

*The world is hollow } The earth stands still*

A PASTORAL LETTER

FROM  
The General Assembly of the Presbyterian  
Church, in the United States, to the  
Churches under their care.

DEAR BRETHREN,

THE time in which we address you is very important and interesting. The free conversation on the state of religion has exhibited abundant evidence, that the Churches under our care have never been in a more prosperous condition than during the last year. In the year immediately preceding, perhaps special revivals were more remarkable and more numerous, but as it relates to the general extension of religious influence, the organization of new congregations, and the wide spreading success of Missionary labors, the aspect of the Church has probably never been so promising as at the present time—and when in addition to this we reflect on the various institutions, not only in our own connexion, but in the Christian world at large, calculated to extend the kingdom of our Redeemer; the zeal and liberality with which those institutions are supported; and the extensively beneficial effects which they are every day producing; we are obliged to consider the present moment as forming an important era in the annals of religion. A general movement of Protestant Christendom has taken place; an unusual blessing has descended on the Church of Christ; and we are probably approaching some day of the Son of Man of no usual or ordinary character. The present therefore is no doubt a favorable time, not only for extending the influence, but for advancing the purity of the church; for the extirpation of any errors, and the abolition of any unchristian practices which may have found entrance among us, during the long period of comparative darkness and desolation through which we have passed. And although we do not believe that any thing immoral or vicious is more prevalent now than at some former periods or even as much so, yet the existence of such things at the present time, strikes the minds of serious christians with an appearance of greater deformity, and fills them with more pungent regret as it is exhibited in such dark contrast with that promising and wonderful aspect of things so extensively displayed by the christian world. The free conversation on the state of religion has brought some such things to our view, against which we feel constrained to bear our decided testimony; and we would enter upon this duty with the tenderness and meekness, but at the same time with the firmness and authority which becomes a Judiciary of the Church of Christ.

The first thing we shall notice is the crime of Drunkenness. This crime has at all times been a curse to our country, and has often made lamentable inroads upon our Church. We are convinced that it may be opposed more successfully by prevention than in any other way. When the character of drunkenness is fully formed, the unhappy victim is lost to those motives which ordinarily influence all other classes of men. In this state of things nothing but a miracle of divine grace can effect his reformation. The certain and acknowledged prospect of the wreck of his family, his fortune, and his character; and even of the ruin of his immortal soul, is not sufficient to arrest his course; and yet perhaps the same man may formerly have been in such a state of equilibrium or indecision upon this subject, that the smallest motives might have prevented the formation of a habit, which in its maturity has become so irresistible. This consideration is certainly sufficient to justify an effort for saving our fellow men from the domination of so destructive a vice. For this purpose we earnestly recommend to the officers and members of our Church to abstain even from the common use of ardent spirits. Such a voluntary privation as this, with its motives publicly avowed, will not be without its effect in cautioning our fellow christians and fellow citizens, against the encroachment of intoxication; and we have the more confidence in recommending this course as it has already been tried with success in several sections of our Church.

The vice of Gambling has also been forced upon our attention. We indeed hope that few, or perhaps none, of our actual professors, have indulged themselves in the practice of what they consider as coming under the denomination of gambling. But perhaps there are some addicted to this practice who have evinced a predilection for our church, and forms of worship, and who are not unwilling to receive the word of admonition from us. Such we would earnestly exhort to consider in the most serious manner, the consequences of the course they are pursuing, and the awful lessons which the experience of the world. Is every day exhibiting on this subject. But it is further our duty to testify, that all encouragement of lotteries, and purchasing of lottery tickets; all attendance on horse racing, and betting on such, or any other occasions; and all attempts of whatever kind to acquire gain without giving an

equivalent, involve the Gambling principle, and participate in the guilt which attaches to that vice.

On the fashionable, though as we believe dangerous amusements of Theatrical Exhibitions and Dancing, we deem it necessary to make a few observations. The theatre we have always considered as a school of immorality. If any person wishes for honest conviction on this subject, let him attend to the character of that mass of matter, which is generally exhibited on the stage. We believe all will agree, that comedies at least, with a few exceptions, are of such a description, that a virtuous and modest person cannot attend the representation of them, without the most painful and embarrassing sensations. If indeed custom has familiarized the scene, and these painful sensations are no longer felt, it only proves that the person in question, has lost some of the best sensibilities of our nature; that the strongest safeguard of virtue has been taken down, and that the moral character has undergone a serious depreciation.

With respect to Dancing, we think it necessary to observe, that however plausible it may appear to some, it is perhaps not the less dangerous on account of that plausibility. It is not from those things which the world acknowledges to be most wrong, that the greatest danger is to be apprehended to religion, especially as it relates to the young. When the practice is carried to its highest extremes, all admit the consequences to be fatal; and why not then apprehend danger, even from its incipient stages. It is certainly in all its stages, a fascinating and infatuating practice. Let it once be introduced, and it is difficult to give it limits. It steals away our precious time, dissipates religious impressions, and hardens the heart. To guard you, beloved brethren, against its wiles and its fascinations, we earnestly recommend that you will consult that sobriety which the sacred pages require. We also trust, that you will attend with the meekness and docility becoming the christian character, to the admonitions on this subject, of those whom you have chosen to watch for your souls. And now, beloved brethren, that you may be guarded from the dangers we have pointed out, and from all other dangers which beset the path of life and obstruct our common salvation, and that the great head of the church may have you in his holy keeping is our sincere and affectionate prayer. Amen.

J. J. JANEWAY,  
Moderator.

June, 1818.

Resolved, That the General Assembly recommend, and they do hereby recommend, to the Pastors and Sessions of the different churches under their care, to assemble as often as they may deem necessary during the year, their baptized children with their parents, to recommend said children to God in prayer, explain to them the nature of their Baptism; the relation which they sustain to the Church; and the obligations which their Baptism has imposed on them.

We have long been apprised of the circumstances alluded to in the paragraph from the Savannah Republican, and as it will, doubtless, go the rounds, it may be well to state them. If we are not misinformed, the dispute between generals Jackson and Scott arose respecting the celebrated 'general order' issued by Jackson. It appears that general Scott expressed an opinion unfavorable to the manner and spirit of that order, as being calculated to create insubordination. This opinion was expressed one evening at a party, and to one person only, a resident of this state, and a politician who seems designed, by nature, to push on mischief. An anonymous letter conveyed to general Jackson the opinion, in all probability, expressed in confidence and without the least expectation of its reaching general Jackson, or without the least intention of wounding his feelings. Gen. Jackson, impetuous and irascible in the extreme, took fire at the supposed insult, and a warm correspondence has taken place, which, we trust, will be amicably terminated, considering, as we do, that gen. Jackson should have treated the anonymous informer with the silence that he merited.

With respect to that general order of Jackson's, the people of the United States, by common consent, permitted it to pass by without comment, in consideration of the eminent service which he had rendered to his country. It is, however, a fact, that a document, so dangerous to subordination and good government, has never been heard of in the annals of any nation; and if general Jackson is desirous of fighting every citizen who holds that opinion, he will have his hands full. General Washington in the most perplexing period of his service, when in fact, there was no government ever issued such an order. The attempt, however, to produce a quarrel between two eminent men, by which their lives may be jeopardized, merits, if made, the indignation of every citizen.

Nat. Advocats.

From the N. Y. Evening Post.

Mr. Editor—It has been sagely said that this is the age of wonders; that it is, I think none will deny, after perusing the following circular. It was received a few days since from a correspondent in St. Louis, who writes, that the author, capt. Symmes, is a very respectable man, a man of intelligence, and really sane in mind. He also states, that Symmes is diligently engaged in forwarding his scheme, and that upwards of twenty credible persons have actually engaged in this expedition.

CIRCULAR.

Light gives light, to light discover—ad in finitum.

St. Louis, (Missouri Territory),  
North America, April 10, A. D. 1818.

TO ALL THE WORLD!

I declare the earth is hollow, and habitable within; containing a number of solid concentric spheres, one within the other, and that it is open at the poles 12 or 16 degrees. I pledge my life in support of this truth, and am ready to explore the hollow, if the world will support and aid me in the undertaking.

JNO. CLEVES SYMMES, of Ohio,  
Late Captain of infantry.

N. B. I have ready for the press a treatise on the principles of matter, wherein I show proofs of the above positions, account for various phenomena, and disclose Doctor Darwin's golden secret.

My terms are, the patronage of this and the new worlds. I dedicate to my wife and ten children. I select Dr. S. L. Mitchell, Sir H. Davy, and baron Alexander de Humboldt, as my protectors.

I ask one hundred brave companions, well equipped, to start from Siberia in the fall season, with reindeer and sleighs, on the ice of the frozen sea—I engage we find warm and rich land, stocked with thrifty vegetables, and animals, if not men, on reaching one degree northward of latitude 82. We will return in the succeeding spring.

J. C. S.

To his excellency gov. Wm. Clark.

ORIGINAL ANECDOTE.

It has been remarked that frequently the human mind, in the last stages of its earthly existence, has been endowed with something like a prophetic spirit of the future. Whether that was the case in the striking incident now about to be recorded, it is not pretended to say. The facts are, however, unquestionably true; and are well known to many of the officers of the American army. The coincidence of the circumstances is, indeed, very striking; and the facts deserve to be recorded, not only as an evidence of the undaunted bravery of the American officers; but as a signal instance of the fulfillment of their own predictions.—About two hours previous to the ever memorable battle of Bridgewater, news had arrived in the camp of the 9th regiment, that the British were advancing. A number of the officers of the ninth, among whom were Captain Hull, Lieutenants Turner and Burgett, and Captain David Perry had assembled together in a little squad; were chatting in a friendly and jocular manner; and were commenting upon the news they had heard of the approach of the army. One of the company observed—"well, we shall have warm work to day—some of us shall be killed—who shall they be." Another in the same tone of jocularly, replied "Captain Hull," and held up his hand. The company all joined in holding up their hands, and Captain Hull among the rest—"Who next?" rejoined another. "Lieut. Turner," was the reply, and the vote taken in like manner. "Well, but there must be more than two—who next?" was asked. "Lieutenant Burgett," and carried by a similar vote. "We want a representative in the British camp—who shall be our representative?—who shall be taken prisoner?" All eyes immediately turned to Captain Perry, who being quite in his dishabille, had excited some raillery. "Captain Perry shall be our representative," was the unanimous reply, and unanimous vote. Captain Perry immediately retired: and in a few minutes returned, shaved, and cleanly dressed, and in a jocular tone, asked whether he now made an appearance suitable for their representative.

The order for forming the line of battle came. The different gentlemen repaired to their different posts. The dreadful conflict commenced. The first officer that fell in the 9th regiment, was captain Hull, fighting gallantly, at the head of his company—the second Lieutenant Turner—the third Lieutenant Burgett, all displaying the most undaunted and determined bravery—whilst captain Perry, as if fully to complete the previous prediction, was taken prisoner by the enemy, and carried captive into the British camp! So striking a coincidence of circumstances rarely occurs; and these incidents have frequently been the subject of conversation and remark, among the American officers, since the ever memorable battle of Bridgewater.

Pittsburg Mercury.

THE PATRIOT.

To speak his thoughts, is every freeman's right.

MONDAY, JULY 6.

State of the Thermometer.

Temperature of the Weather by Fahrenheit's Thermometer—in the shade.

Days.	at sunrise.	at 3 P. M.
JUNE 1	63	69
2	55	75
3	51	82
4	56	86
5	66	82
6	67	88
7	56	76
8	61	76
9	46	80
10	48	86
11	54	91
12	61	89
13	66	76
14	72	76
15	50	76
16	50	80
17	45	82
18	58	76
19	46	78
20	43	78
21	48	76
22	56	86
23	59	78
24	56	84
25	64	68
26	00	00
27	61	92
28	65	94
29	68	97
30	62	94

The weather this month has been highly favorable for the vegetation of grain and grass.

For the Patriot.

Mr. Brindle,

WE live in an age of speculation. The human mind seems bent to the utmost stretch of its faculties in devising new inventions; and our philosophers seem determined to try how far the credulity of mankind will extend, and how many astonishing, marvelous absurdities they can impose upon the world. The time was when the Priests had the disposal of human faith and governed the minds of men at their pleasure, but they have lost their dominion and have been succeeded by the Philosophers. In your paper of the 13th ult. one of your correspondents who subscribes himself 'J. H.' has made a formidable attack upon our credulity. He tries to make us believe that a hazle or birch or willow rod, can be attracted by water in the hands of certain conjurers, notwithstanding the water may be ever so far below the surface of the earth. This he calls 'Bletonism,' or the 'Divining Rod.' And appears to be the same thing that we vulgar beings call *water smelling*. J. H. is not the first of his order who have tried to impose tricks of this kind on the ignorant and credulous, and their success induces others to go on with the same game.

Some two or three years ago Judge Cooper wrote several Essays to prove that vegetables had life and sensation similar to animals, and that like animals they gendered and propagated by cohabitation. This whimsical conceit might have been swallowed by the multitude had not a learned Clergyman taken up the cudgel, or rather his pen, and confined the trees, bushes, &c. to the proper station in which nature had placed them.—Old Dr. Franklin once tried to persuade people that a pointed rod of iron could draw down fire from Heaven to the earth, and he succeeded so far that multitudes of people hoisted rods up against the ends of their houses to prevent the lightning from running down their chimneys—and in Bellefonte there is one raised above the cupola of the Court house, projecting down over the roof to the ground to inform the public, no doubt, that our county Commissioners were at the time philosophic believers. This I believe is called the Lightning, not the Divining Rod.

But one of the most audacious philosophic empirics that ever appeared in the world was an Italian of the name of Galilio—Some two or three hundred years ago he tried to make the world believe that this earth was round like a cannon bullet, or oval like an egg—that it whirled round like a top—that people could walk on every side of it with their feet opposite to each other, and yet none of them tumble off head foremost, and even that it was surrounded with immense bodies of water, seas, lakes, rivers, &c. none of which spilled or run over. In this case the clergy also interfered. They proved beyond contradiction that the earth was formed like a cheese or a millstone, and never moved.