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THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 1868.

HOW THE DOCTRINAL TERM IS UNDERSTOOD.

We publish, in different parts of our paper to-day, the protest of the opponents to Re-union in the Assembly at Albany, and the Answer which we suppose was adopted by that body, but which at all events was made by the Committee appointed for the work, and is therefore, the official paper of the body. Our own Assembly, by adopting the explanations of the Joint Committee, which the other Assembly merely accepted, and by adopting the further explanations of the Special Committee, made it perfectly clear in what sense we take the doctrinal term. It is only in the Answer to the Protest, and perhaps in the Humphrey-Hall Resolution, telegraphed to our Assembly late on Monday night, that we can learn the sense ascribed to the terms by the other body. Let us look first at the Protest of the minority and then at the Answer.

The Protest itself recites a formidable series of doctrinal errors and heresies, which it charges that our body holds to be consistent with the Calvinism of the Confession of Faith. The document is careful not to charge the holding of these errors upon the great mass of our church, but it says that, in the judgment of our body, a person can logically and consistently accept the Westminster Symbol along with the out-and-out Arminian and Pelagian errors enumerated.

It would be mere waste of time to dwell upon these charges themselves, which are simply a re-voicing of the famous Act and Testimony of 1837. But it is worth while to remark that the protesting minority even, have felt constrained to avoid the tone of indiscriminate denunciation employed in that document, which declared that these heresies were widely prevalent in the Presbyterian Church and were embraced by almost entire Synods. It shows great progress when even the ultra-Old School party are driven to admit that these doctrinal errors are repudiated by the great mass of the New School Church. The old lion is shorn of his strength. He regards you as gently as a sucking dove. A little child might almost lead him.

But passing from this paper, which is the voice of a badly defeated minority, rapidly passing from its venerable seat of power in the other body, we come to the Answer. It is a document of historical significance. It is we believe, the only official declaration in thirty years—the only one since the Excommunicating Acts, made by the other Assembly, upon the doctrinal standing of our body. During that time, controversial books on the points of difference have been issued by the Publication Board of that Church, and by individual members, but never before has the voice of the whole church been heard in the form of a solemn deliverance from the highest judicatory, until now. That deliverance is a zealous defence of the substantial orthodoxy of the New School. It warmly, even indignantly, repels the charge of the Protest, that we regard Arminian and Pelagian tenets to be consistent with Calvinism. In language more vigorous than elegant, it characterizes such a position as simply self-stultifying and absurd; it scolds the charge, as involving too much, for human belief; as describing an unparalleled phenomenon; as absurd as would have been the position of the Nicene Church, if it had insisted that the tenets of Arius were consistent with the Trinitarianism of its creed; contrary to the workings of the human mind in its natural—much more in its regenerated condition. The fall of Adam, even in its ultimate consequences, has not brought mankind into a condition of moral perversity, such as these Protestants believe the New School Church to occupy. Have we not entered upon a new era, and is not this answer a monument of the revolution, as conspicuous as the shaft on Bunker Hill?

But it is still more evident. For what is the proof which this Answer furnishes of a fact, but now officially recognized to exist, and directly opposite in character to the facts as believed and formally recognized by the other body? The only other great occasion, on which they were referred to by the Old School Assembly, was what has put the Protestants—who stand where the Assembly of 1837 stood—so utterly in the wrong, and put the New School equally in the right? Is it any new deliverance of our Assembly, quoted in the Answer? Is it recent sermons or books from individuals or from our Publication Committee, or some extract from the Theological Quarterly at New York? On the contrary, it is a paper as old as the division itself. It is the PROTEST OF THE NEW SCHOOL MINORITY in the Assembly of 1837. That protest, vainly made against the

charges of the Declaration and Testimony thirty-one years ago, is now solemnly brought into that body, adopted as a sufficient vindication of our orthodoxy, and commended, with even-handed justice, to the lips of the surviving authors of the Act and Testimony itself. It has taken thirty years, and it is worth living thirty years to see it, for the deeply wronged minority of 1837 to get righted. And so far as their doctrinal reputation is concerned, it has been done; thoroughly, honorably, unmistakably done.

The Answer to the Protest made at Albany says that the sixteen doctrinal points enumerated in the Auburn Declaration, which is the doctrinal part of the Protest of 1837—embrace ALL THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE CALVINISTIC CREED. It also credits the Auburn Declaration as "an authoritative statement of the New School type of Calvinism; and as indicating how far they wish to go, and how much liberty they wish in regard to what the terms of union call the various modes of explaining, illustrating and stating the Calvinistic faith." Thus, the Assembly formally recognizes the existence of a New School type of Theology embracing all the fundamentals of Calvinism. It cites a doctinal originated and designed by such New School leaders as Drs. Danfield, Gilbert and Beman, as showing authoritatively what this New School type of theology is. It speaks of the late Dr. Richards, "under whose influence and doctrinal guidance the Auburn Convention was held, as that excellent and sound divine." And although the Answer does not, in so many words, declare that the Auburn Declaration is consistent with the historical or Reformed sense or does not impair the integrity of the Calvinistic system, its authors must mean, if they mean anything, when they say it contains "ALL THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE CALVINISTIC CREED." They cannot be suspected of believing, (and at the same time, hiding their belief), that things not fundamental may vitiate the Reformed sense, or impair the integrity of the system.

This, then, being the official interpretation by the Old School Assembly of the doctrinal liberty contemplated by the first article, so far as that article and that matter of doctrine goes, we are more than content. For ourselves, we crave no greater liberty, than that contemplated by the Auburn Declaration. It embodies all of doctrinal liberty that we have contended for in these columns. It is the work of such men as Richards, Danfield, Gilbert, and Beman. Nothing can be found in Mr. Barnes' books or in the issues of the Publication Committee in conflict with it. Dr. Skinner in the Assembly at Harrisburg emphatically avowed his adherence to it. The New School Church as a body began its existence on that platform, and has remained upon it ever since. It is our doctrinal Bill of Rights, the legitimate child of the Adopting Act of 1729, and of the tolerant but orthodox spirit of American Presbyterianism. It is a New School document, par excellence. It is scriptural in its simplicity and freedom from dialectical theories. It has no general headship of Adam or of Christ; no fiction of immediate imputation or of realistic oneness; no critically balanced theory of the extent of the Atonement, leaving it doubtful whether the Deity is in earnest in the Gospel offer, or whether He foresaw and foreordained all the effects of the Atonement; it finds no strictly penal quality in the vicarious sufferings of Christ; no fatalistic inability in the condition of the sinner; it traverses none of the primary universal instincts of justice in the human breast, in elaborating a dogmatical system.

Nor is it a mere bundle of negotiations, any more than is the Epistle to the Romans itself. It teaches that election is a sovereign act of God's mercy according to the counsel of his own will; denying, as the Confession does, that any violence is thereby offered to the will of the creature. It teaches a divine constitution and representative relationship between Adam and his posterity, such that all the race, by his transgression, become morally corrupt and liable to temporal and eternal death; that original sin is a natural bias to evil, resulting from the first apostasy, leading invariably and certainly to actual transgression, and requiring the redemption and regeneration of the subject, even in the case of dying in infancy. It teaches that as, on account of Adam's sin, the race are treated as if they had sinned, so on account of Christ's righteousness, his people are treated as if they were righteous. It teaches that the sufferings and death of Christ were vicarious; that is, a substitute for the punishment due to offenders; that He offered a sacrifice which God saw to be a full equivalent for the penalty of the law, making an atonement by which overtures of mercy are sincerely offered to the race and secured to those who believe. It teaches that sinners, although truly moral agents, are justly accountable, yet are they so weighed to sin, and so opposed to God's law, that without the

almighty energy of the Holy Spirit, they will never be saved; that faith and regeneration are special works of the Holy Spirit in the heart; in a word, that God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the economy of Grace, are the mysterious Sources, Ground, Rule, and End of all, yet, in some way unfathomable to human reason, consistently with the reality of the immo- agency of man. We have our Old School brethren declared in their Answer that these propositions "embrace all the fundamentals of Calvinism." They approve of them, for the same reason that we do. They give room enough for all doctrinal freedom we care to enjoy. They are a broad enough heaven for the most discursive flights of the true Calvinistic spirit.

We have styled this declaration "New School" document. We are not concerned about a word or a party term, just now. If our Old School brethren see nothing in it, inconsistent with their own doctrinal position, we are willing to call it an Old School document, and ourselves Old School men. Nay, more, we believe the substance of this document older than the Old School, older than Westminster, or Dort, or Heidelberg, older than Edwards, or Odoecius, or Witsius, or Placcus, or Stäuper, or Calvin; older than Pelagius or Augustine, as old as Paul. We believe, that what is called New Schoolism, but what since this Answer we may equally style Old Schoolism, is nothing more than Calvinism, brought nearer to the fountain-head of all doctrine in the Bible, and viewed in the light of the common sense of the renewed heart of man. We have nothing, we say, in such a crisis, about names. Old School men as a whole, have meant, hitherto, by New School, something of which we and New School men as a body are not conscious, something which they mistakenly imputed to us, something which they now, in terms, declare not to belong to the New School type of theology, and that, interpreted by its own leaders, they embrace all the fundamentals of the Calvinistic system.

We have more to say upon the "Adopting Act" of the Protest, and upon the Hall-Humphrey amendment, telegraphed to our Assembly on the eve of its adjournment. The limitations nullifying aspects of these documents are yet to be noticed; but we here frankly avow our satisfaction with the result, in which the doctrinal basis has been disposed of, and shall have nothing to say materially to alter the judgment here and now put on record, so far as this point is concerned. The first article, understood as embracing the New School type of theology, as that was set forth by acknowledged New School leaders in 1837, is surely sufficiently comprehensive to meet all the demands of our body.

CRITICAL NOTES ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Numerically, the last one was the largest General Assembly ever held in our church. The number of delegates present was 243. The nearest approach to this number was last year; at Rochester, when there were 236 in attendance. At Brooklyn, N. Y., in 1865, 229 were present, and at Cleveland, in 1857, 226. In this city, in 1863, there were 219 present. The smallest Assembly ever held was that of 1840, in this city, when only 87 were present; 58 ministers and 29 elders. No wonder the feeling prevailed that such a lean council represented a moribund constituency! But it lived and grew, notwithstanding. The elders have made the greatest proportional improvement in attendance, as their great delinquency required. They now come within a few figures of dividing the numbers even with the ministry. We believe but one Presbytery failed to be represented at Harrisburg, and but one or two Clerical Commissioners failed to report themselves. Our numbers were 37 less than those of the body at Albany, but their roll showed more vacancies than ours. All our Presbyteries in California, Minnesota, Missouri, Kansas, and Tennessee were represented. This growing fullness of our ranks results (1) from the living sympathy and homogeneity of the body. (2) From its home missionary zeal—greater than that of any other body in the country, in proportion to its numbers. This bids the weaker portions to be stronger, and makes the General Assembly a reunion of brethren upon the basis of a living common interest in the work of the kingdom. (3) From the increasing efficiency of our financial arrangements for meeting expenses of delegates. For several recent assemblies ample funds have been in hand for this object, and at the recent meeting the arrangements were modified to cover the case of delegates from California. (4) The happy absence of judicial cases save in rare instances, and the assurance that the time of the body will be given to the greater aspects of the Redeemer's kingdom, and that its proceedings will chronicle the majestic movements of the Lord's hosts to

victory, instead of rehearsing petty strifes and furnishing sad proofs of carnality and weakness among its members. (5) There is something exhilarating in being associated with the chief council of a body, whose progress is manifest and whose labors are prosperous. If took genuine martyr spirit for those 58 ministers and 29 elders to come to this forlorn little assembly of 1840. There were many that stayed away, because they had not the heart to go. All that is different now. (6) The communities among whom the assemblies have been sitting lately, recognize more readily the connection of our body with the progress of Christ's cause, and the maintenance of public morality. So that the preliminary arrangements—burdensome enough yet—are so satisfactorily made, that the occasion becomes one of the highest social joy and Christian fellowship. (7) The facilities of travel are increasing; the social spirit of the people is rising, and great gatherings are more easily brought about than in times past.

It was a peculiarly happy circumstance that our honored Chief Magistrate so warmly identified himself with the Assembly even devoting himself to its entertainment as the leading host of the occasion. He had no scruple in avowing himself one of us, as he peed not from the completeness of his sympathy with the radical tone of our body on great national and moral questions, as well as from his membership in the Harrisburg church. His mansion was thrown open to the Assembly, and a number of the members were entertained there. On several occasions, he was for some time, in the house, an interested listener to the debates, and his generous conduct in pioneering the visit to Gettysburg, where he spent the entire day with the body, has already been noticed. The governor endeared himself to all hearts. His manly form and upright character, his affable conduct, so well shared and graced by his wife, his reverend and practical patriotism, will be among the brightest memories of the occasion to be cherished to every corner of our Church and land by the delighted delegates.

We have already spoken of the distinguished character of the body. No less than six ex-Moderators had seats on the floor. Mr. Barnes, who had accepted, would have made the seventh; but he allowed his alternate to take his place. The others were Drs. Skinner, Hickok, Fisher, Patterson, H. B. Smith, and Nelson. Two other ex-Moderators in attendance, were Drs. Cox and Duffield.

We are glad to hear of the prosperity attending recent efforts of the Y. M. C. A. of this city to procure the means necessary to prosecute their usual important work, and to continue the payments required for the purchase of the building they now occupy. Through the energetic and persevering efforts of the new secretary, Mr. Thomas Marshall, over \$10,000 have been raised in a very brief period, and the Association is encouraged to continue its efforts with a view to complete the purchase at the earliest practicable moment. We are sure the entire Christian community must rejoice at their success. Their temporary meetings, held in different churches in the city, have been almost the only specific Christian movement in behalf of the cause for a long period, and they are so judiciously conducted that they cannot fail to do good.

Bethany Mission is one of the lions of our city. Although far in the South-west, every Christian man or woman in the city, or visiting it, should not fail to put it down as one of the sights that sooner or later must be seen, as surely as Fairmount, the Mint, or Independence Hall. It occupies one of the most beautiful, substantial, and capacious buildings appropriated to worship in our city. As you enter, the first things that strike you are its ample and airy proportions, high ceiling, broad platform, clear space for forms, large gallery for visitors, &c. There are an infant school-room on the left, and a primary school room on the right of the platform, each capable of accommodating over two hundred scholars. Spaces on either side of the main apartment, are divided off for class-rooms, while the unobstructed space or auditorium in front is occupied by over eighty classes, and all the apartments can be thrown into one, thus giving the superintendent an audience of one thousand hearers from the platform. At the height of one story, is a gallery for visitors, capable of accommodating 500 persons, who are shut out entirely from the school. No description can convey an adequate idea of this unique construction, so admirably adapted to Sunday-school purposes on a great scale, as to be worthy of general recognition as a model. We rejoice that the projector and superintendent, the enterprising John

Wanamaker, Esq., of this city, is greatly encouraged with the success of his enterprise. The Church interests of the affair are under the control of Rev. S. M. Lowrie of the other branch. We can hardly conceive of any, but the highest measure of success, in carrying forward to full maturity, an effort which has been begun so early in the best soil, the hearts of the youth; and which has been pushed forward with the energy of a Christian business man, who seems to desire to do for Christ far more, and more energetically, than he does even in his great and prosperous worldly business.

The recent visit of the Chinese Embassy to our shores under the guidance of an ambassador, chosen from the number of American statesmen, who is to introduce them to all the courts of Christendom, is a significant event. There may be some ideas in Chinese civilization which it would be worth while for Christian nations to be possessed of as Mr. Burlingame intimates in his addresses. We do not certainly wish to imitate the Chinese bigotry, which hitherto has discredited all claims to good beyond their own limits, especially as that bigotry is now giving signal proofs of its decline, but one thing China has yet to learn from Christian nations, before her peculiar ideas will get currency; the ambition and the power, rigorously to propagate among others what she thinks valuable of her own. This is, in fact, a part of our Christian civilization—the impulse to communicate to others what of good we enjoy ourselves. Mr. Burlingame, speaking for the Chinese, said they came to ask of us among other things our Christianity. We thank Mr. Burlingame for that sentiment. We earnestly trust that he will give his distinguished "proteges" opportunity to learn something more of our Christianity, than is to be gathered from diplomatic interviews.

THE VOTE ON REUNION NOT POSTPONED.

Some of our contemporaries—religious and secular—seem to be a good deal puzzled and misled by the supplementary resolutions of the O. S. Assembly in regard to Re-union. The United Presbyterian extra announces that as the N. S. Assembly failed to act on the suggestion of the O. S. Assembly to drop "the Gurley amendment" from the doctrinal article, Re-union is thereby postponed for another year. By this statement several other newspapers not Presbyterian have been brought into serious misapprehension of the actual status of the Re-union movement, while the final explanatory "rider" or Hall-Humphrey resolution helps to increase the middle.

The true state of the case is simply this: (1) The suggestion of the O. S. Assembly that the Gurley amendment be dropped, was only adopted in that Assembly after the basis, as it stands, had been approved, and that suggestion failing to pass our Assembly, the terms of the Basis go down to the O. and N. S. Presbyteries for acceptance or rejection just as they were reported by the Joint Committee. The friends of union in the O. S. Church think that the chance of its approval by the necessary three-fourths of the Presbyteries would have been greater, if the suggestion had been adopted by our body.

(2) The Hall-Humphrey resolution—that no doctrine is to be tolerated in the united Church which either Assembly has condemned—is explained as "a sop to Cerberus" in the O. S. Church. Its adoption at the time does not appear very courteous to our own Assembly. The doctrines of the N. S. Church, never came before the O. S. Assembly in any statement that New School men would accept, save the "Auburn Declaration," and that has just been endorsed at Albany as "embracing all the fundamentals of Calvinism." It is for New School Presbyteries to judge how offensive this resolution is, but it by no means puts a stop to the voting of the Presbyteries on the Basis.

Rev. John S. Craig, of Nobleville, Ind., writes to the Evangelist:—"Our Assembly has done well. I can vote for all the articles of re-union except the tenth. It is anti-Presbyterian, and anti-Christian when made binding. In the new or united Church the legislative power of the Assembly, as exercised in 1837-8, must be disavowed. It is monarchical." Our cotemporary adds: "We have heard Old School speakers do [say?] this very thing on several occasions. But the way is fairly open for additional avowals."

The Irish Presbyterian Assembly has had another of its warm sessions. The "Organ Question" was up, but the exciting theme was the *Regium Donum*. The Conservative party carried a resolution—seconded by Dr. Cooke—to hold fast to the government grant, but it was by a greatly reduced majority. The tide is rising.