplishment of the purpose of his heart; a purpose too—which our Assembly had in the name of Christ, declared to be clearly the will of God. And yet these gentlemen, who would make Divine providences the rule of our duty, interpret it! And how do they interpret it? How do the pulpits east and north and west, and the Presbyteries and Synods, interpret this providence? They tell us that it was because the late Chief Magistrate was too clement, too kindhearted to apply the axe; to open prisons and then close them upon those who were prostrated at his feet. And so, that another more relentless might execute justice, God, took away the President whose heart was filled with mercy! Sir, I should be sorry, were I compelled to interpret this mystery that way; and it still remains a mystery to me.

Now, that we may see further the absurdity of this principle, which I regard as one of the most important of the errors we have enumerated, the method of reasoning runs thus—“because slaveholders had engaged in rebellion, and our arms had succeeded in an encouraging degree, and the Executive had declared certain purposes, therefore, God's will was that slavery should come to an end.” Well, let us apply this principle of interpretation to another case. The people of France exhausted by taxation to support magnificent wars and attain splendid victories, crushed to the very earth, like Samson arise in their power and pull down the pillars of the State; and Reason and Liberty are inaugurated amid the acclamations of the multitude in the Champs de Mars; and it is manifestly

the will of God, that despotism in France should come to an end.* But scarce have I arrived at this conclusion, when lo, as the next scene is unfolded in this perpetual evolution of Divine providence, I see enthroned in imperial majesty and riding in triumph over the prostrate nations, a Napoleon, who has sprung from this very people, and untainted by one drop of royal blood! Pity, indeed, that the French nation had not in their day of trial, some of these modern prophets, to interpret providence for them! But I watch the progress of this drama of providence. Correcting the error into which I had fallen respecting the will of God, as I thought it was made known in previous events, I try to shape my course by the later revelations. Suddenly, however, the curtain is again lifted and another scene opens to view. It is the field of Waterloo—upon one side the allied armies, upon another side Napoleon in his last, magnificent, heroic, death-struggle, defeated by a particular providence, over which, he nor his enemies had any possible control. For I believe that he lost the battle of Waterloo by losing two hours of time; and those two hours of time were lost, because a shower of rain fell and prevented his artillery from being brought up at the proper moment. That is to my mind the most satisfactory solution of it. The present French Emperor says, in a recent article in the French Encyclopedia, that it is something that cannot be explained. Everything went wrong, when everything went right. Everything failed, when everything seemed to have succeeded. But the battle of Waterloo is fought; legitimacy is vindicated; the right of a people to choose their own ruler, untainted or unpurified by royal blood, is settled for all ages; a Napoleon, the choice of the people, shall never sit upon the throne of France. It is providence; it is the will of God undoubtedly, revealed so far. Half a century passes by and see! Every sovereign in Europe bows in the presence of the third Napoleon—the THIRD NAPOLEON—the exile of St. Helena recognized, by those who said none of his blood should ever sit upon the throne of France, as the FIRST GREAT EMPEROR, only greater, by a very little, than the Third great Emperor! Now, that is enough to show, how profound is the error into which the church has fallen, when she has undertaken to declare what the will of God is, as to this question of slavery, and the status of the slave population; since His purpose concerning the negro slaves has not yet been fully manifested in His providence, whatever man's purpose may be. And if it had been, it would not touch by the thousandth part of a hair—it

would not in the slightest degree affect or alter the doctrine of the Word of God on the subject of slavery; nor change one whit its authoritative teachings, respecting the relation and duties of master and servant, in the proper sense of these terms, by which this relation of authority and obligation to service is expressed.

This Synod is now to say, whether we are wrong and the Assembly is right, or whether we are right and those who are opposing us are wrong on this question, which reaches to the very hearts of God's people. "Behind a frowning providence, God hides a smiling face;" and this is the very meaning of that passage in Isaiah which we have quoted in this testimony; "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, *that obeyeth the voice of His servant*"—observe, "obeyeth the voice of His servant" speaking in the written word—"that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?" The darkness and the want of light relate to the providences which we cannot understand now. That, to my mind, is the only clear exposition of this passage. Thus, it is all dark, this civil strife, this bloody war, this sudden breaking up of the foundation of all things in the land; this turning loose so suddenly amongst us, helpless and unprovided for, of these black people; this is a darkness in providence that I for one cannot penetrate; but I can walk by this written word; and I intend, you intend, most of these brethren, I have no doubt, intend to walk by that word; though I think some of them have for a time gone away from it.

"We testify against the sanction which has been given, both directly and indirectly, to *the usurpation, by the secular and military power, of authority in and over the worship and government of the Church.*"

We had expected to be put to the necessity, of perhaps, some elaborate proof to establish the fact we here affirm—that such usurpation has taken place. I feel that it is a delicate and undesirable thing, to be placed in a position, by the action of any civil or ecclesiastical authority, which requires me plainly to say that there has been *usurpation*. But, such is the position to which we have been forced. I am relieved, and yet I am burthened too, by a consideration of the fact, that in this matter the military and civil power, have been rather the followers than the leaders; and that if there has been this usurpation, there is less guilt on the part of the civil and military, than on the part of the ecclesiastical. As of old, so still, the military and the civil power have been invoked by

Ecclesiastics, to unsheathe the sword. They have usurped this power, but they have done so, as it seems to me, rather through the instigation of the Church, than by their own motion.

The labor of proving this has been made easy, by the clear and distinct enunciation here, that not only is that usurpation which was endorsed by the Assembly of 1864, in respect to the "Rosecran's Oath," under the operation of which, our church courts could not sit in freedom, and our ministers were banished from the State and their churches taken possession of—not only was that oath all right, but that the oath which is incorporated in the fundamental law of the State of Missouri, is also right; that it is a mere "parole," that the persons who take it will not assist the rebellion and inaugurate sedition. A mere "*parole!*" Moderator, if the gentleman (Dr. B.), should ever become a prisoner of war, it seems to me, the greatest cruelty that could be inflicted upon him, this side of being incarcerated for life in a loathsome dungeon, would be to compel him to take that oath. That which grinds the soul, is worse than that which grinds the body. We have alleged, that this usurpation, of the kingly rights of Jesus Christ in His own kingdom, has been sanctioned directly by the Seminaries of Princeton and Danville; and we have instanced the teaching of the Professors of Theology at Princeton and at Danville. It relieves us very much, that the Professor at Danville, has acknowledged before this court, that he sanctions as lawful and good this oath, which I will not characterise by any such terms as it might be proper to use. This Professor of Theology, is in favor of shutting out from their pulpits, the preachers of the everlasting gospel in Missouri, who will not take an oath, which I say, as the brethren in Missouri say, no minister of Christ can take, unless he is willing to sacrifice his soul at the shrine—

[Dr. R. J. Breckinridge here interrupted the speaker with a remark which was not distinctly heard at the reporters desk, but which was to the effect that what he said could be found elsewhere.]

DR. WILSON.—Yes, sir; we know what the gentleman has said; we sadly know, that he who sits in the high place of our Church, placed there by the General Assembly, sustained there by the money contributed by God's servants, living and dead, that he says of this infamous oath, "*it is a mere parole!*"—a parole! I trust the gentleman may never be compelled to swallow his own parole. Perhaps, sir, it would not prevent him from preaching the Gospel; I question very much whether it

it would interfere at all with him in that respect. Perhaps it would not interfere with his teaching Theology. Sir, I know it would not prevent him from making political speeches.

“We testify against that *persecution*, which has been carried on for these five years past, and with increasing malignity, toward all those, who have steadfastly refused to sanction or acquiesce in, these departures of the Church from the foundations of truth and righteousness.”

I would say, that this cry of persecution, ought certainly never to be uttered upon light grounds. For myself, when called to endure reproach for the sake of Christ, I have never been accustomed to fly behind the cry of persecution. But I am now speaking for others; for those in our midst, and for those, may I be permitted in this presence to say it, whose hands we ought to be shaking, in fraternal forgetfulness of all past strife, and welcoming back to the bosom of our church.

This charge of persecution has not been made, without the most substantial cause. To show you to what extent it has gone, let me read just one passage from the “Narrative of the state of Religion,” recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly of this year. That Assembly could not even send to the churches an account of the state of religion, without taunting those, who had been excluded from their pulpits and from their homes, by the spirit of persecution. This is what they say:

“It is but proper to add, that to the differences of political opinion, incident to the fearful rebellion through which we have passed, and also to the influence of military excitement, many divisions and strifes in our beloved Zion, during the past year, are to be attributed. The long agony of the Nation, and the streams of human blood which have flowed, *seem not yet to have satisfied some, that the American rebellion, is one of the greatest crimes that will ever blacken the annals of history. One Presbytery reports continued disputation, in reference to a military order which required, as a protection of the Government from the plotting of treason, a pledge of unconditional allegiance from ministers of Christ, in that region of country where treason was rife.* The effect of this disputation has been, only what might be expected, upon the private members of the churches, and upon some of our ecclesiastical courts. It is pleasing, however, to be able to turn from a contest in one Presbytery, *professedly conducted in vindication of the Headship and Crown Rights of the Lord Jesus, but generally believed to be actuated by a desire on the part of some, however sincere others may be, to evade the just*

claims of the Government in times of National peril, and contemplate the picture drawn in the report of another Presbytery, once almost broken up by rebellion, but now restored, through the mercy of God, by the overthrow of our national foes."

Of all the cruelties that persecutors can inflict, to taunt their victims with hypocrisy, is surely the greatest. I have always admired Servetus, in one respect, that though in error, he evinced his sincerity by dying for it. Nor have I ever heard that John Calvin, whether he was responsible for his execution or not, taunted him with insincerity. I have heard, (I do not know that it is founded in truth,) that one of those who are thus taunted with hypocrisy, by the Assembly, was instrumental at the commencement of our difficulties, in saving one of the forts of the United States, from the hands of the Southern Confederacy. And these men sitting at their ease in Pittsburgh or New York, can write such cruel mockery respecting those noble men, so true to their country as they are to their Lord, that even those who have driven them from their places, because they would not surrender what they believed to be the crown rights of Jesus Christ, testify that they have done no evil! No wonder that Judge Ewing should say of the last Assembly, "*I have sat, Mr. Moderator, in many political assemblies—assemblies of divers sorts—but I have never witnessed such relentless persecution as is exhibited by this Assembly!*" We need not detain you on this point. If there ever was persecution, in the name of Cæsar's rights, just as it has always been, this is it. "This Paul preaches that there is another King, one Jesus," and so he plots treason against Cæsar. "If thou let this man go, thou art not the friend of Cæsar." And so through the ages, with the cry of "Cæsar's rights," ecclesiastics have hounded on inquisitors and "the powers that be," to drive God's people as fast as they can, out of the church and out of the world—to heaven.

"We testify against the wide spread and destructive *perversion of the Commission of the ministry and the province of Church Courts.*" It was intimated, that it was quite absurd for us to be testifying, protesting, and arguing against Synods and Church Courts giving deliverances, on political questions, inasmuch as we maintain, that the Church Courts ought to have nothing to do with such matters. This is strange, indeed. If a motion had been made in this house, instead of the one before you, that this Synod should give a deliverance on the lawfulness of the seven-thirty bonds, in the State of Ken-

tucky—the right of Kentucky Christians to take that interest, it being usurious, according to the laws of Kentucky, which, forbid interest higher than six per cent to be given or taken; and, we had risen in our places and said, that was a matter which this Synod as a court of Christ had nothing to do with, would that have been violating the pledge we have given, that we will not take part in the discussion of political questions? The gentleman (Dr. B.), told us, that those who took usurious interest, had been pronounced guilty of an unchristian act, by this Synod; and he said of such people, that he would not say they ought to go to the devil—but he would say they ought to go to the rich of this world. Sir, has he any seven-thirty bonds that he is receiving usurious interest on, against the laws of this State?

DR. BRECKINRIDGE.—I have none, I did not make the statement he says I made.

DR. WILSON.—Well, sir: if the gentleman did not make the statement, my ears did not hear right, and the reporters did not report him right. I looked over his speech just before I came into the house.

DR. BRECKINRIDGE.—I said it was discussed in the Synod, and taken cognizance of by them. I did not say that it was decided so. All the difference is in citing language as it was and as it was not.

DR. WILSON.—I will put it that way. His object was to show, that the Synod had a right to deal with matters of a political character; and he cited the fact that this Synod had considered the question of usury, and I understood him to say, (but whether he said it or not, I understand it to be a historical fact,) that this Synod did decide that question. I may be right or wrong as to that. But the gentleman did say, that he believed that those who took such interest were guilty of a sin or an offence, for which they ought to go, he “would not say to the devil—but to the rich of this world,” and there was a laugh all over this house. It was one of the smartest things that the gentleman said in his speech.

As I was saying, suppose that question had come up here—I take it merely as an illustration, it was to my hand—and that other questions of the same character had been debated and decided by this Synod, it would have been to take just that course, by which we allege the Church Courts and the ministry have perverted their commission. Thus, the last Assembly, as you very well know, from the concurrent testimony upon the subject, occupied nearly the whole of its long,

protracted sessions, in making decisions in regard to questions of loyalty and freedom, and slavery, and what ought to be done by the Church with the rebels at the South for their political offences; and a large part of all the labor I did, in that Assembly, was at every step to say, 'you have no right to touch this subject.'

"We testify against the action of the Assembly in reference to the churches in the Seceded and Border States, and against the basing of that action, upon an assertion of what the Assembly had the clearest evidence was not true."

It is a grave thing to say that what any man utters is untrue. To say that the Assembly based its action upon what was not true, is to say a very serious thing. We said it in the presence of the Assembly. We say it here, because saying it there had no effect upon that body, in staying its action. What is the affirmation of the Assembly? That the "General Assembly of the Confederate States was *organized* in order to render their aid, in the attempt to establish, by means of the rebellion, a *separate national existence*, and to *conserve and perpetuate the system of slavery.*" Now, it was said upon the floor of the Assembly, by living witnesses; it was said, in the document (Address of the Southern Assembly) which has been put in here in evidence, that such was not the ground, nor the object of the organization of the Southern Assembly. The assertion upon which that ordinance was based, which was so vitally to affect the whole church and country, is shown to be unfounded by the most abundant official proof. And how is this proof met here? By nothing but the introduction of an article on the State of the Country, from the pen of the late Dr. Thornwell, and published in the Southern Presbyterian Review. This is claimed to have a semi-official character; yet without citing from it a single line or word, the assertion is made, that it proves that the Southern Assembly was organized in the interest of slavery and the rebellion.

But how did the Assembly vindicate their allegation, when its truth was contradicted, by unequivocal official evidence, embodied in a Protest and entered upon their Records? First, they adduce the fact that Dr. Palmer preached a sermon entitled "Slavery a Divine Trust—Duty of the South to perpetuate and preserve it," and afterwards he "was upon the proposition of several Presbyteries, requested to preach the opening sermon of the First Southern Assembly, and was subsequently elected Moderator." And then they cite certain passages from the Narratives on the state of Religion in 1862 and 1863, *one and two years after that Assembly had been organized*. The strongest of these passages is in these words: "*We hesitate not to affirm, that it is the peculiar mission of the Southern church to conserve the institution of slavery, and to make it a blessing both to the master and the slave.*" This was said two years after the organization of their Assembly; and if it had been a formal declaration of all that is as-

serted in the ordinance against which we testify, it would not sustain our Assembly in its position. But it is very far from declaring what they have attributed to the Southern church. This the Assembly itself appears to have felt, for they immediately resort to a most desperate species of argument, to strengthen the weakness of their proofs. This is nothing less, than to impugn the *sincerity* of the declarations made in the address drawn up by Dr. Thornwell, assuming that the reasons assigned for their withdrawal from us, were not the real reasons, and, they "were principally moved by the designs imputed" in the ordinance of the Assembly. You shall hear what they say:

"In view of the peculiar circumstances of the Southern churches before the world; in further view of the expressed declaration of that Assembly, touching the relations of the church *as an organization* to the State, in connection with the fact that the individuals who composed the Assembly, did not regard the secession of the Southern States as a sin, and the doctrine that it was the providential mission of the South to conserve and perpetuate the institution of slavery as a heresy; *it was to have been expected that all reference to such design of individuals would be studiously avoided.* It is not the intention of the Assembly to assert that the reasons set forth in that address were not influential with those who uttered them, nor is it their intention in this paper to discuss their validity; but *they do declare that in their judgement, there is nothing in that document to forbid the idea, that the individuals who framed it, and the members of the Southern churches generally, were principally moved by the designs imputed.*"

"We do not intend to discuss the validity of the reasons set forth in that address"—of course not, for where would be the use of discussing those reasons, when "there is nothing in the document to forbid the idea," that they are not the true reasons. Nothing at all to forbid the idea, that *the whole Southern Presbyterian body were solemnly and deliberately playing the part of hypocrites!* I once heard a very venerable man say, that it was hard for an honest man to suspect others of being false and deceitful. Is it sir, easy for men who are false and deceitful to suspect others of the same thing, and for this reason to be constantly imputing hypocrisy? But I will say this: that if the Address written by Doctor Thornwell, and his article on the State of the country, show that the General Assembly of the Southern church was organized to perpetuate and conserve the system of slavery, and in the interests of the Southern rebellion; then I will show by more substantial evidence, that the action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church for the last five years—I do not say the utterances of this or that individual—proves that the General Assembly was organized, for the purpose of assisting Abolitionism in breaking up this country, and for the purpose of perpetuating despotism.

This ordinance of the Assembly is unrighteous and inequitable. It proposes certain terms of church membership. One of these is the renunciation of certain errors, and acts, and all sympathy with the institution of slavery and the Southern Confederacy. In the first

place this is unjust, because the Assembly was estopped from doing anything of this sort upon its own principles. In vindicating their action, declaring it to be the duty of Presbyterians to aid the Administration in co-ercing the South into submission, they appeal to the precedent decision of the Government that there was a rebellion; and take this decision as their rule of action. It is therefore the decision of the Government that defines the offence, according to the judgment of the General Assembly, and their business was to sustain the Government in their decision. Now then, by all laws of justice, as it seems to me, when the Government is satisfied with regard to those engaged in the rebellion; when it says, "Go home; you have surrendered, and you shall be unmolested," the Assémbly upon its own principles, is bound to accept and uphold the decision of the Government. It vindicates its first action, because, it says it cannot go behind the action of the Government. We say then, your second action was unjust, because you do go behind the action of the Government. You said "We will condemn the rebellion, because Cæsar has condemned it." Cæsar says he is satisfied, and you say you are not. But the Church, has no right thus to shift her position. She cannot to-day accept the State as her teacher upon this subject, and to-morrow repudiate the State, teaching her upon the same subject.

But further, the church had no right to do this, because, as you were told on yesterday, the rebellion might have succeeded. Now, if it was a crime that these men committed against the church—made such by the laws of Jesus Christ, then it would have continued a crime, even if the Confederacy had succeeded. If to rise in arms against an existing Government, is to be treated by the church as a crime against the laws of Christ's house, without going into an inquiry respecting the causes of it, but accepting the decision of the existing Government declaring it rebellion, then it continues a crime. It cannot be made right by success; otherwise success becomes a standard of right and a rule of duty, as well as providence. Who does not see, that the principles upon which the Assembly has acted, are destructive of the very foundation of christian morality.

It is unjust in the third place, because it is a rule to be applied only to those who live in a particular section of the country. The moment it was proposed to apply this same rule to the churches North, those who were ready to cut off their Southern brethren, fell out by the way; and twice in that Assembly those, who were thus hunting to destruction the Southern church, became so divided against each other, and by their angry debate created such confusion, that the Moderator was compelled to adjourn the body by his own motion, to stop the disorder. So far, the author of the memorial was right; he saw that it would be unjust to apply it only in one part of the country, and sought to make its application general. But when it seemed likely to be shaped in that way, the very brethren from the churches who are to be asked to cut us off, said, "We never will enforce it in our churches." "If you undertake to apply that

rule to us you will blow us up"—or substantially that. Is this equity? Is this justice? Call us, if you will, sinners against God and disturbers of Zion, we cannot have anything to do with such an unrighteous law.

"We testify against all and every movement in the church, however cautiously or plausibly veiled, which looks to a *union of the State with the church, or a subordination of the one to the other, or the interference of either with the jurisdiction of the other.*"

Moderator, what is the State? That is one of the most difficult questions perhaps, that could be started in the region of jurisprudence. I will attempt to answer it in brief, according to the opinion, as I suppose, of these brethren who signed this Testimony. The State, sir, is fundamentally, the people. The State embodied, is what we call the Government. The State as it speaks, is its Constitution and its Laws. There has evidently been great confusion in this discussion, by changing terms, or using them with different meanings. For instance, "*the Government,*" and "*government.*" It was said that he who set himself against *government*, was guilty of a sin, and would receive condemnation. Yes, sir, that is true—against *government*. The man who says there is no such thing as government, denies that there is a God. The man who says, that there is no right of government in the people, denies in effect, that there is a God. But, sir, the man who says that a *particular Government* is not so of God, as that other Governments of a different form, are not equally of God, also denies, as I believe, that there is a God. In other words, God is not the author of despotism, either in the natural principles he has implanted in our nature, or in the working out of the necessities of our nature, through the operation of those principles. You have been told that we are sanctioning that which is damnable, because we have denied that one particular government is more of God than another; so that when two governments come in conflict, we are, upon the very fact of their being in conflict, of necessity obliged, to take sides with this one rather than with that one. And it is charged, that we violate the law of God, because we say, that we, as christians, are not bound to enter into the strife at all, or to fight with either; we may not consider either of them, so righteous in what they may be doing, as that we can take up the sword on either side.

I said a little this morning on the right of private judgment. I wish to introduce here that principle, because it has a direct bearing upon this point. So fundamental is this right of private judgment, in regard to this matter of particular governments; so free are men in their relations to these governments; and such is the obligation they are under, to know enough to judge in regard to them, that if a man fights wrongfully with his Government, he is responsible to God for it. I believe not only that bayonets can think, but that they *ought* to think, and that if they do not think, God will judge them for not thinking. The centurion and the soldiers that crucified Jesus Christ, were commanded to do it by Pilate, and Jesus Christ said

explicitly, "Thou could'st have no power against me, except it were given thee from on high." Pilate was the ordinance of God; but when he commanded the centurion and the soldiers to lead Jesus Christ to crucifixion, the centurion was bound to say, as he should answer at the bar of God, "I will not have anything to do with the execution of this just man." The principle avowed on this floor, and against which I argued this morning, would hold harmless, every soldier that drove the nails through the palms of the hands of Christ. They were ordered to do it. But, let soldiers know, that they are bound to have such an enlightened conscience, that when they obey orders, they shall be able to give a good account of it in the last great day. Conscript men upon the contrary principle, put them into the ranks against their will, and they have no conscience, no accountability. No, sir, government is of God; the State is of God, because the State is fundamentally the people. But I cannot go further in this line of remark.

Now, what is the Church? The Church is the people too—*eklektōi, klatoi, eklesia*—God's chosen; God's called; God's united society of people: but not only the called and the chosen outwardly, but it is the truly called, the truly chosen, that constitute the true church. I wish you to hold that idea. We have then in the State, the people, the law, the executive; the constitutional law, the statute law, and the common law; if you please. We have in the Church, the people, the law, the ministry. It so happens that the Apostle uses the same word in regard to the minister in the State, that he does in regard to the minister in the Church—"they are the ministers of God attending upon this very thing." What are the relations of these two institutions to each other? Perfectly independent. They have no common jurisdiction. They have jurisdiction over the same persons, but no common jurisdiction, so that the State can do for the church, or the church do for the State, or both together do that which belongs to either. And, loyalty to the State, is exactly what loyalty to the Church is. It begins with loyalty to the *people*. He that is not loyal to the people, is not loyal at all. When a man says "I am the State," then he has ceased to be loyal. And as loyalty begins there, loyalty is obedience to the mind of the State as expressed in its laws. The minister of the State, the executive, the magistrate, has nothing to do, but first himself obey the law, and next require other people to obey it. And that is loyalty, sir; that is my loyalty. "We love the King, who loves the law." But when the King himself disobeys the law, the State (that is the people) has a right to call him to account. It is just so in the church. We are the servants of the church. The mind of the church is expressed in the laws given by her Divine Head; and here is one of the differences between the State and the church. The State has no divinely revealed code of laws—no divinely given constitution; and therefore no civil constitution can be said to be of divine authority. I may prefer a monarchy to a commonwealth. Do I offend against any divine law when I so prefer? But if I prefer the Koran to the Bible,

I sin at once. The church has her law as the spiritual State, if you will allow me such an expression. It is the Spiritual Kingdom—called a Kingdom—which Jesus Christ has established in this world. She has her Constitution and laws in the Bible, and her ministers are simply to declare that law and enforce it. When her ministers fail to obey the law, they violate their vows to their Lord and Master; they violate the authority of their commission, and the people may call them to account. And, as, according to the great John Owen, the bride, the wife carries the keys of the household, so Jesus Christ, the husband of the Church, has endowed his bride with the keys of the household of faith; and when she has handed them to her servant and he transgresses the authority which she has given him, she has a right to reclaim them. And, as in the State, when the magistrate has violated his authority, the people may require him to surrender that authority, the sword which he holds to be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well; so, when in the church, the ministry violate their commission, the bride has a right to require that they shall give back the keys. And if there be any portion of those who are ministers, who faithfully hold and use these keys, they may take their appeal, from those who are violating their trust, to the bride, and say; "Your servants have been faithless; we ask that you shall require them to return to their fidelity, or surrender the keys." And, if the bride should become herself so corrupt—should so depart from her Divine Husband, as she too often has done, as to fail to answer back that call, then the faithful servants may go to the Husband and ask Him to interpose, to correct his Bride. This is something like what I desired to say, upon this interesting and somewhat difficult subject.

Now, these two divinely appointed institutions—the State for this world, and the Church for this world and the next—we hold to be perfectly independent—perfectly free from all intervention, on the part of one or the other; and the moment the Church goes over to the State, that moment the Church becomes a harlot; and the moment the State accepts the offer, and prostitutes the Church to her own ends and aims, that moment it becomes a wild beast, just as it is always represented in the visions of prophecy. And we do most solemnly testify, and we design by the grace of God to continue to testify, against the Church turning harlot and the State being brutalized by cohabitation with her.

I pass over much that I might say, and come to the action proposed in this paper, because this action seems to be that which is immediately relied upon, to make good the proposition both in the resolution and the complaint, to treat us as schismatics and as practically out of the Church. Look then and see what this action is. It is explicitly stated here that our first great, prayerful aim, as God shall give us strength and opportunity, is to reform the Church.

As to separation from the General Assembly, we express our anxiety to avoid it, and predicate such a result, upon the majority continuing to adhere to their errors, and upon compulsion. It is clear as the shin-

ing of the sun at noonday, that we cannot walk together if we are not agreed; and as the gentleman (Dr. B.) said very truly, we are not agreed, not merely in minor matters, but in fundamental principles. It seemed to me I understood this more than a year ago; and therefore I said it publicly, that the Presbyterian Church must retrace her steps or she must divide. And is she not disintegrating at this very hour? Is she not going to pieces? You have been told there exists a practical schism. It is true; but not more true here than elsewhere. It is widespread. Dr. Hodge of Princeton, the Presbytery of Sangamon, the Presbytery and the Synod of Missouri, all the Presbyteries in this State, are practical schismatics, according to the position taken against us. We say that the schism is on the part of those who have corrupted the church, who have perverted her authority, who have violated her constitution, who have usurped the prerogatives of her Divine Lord, who have persecuted his servants—that these are the schismatics. Men who sign memorials of the Stanton-Wood character—who sanction oaths of the Rosecrans-Missouri type—who shut out of the church, upon a new, unscriptural test of christian character, hundreds of ministers and thousands of men and women, than whom there are none more true hearted Presbyterians in the land—these men are the real schismatics; it is these, as we believe and declare, who have divided our church. They charge, that those who have boldly and openly stood in the way, and resisted their course, are agitators, schismatics and rebels against the church. Here then the issue is joined, and it will be tried, is now trying, in every Presbytery and church in this State, and throughout the land. Perhaps we shall be successful in reforming the church; perchance we may be defeated. We have no bayonets to aid us. The gentleman (Dr. B.) said “unless the Government protect us, they will put us out.” These words, from such a source, have a very instructive meaning. They mean that unless, as was done in the case of one of the churches within your bounds, at the instigation of one in high position, the “powers that be” will take in hand the suppression of our Testimony and of the witnesses, and send guards with “swords and staves,” (possibly negro soldiers, deluded with the idea of freedom) to take possession of sessional records, to force open the doors of churches, and to compel the people to hear a man preach whom they do not wish to hear—unless *the Government* will supply the gentleman with jails and scaffolds, the want of which in the hands of the church he seemed to regret—then it appears to be feared, the influence of this Declaration and Testimony cannot be stopped, until he himself may be compelled either to retrace his steps, or to go out with those, who have created this schism. This much is certain, either we must change or he and his party must change, or part asunder we must. And rest assured, brethren, if we are thrust out, we will go, as the Israel of the Alps went, out of the meretricious church of Rome, bearing with us the Golden Candlesticks, and the shewbread, and the Ark of the covenant and the Shekinah of our God.

The action we propose is in terms, much of it, precisely the action,

proposed in the "Act and Testimony" of 1835. We say first "That we refuse to give our support to ministers, elders, agents, editors, teachers, or to those who are in any other capacity engaged in religious instruction or effort, who hold the preceding or similar heresies." Said the "Act and Testimony" of 1835: "We refuse to give countenance (they went further than we do) to ministers, elders, agents, editors, teachers, or to those who are in any other capacity engaged in religious instruction or effort, who hold the preceding or similar heresies." Was not that practical schism? And yet, did not the gentlemen who uttered this "Act and Testimony" in 1835, all over the land, protest, that they did not intend to divide the church, but that their intention was to reform her, and that if they were cut off they would do substantially, what we say we will do, if we are compelled to go out?

We propose a Convention. Mr. McMillan in his "complaint" lays great stress upon that, as has also been done by the gentleman who has spoken in defense of both the complaint and his own paper. We propose a convention. Well, what for? Why, say they, at once, to divide the church! Is this so? Hear the language and judge. "We do earnestly recommend that on the—day of—, A. D. 1865, —(we do not fix any time except that it should be in 1865, and we were not at all tenacious of that)—"a convention be held in the city of—, composed of all such Ministers and Ruling elders as may concur in the views and sentiments of this testimony, to deliberate and consult on the present state of our church, and to adopt such further measures as may seem best suited to restore her prostrated Standards, and vindicate the pure and peaceful religion of Jesus, from the reproach which has been brought upon it, through the faithlessness and corruption of its ministers and professors." Now, read and compare this: "We do earnestly recommend that on the second Thursday of May, 1835, a Convention be held in the city of Pittsburgh, to be composed of two delegates, a minister and a ruling elder from each of the Presbyteries, or from the minority of any Presbytery who may concur in the sentiments of this "Act and Testimony, to deliberate and consult on the present state of our church, and to adopt such measures as may be best suited to restore our prostrated standards." When from Princeton went forth the cry, "These men are going to meet to control the General Assembly of the Church; they are going to sit by the side of that Assembly," a venerable signer of this "Act and Testimony" said "We don't mean to sit beside it, we will sit *before* it." But, sir, that meant division and schism, unless that which those men intended first to attempt, to "restore the prostrated standards of the church," had been accomplished. Things had not gone so far then, as they have gone with us, by a great deal. There was no such state of things then as there is now. The Assembly had not formally endorsed, as she has now endorsed by explicit acts, and by setting up as terms of membership in the church, the doctrines and errors against which those venerable fathers and

brethren—many of them now gone to glory—protested. No, sir, not half so far. As a youth, I was familiar with this thing in my father's house. There I saw many—many a solemn meeting, of those who were consulting over "the prostrated standards of the church," and praying and pleading that God would save the ark of the covenant. These men knew, that unless the one party abandoned their course, the other party must go out. In that day the truth triumphed; and whether right or wrong, by the agency of him, who now would apply the axe to us, there were cut off whole Presbyteries and Synods, and the church was divided. But we do not want division. Come back to us, come back to us brethren upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, and we will bury all the past; we will forget all by-gones, and we will embrace in fraternal affection. We will never say one word about the evil that we think you have done; but we will go on with you, to preach the everlasting Gospel, and save the life of our dying nation, by applying to it the "balm of Gilead." But if you meet us thus; if you respond to us as is proposed in this resolution, we will gather about us those that prefer truth to a mere fictitious union; we will gather about us those who love the truth, more than they love any man after the flesh; we will gather about us those in the North and East and South and West, who agree with us in this truth which we hold dearer than life, and with tears over those who have compelled us to part with them, we will go out! Now, sir, that is what we mean; that is what you mean—you know it.

Now, Moderator, I will draw to a conclusion. We have been taunted with being a little band—a *little band*! Well, sir, be it so. I remember that there was but one outspoken prophet in Israel, for for seven thousand hidden ones that had not bowed the knee to Baal. I remember that when he confronted Ahab, Ahab said, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" and I recollect the response and the triumph. I remember in ancient lore, the day when Greece, with all her beauty and splendor and liberty, was threatened to be blotted out by the iron tread of the haughty Asiatic; and I remember that a little band of three hundred, standing in the straits of Thermopylae, leaving the faint hearted to depart, with heroic calmness, said, "We will be the sacrifice for our country;" and true to their word, they battled and battled, until every man of them died in a baptism of blood. But the cause lived. I remember, sir, when three hundred, who would not stoop to drink but lapped with the tongue, stood between Israel and the Midianites, and with pitchers and lamps conquered. I remember these and the thousand other illustrious dead, that have stood in the breach in the day of trial—Yes! stood between the ark of the covenant, and those who would lay profane hands upon it. And, sir, dying they triumphed! And if it be necessary to lay our bodies in the breach—if it be necessary that we, in a baptism of blood, a little band, should thus attempt to rescue, and be blessed in rescuing our beloved church, the Ark of God as committed to us, then let the sacrifice be made; we will die a little band.

But we have been asked, "Have these gentlemen worked miracles? No, sir, we have not. "Are these gentlemen inspired?" No, sir, we are not. "Have these gentlemen ever raised the dead?" No, sir, we have never raised the dead. But, sir, we ask in return, have these gentlemen raised the dead? I have heard that they could kill; or at least that they could hound others on to kill, but I have never heard that they raised any of the dead. Are they inspired, sir? I have tried to get at their inspiration, in their reviews, in their newspapers, in their memorials and in their speeches; and what sort of inspiration is it? Have these gentlemen wrought miracles? Aye! miracles, sir, of destruction. I most fervently and conscientiously believe it, that these and such like, have wrought miracles of destruction to the hopes of our country—to the hopes of our Church—to the hopes of the black man, sir, above all others—and to the hopes of the world; and unless God will work miracles of deliverance, from the hands of these Egyptian necromancers and magicians, we are ruined as a country—we are ruined as a Church.

Moderator and brethren, I have done. With such ability as God has given me; with the imperfections of my nature, but with honesty of purpose, and the love which I bear to my Church, my country, and my Master, urging me forward to do that, which I would rather have committed to the hands of those better able to do it, I have endeavored in your presence to lift up the standard of truth and righteousness, and to ask you to rally around it—to ask you, before you close these sessions, to lift it up so high and to display it so clearly, that it shall be seen from all parts of the land; to ask you, imitating the example of that other branch of the Church, our Episcopal brethren, with the venerable Bishop Hopkins, so happily as it seems to me, at its head at this important moment, to hold out the olive branch to our brethren in the South. The olive branch is what I plead for in the late General Assembly. When the Stanton memorial was presented I voted alone against even entertaining it, and entered my dissent against referring it to a Committee. When, in the form of an ordinance brought in by the chairman of the Committee on Bills and Overtures, it was adopted by the Assembly, I with others, "a little band," entered our solemn protest against it. When its principles, sublimated and embodied in the single resolution, which set the Board of Domestic Missions over the Presbyteries, Church Sessions, Churches, Synods and Assembly itself—to sit in judgement upon the loyalty, the doctrine, and sympathies of ministers and members—when that was under discussion, I earnestly opposed its passage. I said I would never—never obey or enforce it. I said, "Brethren do not this thing."

Well, sir, they have done it, and now, as the last hope of a bleeding Church, we here, upon the border in this State which has sacrificed so much for the love of the country our fathers bequeathed us—we who stand here between the North and the South, belonging naturally to the South, but unwilling to be separated from the North—we who stand here, in our relations to both parts of the Church, some-



thing like the venerable bishop I have named, in the Episcopal Church, in this day of trial; we can extend our hands in fraternal entreaty to both. We can drop the sword—we can say to the General Assembly, "If our brethren must perish, we cannot, we will not be your executioners." Yes, brethren, if the General Assembly must find executioners for these christians in the South, they must, I think, find them somewhere else than in the good old State of Kentucky, and in the venerable Synod called by that name. At least they must I am sure, find executioners somewhere else than in the Louisville Presbytery. But what you can do, what we ask you to do, is to say to those of our brethren in the South, who hold these principles of a pure and free Presbyterianism, "come with us and we will do you good." To say to those of our brethren in the North, who stand by the same principles, "come with us and we will do you good." It is in the cause of Unity; it is in the cause of peace upon the foundations of the truth in Jesus, that we have endeavored to act. The war is over in the State. Cæsar is satisfied. He is holding out his hands, to those who are regarded as having lifted their hands, with paracidal purpose, against the life of the nation—whether rightly so judged or not I cannot say—I may not judge. But however this may be, Cæsar is satisfied. Oh! brethren, are not you satisfied? Will you not join us in the principles of this Testimony? Will you not with us lift up this standard, and under it go forward in the footsteps of our Prophet Priest, and King, and leave Cæsar to do his work, while we do ours?

Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery, which I have thus been called to represent, I thank you for the patience with which you have heard these remarks. We may perhaps find it necessary to say a word in explanation, but otherwise we design to say nothing more hereafter.

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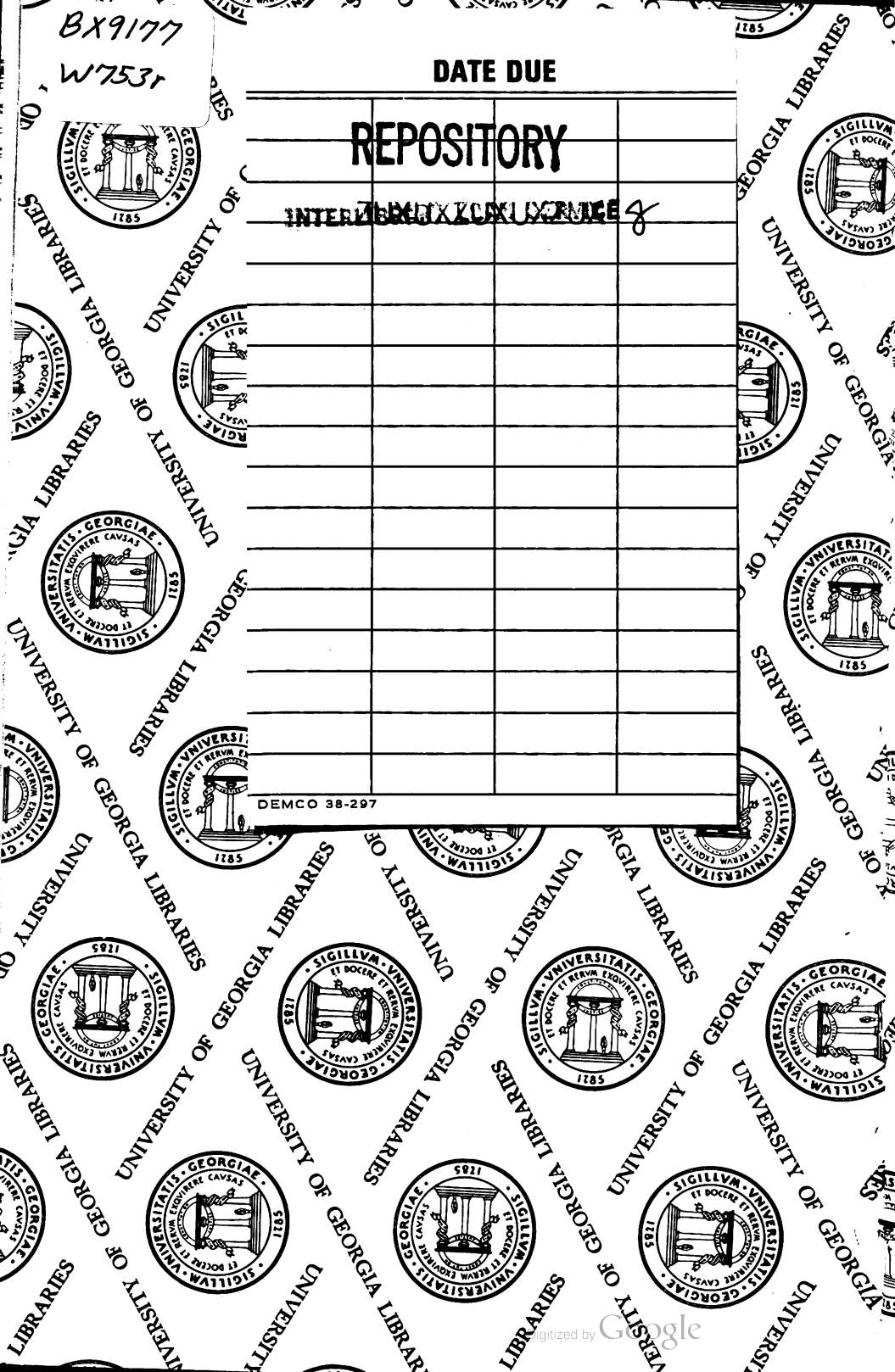
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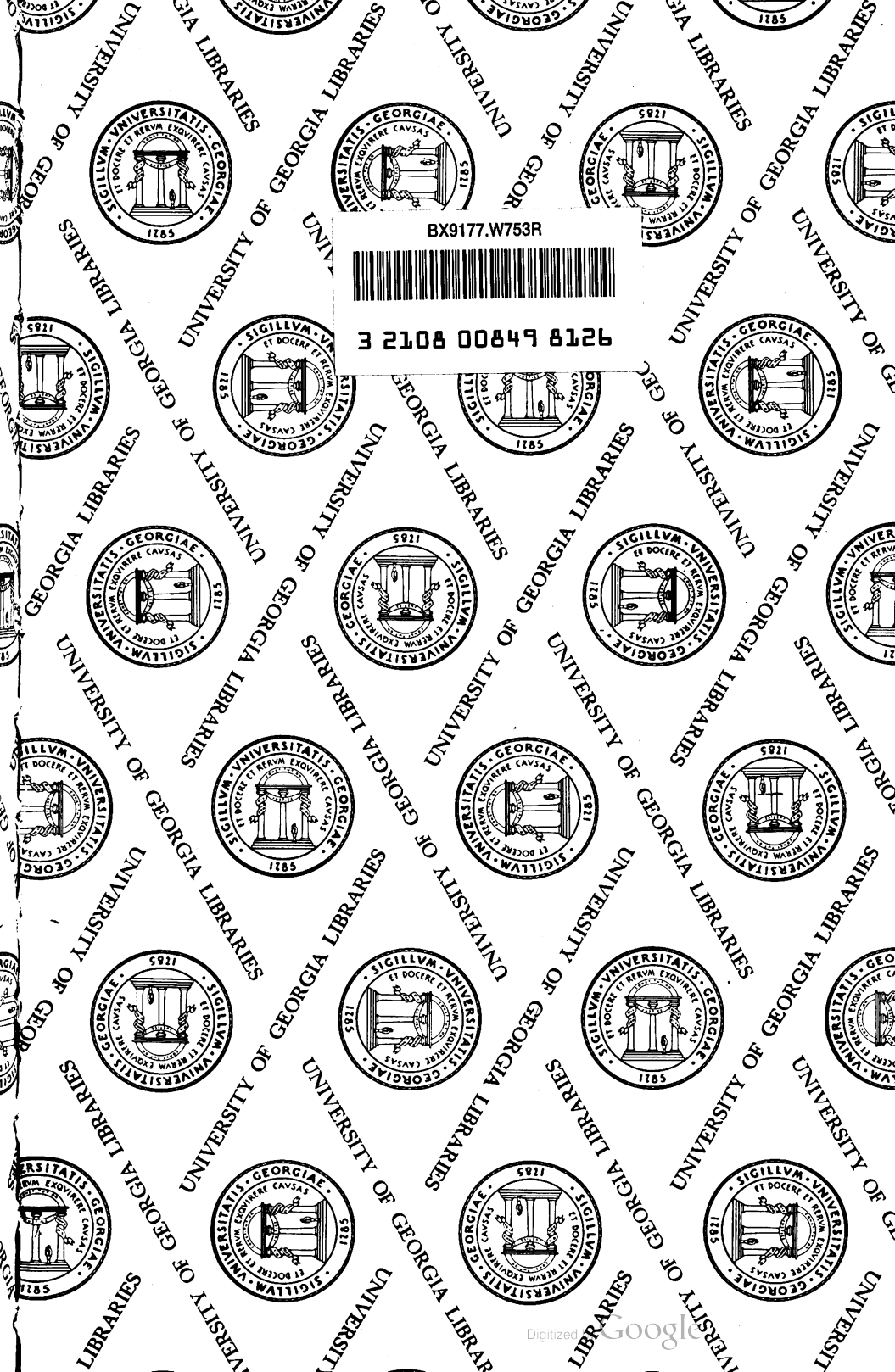
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