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at the Anniversary
Philadelp.
Penn
THE CRISIS,

OR

A STATEMENT OF FACTS

IN

EXPOSITION OF DANGEROUS ERRORS

CONTAINED IN

MR. BARNES'S DEFENCE.

BY

A SON OF THE HUGUENOTS.

NEW-YORK:

ROBERT CARTER, 112 CANAL-STREET.

1836.

SCATCHERD & ADAMS,
PRINTERS,
38 Gold street.

THE CRISIS, &c.

MANY circumstances concur to mark the present as an era of absorbing interest to the friends of truth and righteousness. Fluctuation is, in strong features, impressed upon the face of nature. Principles and establishments, old, and wise, and venerable—physical, political, and moral—are rudely assailed by a spirit of daring and unhallowed innovation. The Bible is attacked—the Church, bought with the precious blood of the eternal Son of God, and destined to elevate and bless mankind, is pushed, by pretended friends and deluded votaries, into the “fiery trial.” Whether, in her present form, she will be utterly consumed, emerge from the flames marred and spoiled of her heavenly beauty, or come forth purified from her dross, as gold refined, time must prove.

In the Presbyterian Church every thing precious to true believers and to our ruined world is brought into fearful jeopardy. It is high time for all honest and good men to come forth to the help of the Lord against the opposers of his truth.

Under deep impressions of danger and of duty, we ask the calm and solemn, and prayerful attention of all true Presbyterians, to the following plain statement of facts.

The evils threatened to our beloved Church, and the designs of her adversaries, whether partially fulfilled or still prospective, are clearly concentrated in the case of the Rev. Albert Barnes. Although it is not the object of these pages to enter directly into the controversy between him and Dr. Junkin, we cannot withhold a few passing remarks upon the *Notes on the Romans* and the character of their author.

No undertaking requires so many peculiar, rare, and high qualifications as that of a sacred commentator. To this work Mr. Barnes’s capacity is by no means adapted. He does not possess the precision and accuracy of mind—the nice discrimination—the comprehensiveness of view—the age—patience—distrust of self-exemption from prejudice—extensive, various, and well-digested knowledge, necessary to execute this arduous task with success. Besides, suspected as he always has been, especially since he published his sermon on the *Way of Salvation*, by a large and respectable number of his brethren, who had the best means of knowing, with holding erroneous opinions—doctrines offensive to the Church because at variance with her standards—and satisfied of the fact, as he appears to have been, it was certainly a very rash measure so hastily to spread before the world his crude strictures on the Romans. What has oc-

curred, under such circumstances, could not fail to occur. The performance is very imperfect; sufficient greatly to depress, if not destroy, his reputation as a theologian and scholar in the estimation of sound and accurate men. The Apostle's profound and comprehensive arguments, either from design to misrepresent them, or from want of clear and expanded views, are exhibited, in many places, in detached and broken parts, as incoherent fragments of thought; often destitute of meaning, force, or beauty. In some of the most difficult and important passages, there is much perversion, evasion, and concealment; and, in some instances, attempts to annihilate what the learned and pious have ever pronounced to be the very essence of the sacred text. The plainest principles of Greek grammar, which every schoolboy ought to be familiar with, are set at naught; and the best established rules of exegetical exposition outraged, to make the Apostle's language tally with his expositor's preconceived opinions.

That Mr. Barnes holds unsound doctrines is now established by his own statements and concessions; and I do most honestly declare that I never was fully satisfied of his serious criminality till I received the conviction from a careful reading of his own attempt at vindication. The very effort he makes to pervert the nature and impair the force of our ordination vows—to resolve these most sacred engagements into mere matters of form, allowing numberless reserves and departures from their letter and spirit—abrogating, at once, their solemn sanctions and binding force, gives origin to most painful suspicions; and is an enormity never before, in our land, with so much effrontery, put forth to the light—an enormity deserving the solemn consideration and rebuke of the Church.

Our strictures will be confined chiefly to Mr. B.'s preliminary remarks in his defence, which abound with positions of the most unwarrantable nature, inasmuch as their direct tendency is to destroy the purity and peace of our Church. We feel this examination to be the more necessary, and the more entirely justifiable, from the fact that his statements form no part of the documents which are to be laid before the General Assembly in his appeal; and yet, if unanswered, they will exert an extensive ex parte influence on the expected decision.*

* The writer here refers, chiefly, to the indications afforded during the recent investigations in Mr. B.'s case. A volume would not suffice to contain a full view of the various plans and movements of this party to accomplish their object. Indeed, the history of the N. S. faction, for many past years, if fairly drawn, would exhibit little more than a constant series of artful, disorderly, and laborious efforts, to destroy the prominent features of the Presbyterian system. To promote this work the Home Missionary and Presbyterian Education Societies were established, and especially remodelled into their present form. The Am. Ed. Society has been uniformly devoted to the same service. New England associations have co-operated with the N. School by ordaining unsound candidates, who had been refused admission in our own body, and then returning them (with their papers) to spurious Presbyteries, who readily received them. As a fit instrumentality in this work of disorganization, elective affinity Presbyteries were introduced. Multitudes of papers, pamphlets, and magazines have been issued as auxiliaries. Men drilled for the work of contamination have been fraudulently smuggled into orthodox seminaries and churches, to propagate their errors, create divisions, and impair the glory of our church. Her catechisms have been corrupted, and large spurious editions disgorged upon the churches. The theology of our hymns and sacred songs has been mutilated so as to deprive them of their high and useful character for scriptural

The leading object of these sheets is to show design, in Mr. B. and his adherents, to introduce into our Church corruption of doctrine and order; to evade honest investigation and constitutional trial; to mislead the public mind by uncandid and inflammatory statements; to excite odium against the truth and its advocates; in a word, to defeat judicial proceedings, and paralyse all discipline in the Church, with a design to open a wide door for the entrance of every "unclean thing."

Before proceeding, allow me to make some preliminary observations considered of importance.

First: my appearing in this manner is the result of absolute constraint. The friends of truth and order, with one consent, after the decision of the Synod of Philadelphia and the appeal taken by Mr. Barnes, resolved to let the whole matter go up to the proper tribunal on its own merits, without discussion or a single effort to prejudice his cause. This course, justice, delicacy, and usage, all seemed to demand both from *them* and from *him*. *His violation* of this course is now notorious through our land. *They* have been true to their purpose, till farther silence would involve a criminal dereliction of duty, and abandonment of the truth of God, and the very existence of his Church to the influence of most unwarrantable measures. In these circumstances, as the humble advocate of the cause of God and of our venerated system, in this day of slander and reproach from those whom "a deceived heart hath turned aside," with great reluctance I lift my feeble pen. It is not a victory of person or of party, but the triumph of Gospel truth over its foes, that is sought.

Again: let it be distinctly observed that the present question is no local matter—not merely a controversy in the city or Synod of Philadelphia. Can it be a matter of duty or of interest, in any possible view of the subject, exclusively, to that Synod, to detect heresy—to suppress a dangerous book, published indeed within their limits, but industriously circulated through the whole land? God forbid! We cannot assent to the idea that the suppression of error and vindication of truth in the United States—that defending the pure standard of our great and holy Presbyterian body has devolved upon that Synod alone. We are not willing to impose upon them the exclusive labor, nor to concede to them this high exclusive honor, and to stand idly by and push the cause of God and of souls thus coldly from us. We *too* feel a solemn, because a deep and eternal interest, in this momentous struggle between darkness and light. The cause of truth is one of absorbing interest to every child of God and to every lover of Zion. Our common vows, our common dangers, our common hopes,

truth and doctrinal purity. Numberless *Runners* have been commissioned, and paid in part, at common expense, under the characters of ministers, missionaries, stated supplies, editors, professors, revival-makers, teachers, singers, agents, booksellers, travelling merchants, &c., with the specific design of circulating new divinity, introducing new measures, undermining orthodox ministers, dividing orthodox congregations and establishing new ones, upon heretical or schismatic principles. Recently it has appeared to be systematic in the N. S. to oppose all orthodox institutions, and not less so to assail pure and faithful preachers and teachers with slander and invective. And to consummate this atrocious scheme, funds have been raised and appropriated, so as to involve the high and hateful crime of bribery, to corrupt the Church. These statements are not made as floating rumours, resting upon a doubtful basis:—they are susceptible of positive proof, on indisputable evidence, before any competent and impartial tribunal.

should inspire common zeal, and lead to prompt and united action in the common cause.

Again : we assume it as an indisputable principle, that the Presbyterian Church have a perfect right, in common with all denominations of Christians, to create a test or formula by which to distinguish themselves from the other parts of the great Christian body—to try the purity, and regulate the faith and practice of their members—and to guard against innovations and corruptions from every quarter. In establishing a Confession of Faith and form of Discipline, they have followed the example, early and constantly set by all denominations, not only in erecting standards, but in requiring honest conformity to them.

Again : the present inquiry involves no charge against the religious character or ministerial fidelity of Mr. Barnes. With these matters the prosecution has nothing to do. It is a simple question of conformity or non-conformity to the Confession of Faith—of soundness or unsoundness in doctrine—of observance or violation of ordination vows. It is to be decided by reference to the law and testimony. We do not pretend to assert, that either wisdom or piety is confined within the limits of our Church, or to be measured by the articles of our creed. But we do say, that no man, after voluntarily assuming the prescribed obligations, can honestly and innocently preach and publish, while within our bosom, sentiments at variance with our doctrines ; that the purity of the Church must be impaired by it ; her peace marred ; her essential and lovely features changed ; and her very existence gradually undermined by such a course.

Again : differences of opinion do not imply, and need not create, personal animosity ; they are consistent with kind and respectful feelings between individuals whose doctrinal views are most directly opposed. The writer of these remarks disavows all personal antipathy to Mr. Barnes. His intercourse with that brother, during the last ten years, has been of the most kind and fraternal character. In this proposed illustration he is not conscious of any desire to injure Mr. Barnes ; but feels imperiously bound, as far as in him lies, to maintain those sacred interests to which he has given an irrevocable pledge and consecrated his life, whatever sacrifices of feeling may be involved : and, in the words of "the book of the covenant,"—"whatever persecutions may arise unto him on that account."

Lastly : as a fundamental principle, take notice, that the ministers of the Church are pre-eminently responsible to her for their opinions and their conduct. This remark is the more necessary and important here, as Mr. Barnes, in the very threshold of his defence, really seems to claim exemption from the authority and supervision of the Church. He tells us, virtually, that it is an improper and unjustifiable thing to call a minister, who thinks himself in good standing, who is laboring diligently, and surrounded by a united people, to spend "his time, and patience, and strength to answer to accusations," &c. Hear the Book of Discipline, ch. v. sec. 1. : "No minister ought, on account of his office, to be screened from justice, nor his offences to be slightly censured." This relates to general conduct. Hear the Book

on the subject of doctrine, ch. xx. sec. 4. : "And for their *publishing* such *erroneous opinions*, as either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church, they may lawfully be called to account and proceeded against by the censures of the Church." Gov. ch. v. sec. 13. : "*Heresy* and schism may be of such a nature as to infer *deposition*: but errors ought to be carefully considered, whether *they strike at the vitals of religion*, and are *industriously spread*." In this case the prosecutor declares his persuasion, and every enlightened and sincere Christian, who believes the charges, must concur in the belief, that Mr. Barnes's errors strike at the foundation of the Christian's hope for eternity.

We now return to our main object, which is, to show design in Mr. Barnes and his coadjutors, to corrupt the Church, &c. &c.

In his defence against the charges of Dr. Junkin, Mr. Barnes has so far implicated the Theological Seminary at Princeton, and the Presbytery of New Brunswick, as to render necessary some statement of the opinion entertained respecting him while on trials before that judicatory. So far as the writer recollects or can ascertain now, he was considered, by those who knew him best, as a young man of pretty good parts, hopeful piety, desirous of knowledge and addicted to study—but imprudently fond of Eastern theories and speculations—tenacious of novel and doubtful opinions—often occasioning among his fellow-students unprofitable and perplexing disputations; on the whole, as to his theological course, rather creating painful apprehensions than inspiring confidence. In his trials before the Presbytery, his evasive and equivocal terms, and unusual statements on some cardinal points, excited dissatisfaction in the minds of some members. But supposing, as they did, that they might have been somewhat mistaken—that the candidate might have spoken unguardedly—that he would obtain more clear and satisfactory views by age and reflection, and inclining to great moderation and indulgence—there was no open objection made to Mr. Barnes's licensure. Soon after he was transferred, for ordination, to a sister Presbytery, upon whom devolved the chief responsibility of inducting him into the sacred office.

Here it is to be observed, that a designing, artful candidate can deceive any Presbytery. Mr. Barnes now informs us, that while at Princeton *his views were the same as now!* If this be true, it is a serious fact, as we shall discover—a dark and melancholy chapter in his history. In his assertion, that this was *fully known*, he commits a monstrous mistake! Had he honestly and fully disclosed his opinions, as they are now *fully known*, there cannot be a doubt—fidelity to be principles and character of that pure and respectable company of Christian ministers, compels the declaration—that he would assuredly have been rebuked and rejected. It is evident from his own words that he entered the holy office as a probationer by such an act as ought to affect any minister's public character. We regret Mr. Barnes's reference to this Presbytery, as it imposes, to some extent, the painful duty of explanation. Even if that body, in its Presbyterial capacity, choose passively to bear the reference, some individual members feel a desire to wipe off the stigma. It is always offensive

to be duped ; but still more so to be publicly told of it. Why did not Mr. Barnes keep this fact securely laid up in his own breast ? The charge, not indeed directly brought by him, is certainly implied, and will be unsparingly urged by others, that this Presbytery either sympathized in his errors or were too obtuse to discern them ! Of what avail, then, is the reference ? But how uncandid and unjust does it seem to make the Presbytery responsible for a licensure which, his own words roundly aver, was obtained by double-dealing ; that is, by assenting to the standards in one form, and silently and secretly intending to interpret them in another ! For, as we shall see, from Mr. Barnes's own account of this transaction, such is its just import.

The plan of making secret exceptions and mental reservations in forming contracts, has always been considered by honest men as culpable and disgraceful. Our Confession condemns it, ch. xxii. sec. 4. : "An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words, *without equivocation or mental reservation!*" This dishonest course was denounced in the Assembly of 1834, which did more to favor heresy than any preceding General Assembly, viz : "Resolved, that in receiving and adopting the formularies of our Church, every person ought to be supposed, without evidence to the contrary, to receive and adopt them according to the *obvious, known, and established meaning of the terms, as the confession of his faith;* and that if objections be made, the Presbytery, unless he withdraw such objections, should not license, or ordain, or admit him."—Ex. p. 26. The Presbytery of New Brunswick, in taking Mr. Barnes's solemn engagement, really believed he was receiving and adopting the Confession of Faith according to the obvious, known, and established meaning of its terms. But Mr. Barnes now discloses something widely different. "The *system of doctrines contained in the standards I received as a system. I received it, not indeed ever expressing my assent to every expression and form of expression, but as reserving to myself the right, in common with all others, of examining the language and forming an opinion of its meaning.*" This is in direct violation of the above extracts from the Confession of Faith and the minutes of the Assembly. Mr. Barnes here takes a position, we think, far in advance of the main body of troublesome intruders into our Church. They have practised this artifice—been suspected of it—been charged with it—but from fear of public opinion and the shame of detection, they have stoutly denied the charge ! Mr. Barnes throws off all restraint, takes the very ground of Unitarians, Pelagians, Taylorites, of his Eastern theological fraternity, and openly asserts the right of signing the Confession as a whole, for doctrine, for substance—intending to interpret, mutilate, or distort the individual parts of the system, to suit any other system which latent scepticism, false philosophy, fanaticism, or folly may suggest. Is not this monstrous for a man laying claims to common sense and common honesty ! He even asserts that he entered the sacred office exercising this right, these secret reserves and hidden intentions ; thus imposing upon the pure and unsuspecting judicatories through which he passed ; nay, he tells us, that on this right of secret reserves and exceptions he vindicates himself in holding the false doctrines of which he now stands convicted before the Church. Now, what is this but setting up one

crime to vindicate another—practising fraud to secure advantages for propagating heresy? Without preferring any charge, we would here recommend to Mr. Barnes for serious consideration, the remarkable, and, as we conceive, not inappropriate language of Peter to Ananias, Acts v. 3. : “Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price (promise)? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto man, but unto God.”

In examining Mr. Barnes’s subsequent course, as developed by himself, we find similar exhibitions of unsound and disorderly views, with short interims, down to the present time; and a party striving by every means in their power to sustain him. His resolution was early formed, and has been pertinaciously followed up, to trample upon the Confession of Faith; to make his assumption of it a mere convenience, and the general pledge given to it a nominal thing which every minister and member of the Church may observe or not, in its known and established import. This point gained, error may enter in all its various forms, and triumph. In accordance with this, we find, in his sermon on *The Way of Salvation*, he unhesitatingly discards the public standards:—“Nor is he to be *cramped* by any *frame-work* of faith that has been reared around the Bible.” How decisive and contemptuous is such language from a man who had bound himself, by the most impressive and awful sanctions, to regard that very frame-work honestly, according to its spirit and letter!—for such is the interpretation put upon the oath by those who administered it. Seldom, indeed, have we been more astonished and grieved than at finding so many indications of this character. The sermon containing this renunciation of our standards exhibits principles and views opposed to some most important doctrines of our Confession. Hence the zeal and perseverance of his adherents to screen both himself and his discourse from deserved censure. The result is well known. Mr. Barnes’s account of the transaction is quite remarkable:—“Charges similiar to these had been alleged against me, not indeed in a formal and regular manner, but in an irregular manner, by the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Those accusations had been laid before the General Assembly, and the highest judicature of the Presbyterian Church had *fully acquitted me of them!*” Did that General Assembly, or any other, ever declare that Mr. Barnes did not hold the opinions charged as errors? Mr. Barnes knows to the contrary. This full acquittal was such as left more than two fifths of that Assembly fully persuaded of his guilt in the matter of accusation. The decision, as was openly avowed by a large portion both of the majority and minority, turned much more on points of policy than upon the merits of the charges. The same controversy was continued, in different forms, till the Assembly of 1834 introduced and sanctioned the affinity system. This decisive step in favour of heresy, instead of acquitting Mr. Barnes, admitted his guilt, and was designed to provide for him a safe retreat in his heretical course. In all these complicate measures, from year to year, the same man in substance is indirectly under process. In the back ground we discover a conspiracy in progress to shelter these dangerous opinions and their author from merited condemnation; to provide inlets for large numbers of these spurious operators;

and eventually to overturn the whole Presbyterian system. Mr. Barnes never has been acquitted in the Presbyterian Church; and while *he* holds his heretical opinions, and *she* adheres to her standards, based upon the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, he never can be set free from the charges now alleged. His present course proves an obstinate adherence to his original design of introducing corruption into the Church. His co-operators have embraced the present opportunity as propitious to their common object. His early prejudices—his prominent position—his rapid advances in the career of error—his popularity as a man and minister—his reckless devotion to party—and his predominant passion for pre-eminence, qualify him well for the distinguished place assigned him in this nefarious work.

Mr. Barnes's Sermon before the Theological Seminary at Princeton, September, 1834, still farther discloses his rage for speculation on the truths of the Bible. "Nor is it," says he, referring to modern discoveries in science, "nor is it demonstrated that the limit of advancement is yet reached; or that the human mind must pause here and hope to proceed no farther. These men (philosophers named) have just opened illimitable fields of thought before the mind. *And so it may be in Theology.* The system was as perfect in the Scriptures as Astronomy was before Newton lived; yet it is possible that there are truths, and relations of truths, which the mind has not yet contemplated." We introduce this extract merely to exhibit Mr. Barnes's real character to the public, whom he has so elaborately and voluminously addressed, to show how completely he has thrown off all the restraints of our standards, and rejected the landmarks of reason and common sense. And we now ask the Christian world, Is it true that the Bible is susceptible of entire renovation and radical amendment? Has the profound and critical learning of all preceding ages proved abortive? Are the grand essential principles of revealed truth still enveloped in darkness and doubt? Is it possible, as Mr. Barnes plainly intimates, that entire misapprehension and utter ignorance on points of primary importance may still exist, to be detected and removed by some modern theological adventurer, as Newton and La Place expelled the ignorance and crudity existing before their day in Astronomical science? This is the vision gravely presented by Mr. Barnes. Concede to him that Theology, the meaning of the Bible, is to be altered, amended, or new-modelled, as Astronomy was by Newton—as a system of experimental philosophy; or like the progressive science of Botany or Chemistry, like a cotton gin or steam engine; and all religious truth may be sublimated, frittered away, and ejected from the world, by the insatiable spirit of innovation. Besides, what confidence can be placed in the public ministry of a man whose opinions rest upon so visionary and fluctuating a basis? How can he himself proclaim and urge any thing upon dying souls as the truth of God and able to save, when it may be an obsolete error, a total mistake, which the march of mind and increase of light may supersede; and then follow with some new vision, to be, in its turn, admired and abandoned? The direct and inevitable tendency of Mr. Barnes's views on this subject, is to shake the foundation of all sacred truth; not only to create in ordinary minds a vacillating temper—not only to impair the precious hopes of

established believers in the sublimest truths of Christianity; but to inspire universal doubt—to scatter among sinful men the seeds of cavilling—scepticism—and of death! This system of “ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth,”—2 Tim. iii. 6.—none are so ready to embrace as those who greatly overvalue their own ability and importance. * Some admirable fruits of Mr. Barnes’s splendid fiction may be seen in his Notes on the Romans; a few choice specimens condensed, in Dr. Junkin’s charges against him for heresy.

Mr. Barnes’s defence is replete with painful indications of design to evade his ordination vows, and to depart from the Confession of our faith. The following passage admits the charges and evinces fixed purpose, at least, under the present process, to cleave to his errors and brave all consequences. “I am not conscious of being so obstinately attached to the exposition which I have adopted, as to be unwilling to be convinced of error; and, if convinced, to abandon the sentiments which I have expressed. Whether the mode that will be most likely to secure a change of opinion is that of arraigning me for the high misdemeanor of heresy, is the most desirable to secure such a result, I shall not now inquire. In *this land* and in *these times*, a change of opinion is to be effected, not by the language of *authority*—not by an appeal to the *fathers*—not by calling on us simply to listen to the voice of other times; but by the sober and solid exposition of the oracles of God. *Men, even in error*, listen respectfully to those who attempt to reason with them and to convince them that they are wrong; *they turn instinctively away* when denunciation takes the place of argument, and the cry of heresy is the substitute for a sober appeal to the understanding.” Mr. Barnes’s reformation then is hopeless! He admits that he is in error. He quarrels dreadfully with Dr. Junkin’s constitutional resort to set him right. He has proved incorrigible under a constant course of warning and admonition ever since he entered Philadelphia. The history of our Church, for the last five years, is an indelible record of that fact! If Dr. Junkin had approached him with bended knee and suppliant tone—if the church had come (not with *authority*!) humbly suing at his feet, he might have deigned to *listen*. But the name of heresy, accusations, charges, dreadful! *He turns instinctively away!* Yes, and hugs his false opinions closer than ever. Remember this is the profoundly meek and devout Mr. Barnes. Remember, too, when in error, his embracing or refusing reform depends not upon the nature, the evidence, the importance of truth; but upon the gentleness, the soft and timid reserve, the courtesy, with which it is commended to him. Admirable trait in a new school Commentator!!

That Mr. Barnes never felt the force of his ordination covenant, that he never intended to regard it, nay, that he studiously designed to set it at naught, no man can doubt who attentively examines *his defence*. The following extract proclaims, and even argues, not only his right, but his

* Mr. Barnes’s commendatory preface to the late edition of Butler’s Analogy, though it furnished little evidence of the modesty which some have ascribed to him, admonished us to expect some great attempt pretty soon. Dr. Butler is justly considered one of the great moral lights of the world; and “*without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.*” Heb. vii. 7.

duty as an expositor, to act in a manner entirely independent of his obligations to the standards, and without the slightest reference to them. And this he gravely sets up as a plea, or vindication, for the unsound opinions expressed in his *Notes*. "It was my intention, in preparing these *Notes*, not to be influenced in the interpretation by a regard to any creed or Confession of Faith whatever. I make this frank avowal, because it is *the deliberate and settled purpose of my mind*, and because it is the principle by which I expect always to be governed. I therefore state, that in preparing these *Notes* I have never had the Westminster Confession of Faith before me, nor any other Confession. I have never framed a sentence, to the best of my recollection, with any design that it should be conformed to the doctrines of any Confession of Faith!" Here a very serious question arises—Has Mr. Barnes acted honestly as a minister in the Presbyterian church? We admit that the duty of an interpreter of Scripture is, uprightly and truly, free from undue attachment to previous systems, to find out and report what the Holy Spirit says. If the interpreter *be indeed exempt* from all commitment to *existing forms of faith*, he may indeed pursue his labour without reference to any Confession, and leave his work to be tested simply by its own merits and the Word of God. But if he has previously adopted "a form of sound words," and bound himself to a large and sacred community of Jesus Christ, inviolably to observe that "form," in its known and established import, as an Epitome of Bible truth—and in attempting to expound a sacred writer, should discover, or *by some means elicit*, doctrines opposed to the formula he has voluntarily assumed; can he consistently and honestly hold at the same time those conflicting opinions? Certainly not. How then shall he escape from the dilemma into which he has plunged himself? He must immediately accommodate his doctrinal views to his assumed standard, or peaceably withdraw from that communion with whose faith and order he can no longer harmonize. This is the course prescribed by common sense and common honesty. But Mr. Barnes's course is very different. He openly declares that he commenced his *Notes* with *an intention not to be influenced by a regard to the Confession of Faith*. And now, after finishing the work, being convicted of heresy, and even acknowledging himself in error, he avows it as *the deliberate and settled purpose of his mind always to be governed by this principle*; and yet pertinaciously continues in the Church, whose purity he has marred, whose peace he has wounded, and whose authority he has contemned! After this, no man will do Mr. Barnes the injustice to charge him with being a Presbyterian; with belonging, in heart and spirit, to that or any other denomination; with having, indeed, any settled views of truth at all. If he should be found to agree with our constitutional Forms in any instance, it will be by mere chance! Really, his declarations are so wild and extravagant, that they seem scarcely compatible with sanity of intellect, certainly at the farthest remove from all consistency with that integrity and candour of purpose and practice which constitute the very essence of fidelity to our holy ecclesiastical compact.

Mr. Barnes, pressed hard by difficulties, and pent up within narrow limits, refusing the only just and honourable modes of escape, *reformation* or *secession*, attempts several methods of retreat, both inadequate and unsafe.

The public will no doubt be surprised to find him endeavouring to create a refuge from the charge of heresy, under the pretence that *uniformity of opinion* was *never intended* in the Presbyterian body. "The Presbyterian Church in this country did not contemplate exact uniformity of opinion, others have been allowed to take exceptions; a wide latitude was formerly given to candidates for licensure and ordination, a latitude of interpretation certainly as wide as has ever been desired or contended for in more modern times." Now, all this, and much more of the same kind, which he confidently alleges, is in direct violation of true history; it is founded upon concealment or distortion of palpable facts, and calculated injuriously to impress those who know not the character of our American churches, and their early and inflexible devotion to definite and established principles and forms. The following Act of the Old Synod, passed 1729, and superseded by numerous acts and decisions of our supreme judicatory, is adduced by Mr Barnes in support of his unfounded statements:—"And in case any minister of the Synod, or any candidate of the ministry, shall have any scruple with respect to any article or articles of said Confession, he shall, in time of making such declaration, *declare his scruples* to the Synod or Presbytery: who shall, notwithstanding, admit him to the exercises of the ministry within our bounds, and to ministerial communion of the Synod or Presbytery—if it shall judge his scruples not essential, or necessary, in doctrine, worship, or government." Here then is his supposed gap, through which he would introduce his heretical dogmas. The effort is a complete failure. Every impartial eye must see that all error is thoroughly barred out! By the very act recited, no member, licentiate, or minister, is allowed the least room for deviation in the smallest particular, without the full knowledge and permission of the Presbytery or Synod to which he belongs. In every case of dissent, in the minutest concern, one of these bodies, subject to review and correction by the proper superior tribunal, must hear the scruples and decide upon their character. The comprehensive and sweeping prohibition extends, not only to subjects of *doctrine*, but modes of *worship* and forms of *government*. It is a *pro re nata* statute, as perfectly specific, rigid, and unbending, as could be couched in language. And yet this is the only gate Mr. Barnes can find to let in error. His case is desperate. Is he retaining his heretical and disorderly opinions by license of Presbytery or Synod? Did he ever declare his scruples and ask this liberty, according to the rule he has produced? When Dr. Junkin read his *scruples* to the Synod, he would not appear in their defence; and that body approached them not at all in the spirit of connivance, much less of absolution!!

Admitting that the old exploded statute of 1729, adduced by Mr. Barnes, were now in force, his argument would be—Because the old Synod granted to church judicatories some discretionary power, subject to review, of deciding on the character of conscientious *scruples alleged* by candidates, as obstacles to entering the Presbyterian church, therefore the quibbling and heretical tribe of the present day may enter the Presbytery, with reserves, designedly to evade the force of their ordination promise and oppose the standards of the Church; and all without giving to the Presbytery or Synod the least intimation of the slightest dissatisfaction

with any part of the assumed formula. A fair specimen of New School logic! But can Mr. B. be ignorant that the old act in question has been set aside for scores of years? and can he not recollect the decision of the memorable Assembly of 1834, where he was present as a spectator and abettor?—"That in receiving and adopting the formularies of our church, every person ought to be supposed, without evidence to the contrary, to receive and adopt them according to the obvious, known, and established meaning of the terms, as the confession of his faith; and *that if objections be made, the Presbytery, unless he withdraw such objections, should not license, or ordain, or admit him.*" Extracts, 1834. Mr. B. seems exceedingly honest and scrupulous in yielding obedience to the act of the old Synod. Can any body tell why he should not pay some respect to the absolute decree of his grand ecclesiastical *Alma mater*, the Assembly of 1834, to whose unconstitutional and suicidal foster care he undoubtedly owes his Presbyterian standing to this hour?—She has peremptorily discarded the plea of scruples, and positively prohibited the admission of objectors altogether. The discretionary power is completely revoked. Let Professor Halsey look at this paragraph. It is intended to cast a side glance at his '*Distinctive Peculiarities!*'

But it would appear from Mr. Barnes's statements, that our Church has been very indulgent toward unsound members in former times. It is to be regretted that he has exposed himself so sadly to painful remark on this topic. We can scarcely conceive how he could be ignorant of the long line of facts opposed to his representations, or expect to escape detection in misstatements so notorious. The early history of the Church record few cases of error, and consequently of discipline. Nothing is more certain than this—the farther you look back into our ecclesiastical character, the greater strictness and even rigour will you find continually in exercise to guard against the approach of every error. Even in 1810, the Rev. W. C. Davis, whose "gospel plan" was under process for heresy, found not a man in the Assembly to advocate his cause. The vote to condemn his book, containing substantially the same false doctrine now revived by Mr. B., was unanimous. The whole business occupied half a day. Times have greatly changed. Now, the promoters of corruption and discord have augmented their numbers and clog the wheels of discipline: they even reprove the advocates of truth and order for attempting at all to obstruct their desolating course, and boldly denounce us as persecutors; a charge which might as justly be urged by a felon at the bar against the court and jury engaged in ferreting out his crimes.

In maintaining his false and dangerous positions, Mr. B. calls to his aid the Biblical Repertory, Princeton, Vol. III. p. 521, &c., where he finds the following passage—"The Confession, as framed by the Westminster Divines, was an acknowledged compromise between two classes of Theologians. When adopted by the Presbyterian Church in this country, it was with the understanding that the *mode of subscription did not imply strict uniformity of views.*" The character of this Journal is such as to require a consideration of what is here advanced. The passage quoted is the mere opinion of one man, or at most of a very few,

superintending a periodical at a time calculated to lull vigilance. Instead of receiving the sanction of public opinion, it was met by general disapprobation, as opening a door for mischievous innovators to intrude themselves *unawares*. That the understanding, here gratuitously proclaimed as universal, might have existed in the minds of a few obstinate sticklers for opinion in that large conclave which formed the Confession, at Westminster, and adopted it in this country, may be supposed; but that such was the designed and approved import of the pledge and signature, to be required in all after-time, is really too romantic to be for a moment admitted. Who does not see—that in this case our bond of union must immediately have proved a rope of sand—our beautiful system, a promiscuous heap of fragments—and the Church, not a *glorious building, filly framed and compacted together*, but a heterogeneous image of gold and silver, brass and iron! The sequel of this extract from the Repertory is still more revolting, as it really appears to concede every thing which the direst foes of our system are struggling for—the right of adopting her standards *for doctrine*, the very evasion practised by Mr. B.—“The very terms, ‘system of doctrines,’ conveys a definite idea, the idea of a regular series of connected opinions having a natural relation and constituting *one whole*. These doctrines are clearly expressed; such as the doctrine of the Trinity—the incarnation and supreme deity of Christ—the fall, and original sin—atonement—justification by faith. With respect to each of these several points there are, and *may safely be, various modes of statement and explanation, consistent with their sincere reception.*” In connexion with this, the writer asks, “How is the subscription, or assent to our standards, to be interpreted?—or, with what degree of strictness is the phrase ‘system of doctrines,’ as it occurs in the ordination service, to be explained?—who is to judge whether an explanation does, or does not, interfere with what is essential to a particular doctrine? We answer, in the first place, this is a question for every man to answer.” The writer’s remarks too much favour the supposition that the main force of our ordination promise falls upon the words “system of doctrines.” As this is deeply interesting, let us examine it. “Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith, of this Church, as containing the system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures?” Now, according to the apparent meaning of the Repertory, the candidate primarily and principally *receives and adopts “the system of doctrine.”* We ask—what is the particular form and character of these doctrines? The writer’s answer is—“This is a question for every man to answer” as he may please. If so, the terms “Confession of Faith of this Church,” might as well be expunged altogether. But we apprehend this to be an entirely erroneous construction of the whole article. Examine the question proposed—“Do you sincerely receive and adopt”—what?—“the system of doctrines?” No—“the Confession of Faith of this Church.” This is the very gist of the question, and here rests the main force of the obligation. Why receive “the Confession of Faith?” because we believe it “contains the system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures.” Now, suppose any man should insist that this Confession does not contain the doctrines of the

Sacred Scriptures; it is plain he cannot be an honest Presbyterian; for this point is settled by our form of induction into the Church, and every sincere signer professes his confirmed belief in this principle. There were, doubtless, present to the minds of the framers of our *Confession* many systems of doctrine, and there exist still many forms of Faith, at war with each other, all represented by their respective advocates to be embraced by the Holy Scriptures. *Our Confession* makes its selection and exhibits its choice, to the exclusion of every opposing form of words, in distinct and permanent traits; and every honest receiver yields and records his unqualified and unwavering assent to it. Does any man inquire what the doctrinal system of the Presbyterian Church is? We refer him—not to the evasive speculations or dubious *answers* of others—but directly to “the Confession of Faith,” which the book describes as containing this system. We tell the inquirer the very object of the Confession was to prevent private and devious explanation; to distinguish our system from all opposing systems; to prevent any mistake or confusion among ourselves respecting the real character and import of our doctrines. Admitting the right of private explanation appears to us like a palpable violation of reason; the same as to say, here is a rule of faith or law of the Church, which does not require what it does require; which is absurd. And, under another view of the subject, making an indefinite grant of the right of private construction, necessarily implies that the exercise of this right may become universal; which assuredly involves the idea of total destruction to the system.

We consider the statement, that with respect to each of the several points, there are and may safely be, various modes of statement and explanation consistent with their sincere reception, as liable to abuse infinitely beyond what we suppose the writer apprehended. To the general proposition, abstractly stated, that evangelical doctrines are, in some particulars, to a limited extent susceptible of various modes of explanation not inconsistent with their honest reception, we are not disposed to object. But in an ecclesiastical community, constituted on the very cardinal principle of coincidence or uniformity, giving to every member an unlimited right to explain or modify the fundamental doctrines of the system to suit his own capricious views, is a very different thing, and must become the sure means of undermining piecemeal the whole fabric, and making it altogether “another Gospel than that we have received.” That is to say, while there may exist, to a limited degree, diversities of statement and explanation respecting fundamental truth, consistent with its honest reception—there are multitudinous forms of thought and schemes of speculation much more likely to be embraced than the simple truth, not only inconsistent with pure Gospel doctrine, but hostile to its very nature and incompatible with its existence. Now, if you open a door to admit the former class of explanations, you cannot exclude the latter. The panacea and the poison will flow in at the same sluice. There must be a guard set at the entrance!

Our meaning may be appositely illustrated in a few particulars from the case now pending. Mr. Barnes has subscribed to the doctrine of the “fall and original sin.” How does he explain it? “*All sin is volun-*

tary!" of course, there is no corruption of nature nor guilt till moral agency commences. "Sinners have no federal relation to Adam, and are not answerable for his guilt." "The notion of imputation is an invention of modern times." As this doctrine is explained by Mr. B., men have no sin till they create it by actual transgression. "It is a result secured by bad conduct—just as the drunkard becomes such and ruins his family by bad habits." Now, is this explanation consistent with an honest reception of either the Bible or the Confession of Faith? We think far otherwise.

Again: Mr. B. holds the doctrine of *Atonement*. Now for his explanation of this vital truth:—"The sin of Adam and his seed was not imputed to Christ, and he punished on account of it." Of course, he asserts "Christ did not endure the precise penalty of the law," nor make certain the salvation of any one. What then did he do that resembles the work of atonement? Mr. B. does not inform us. As Christ *had no sin* himself, and was not charged with the sin of others, he must have suffered as an innocent person, to make an exhibition of some kind, and this is Mr. B.'s view, to satisfy public justice, the ends of the Divine government; but without real expiation or purchase at all! And yet he very gravely talks about the *atonement*.

Once more: Mr. B. holds to *justification by faith*. His explanation, so far as it goes, completely removes the true doctrine on this fundamental point out of the world. Having discarded the principle of imputation, which runs through the whole Bible, and is so strikingly prominent in our Confession, of course neither the person, nor the work, or righteousness of Christ, has any thing to do with the sinner's justification. The old doctrine, on which we have been accustomed to repose our eternal hopes of justification through Christ's righteousness imputed to the sinner and received by *faith of God*, is completely set aside as a stale error, or, more absurdly, as a modern invention; and its place is supplied, in Mr. B.'s explanation, by an attempt to make this infinitely important matter, *justification before God*, depend upon a blind mystical faith itself, or to resolve it into simple pardon for sin. Thus the peculiar doctrines which form the basis of the glorious Gospel may be explained away, and enveloped in impenetrable and cheerless clouds.

If, then, the statement of the Repertory is to stand unqualified, every one must perceive that there can be no safety for the purity of our Church even an hour. Now, the correct understanding of this subject, and the safe practice in licensing candidates, in ordaining or receiving members, we apprehend to be this:—The great doctrines, in their genuine nature and spirit as well as systematic connexion, must be honestly received as generally expounded by the orthodox and evangelic; and the *explanation*, so far as it goes, under each particular in the Confession of Faith, candidly and sincerely embraced, in its known and established import, as decisive. Chasms not filled up, or new *scruples* which may arise, cannot be left to the discretion or caprice of individuals; but must be referred, for examination and decision, to the competent authority.

To our respected brethren of the Repertory, occupying the highly responsible station of watchmen on the walls of Zion, we would affect-

tionately recommend more caution in guarding those points against which the adversary are levelling all their battering rams to force a passage for the *Trojan horse!* But our caution scarcely seems to be needed by them; for, after seeming to surrender to the enemy all that he demands, before they finish the paragraph they retract the fatal grant, and close the breach against his unholy approach. "The Presbytery," say they, "has a right of judgment in all such cases. It is their business to decide the very point, whether the candidate believe or not, the doctrines of our standards; and they are under the most solemn engagements to God and the brethren to do this honestly—and here the matter must be left."

It is not the least objection to Mr. Barnes's book, that he "has made it an object to avoid the use of some technical words which have been long employed in theology, and which have been deemed valuable, in the interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans." Every science, to be correctly understood and faithfully preserved, requires that very guard which Mr. B. has so carefully rejected. It is by technical phraseology, specifically defined and appropriately employed, that correct ideas, on difficult points, are best secured and perpetuated. Hence we find that innovators and corruptors in theology always commence dilapidation at this point. They reject familiar technicalities, feigning improvement and greater simplicity; but really to get clear of old landmarks, obstinate impediments in the way of error, having stood for ages and become familiar and venerable to every observer: the real object is to pass by the truths which lie entrenched behind these constitutional barriers. The artful and designing do not like frequented paths; they select *new ways*; they invent new terms, obscure and ambiguous, to obtain facilities for evasion and dispute. The Catechisms of our Church are valuable chiefly for their concise, clear, common-place expressions and technical terms; so admirably chosen, so simple, definite and significant, that no improvement can be grafted upon them, and no departure from them safely made. Only impress these inexpressibly precious summaries of Gospel truth, just as they stand, with suitable remarks and explanations, upon a generation of minds, and the impression will defy the arts of deceivers. But, on many cardinal points, change the dress of the idea—remove the technical guard of the doctrines—and security for the truth is in a great measure taken away. This is especially true in regard to the young, for whom, Mr. B. tells us, he particularly wrote. They are, usually, easy victims of seducing arts. His book may, indeed, infect many precious companies; and even generations of youth may, unsuspectingly, imbibe the fatal poison. Thus the Jesuits made their first and most successful attempts upon the young in schools and colleges of learning. This is the system of the Roman Catholics in the present day; and the disorganizers in the Presbyterian Church are employing the same means with all their zeal.

The new edition of his *Notes*, which Mr. B. is now publishing, furnishes decisive evidence of his incorrigibility in error. This work is now a favorite instrument, in the hands of his partisans, for the propagation of his dangerous opinions. After declaring unequivocally, that he

does not wish it to be understood that he has altered or retracted a single sentiment, all his promises to remove difficulties and grounds of offence by corrections and explanations must prove delusive. His attempt to carry on this farce, by restoring, perhaps in a few unimportant instances, the rejected technicalities, by glossing with a more imposing lure his anti-evangelic notions, by change of words without change of *sense*, must be regarded as dust thrown into the eyes of the reader; a specious movement, the more easily and effectually to palm his spurious dogmas upon the Church and to escape her censures. This is the artifice which has been recently practised with great success by the arch deceiver of the West. As a last resort, when other evasive and deceptive expedients fail, the imposing policy of attempting to amalgamate truth and error is simultaneously embraced West and East of the mountains. God grant that this Heresiarchal cunning may fail of its object!

Thus, it seems to us, Mr. Barnes's own testimony, candidly estimated, is sufficient to place him before the Church in a predicament as little to be envied as any that can be conceived. And when the conduct of his advocates is viewed in connexion with his public *declarations* and *acts*, a fixed purpose is clearly developed by them to evade honest investigation and constitutional trial altogether. No matter who is the *accused*, who the *prosecutor*, or what the *charge*; they have combined to trample the constitution under their feet, and to nullify all its salutary provisions.

In support of these assertions we turn to the acts of the General Assembly. The appeal and complaint of Mr. B. and his associates in May, 1834, against the proceedings of the Philadelphia Presbytery and Synod, in regard to the Sermon on *the Way of Salvation*, as has been stated, resulted in the formation of the second Presbytery, on *affinity principles*, in direct violation of the letter and spirit of the constitution, and for the avowed purpose of protecting Mr. B. and his party. The Western Memorial solemnly implored that Assembly to decide upon sundry spurious publications then named, and among them that sermon of Mr. B. After rebuking the memorialists, and providing him a secure retreat, that Assembly tantalize the Church by the following resolution:—"That in the opinion of this Assembly, to take up and try and condemn any printed publication as heretical and dangerous, is equivalent to condemning the author as heretical:—that to condemn heresy in the abstract cannot be understood as the purpose of such trial:—that the results of such trial are to bear upon and seriously affect the standing of the author:—and that the fair and unquestionable mode of procedure is, *if the author be alive, and known to be of our communion, to institute process against him, and give a fair and constitutional trial.*" The insincerity and absurdity of the opinion here expressed by the affinity members of that body, have been abundantly exposed in public discussions on that subject, and the resolution was solemnly rescinded by the Assembly of 1835. But we recur to this whole transaction to unravel the corrupt designs of Mr. B. and his adherents. Their language in 1834 was, "Don't condemn the book—take its author; don't touch heresy in the abstract, table charges against its promulgator!" The book was then, in substance, under process; hence such language was convenient, however absurd!

The design of the combination was obvious—to defeat investigation and prevent decision on false doctrines altogether. Hence the accompanying resolution passed by that Assembly:—“That *ministers dismissed* in good standing by sister Presbyteries should be *received* by the Presbyteries which they are dismissed to join, upon the *credit* of their *testimonials!*” Here is a glaring attempt artfully to open free course for the itinerant propagators of heresy by paralysing the power of Presbyteries, which are the original, sovereign, and divinely constituted guardians of the Church’s purity. Who can be so blinded by prejudice as not to see that this was a mere artifice to prevent inquiry into their theological tenets, and to promote their corrupt designs!! Now, they supposed that Mr. B. was safe; that no member of his own affinity Presbytery would assail him; that none of any other Presbytery, of sufficient love to the truth and devotion to the cause of God and his church to encounter this painful service, could be found. Relying upon the security of his position, and in defiance of the orthodox individuals and bodies around him, who lifted their warning and expostulating voice, Mr. B., encouraged by his party, goes on to publish more and more extensively his unsound and injurious speculations, and to circulate them, by his agents, through the length and breadth of the land. His book is regarded as a public nuisance, and the author as a source of moral pestilence. The work of contamination, on the one hand, is pressed with unsparing zeal; the *cry of heresy*, on the other, deeply agitating the Church, fills the land. What, then, is to be done? Is there no remedy for this distracting and destroying process? The words of the party advocating Mr. B. and patronizing his book, are, “If the author be alive, and known to be of our communion, *institute process against him!*” The leaders in that party often publicly give the challenge—“Don’t take the book, *prosecute the author!*” Now the author is arraigned, behold what a cry; it disturbs my peace, it infringes liberty of speech, rights of conscience, interrupts my work, injures the character of my book, and, what is worse, “the hope of our gains is gone!”* Alas, what a catastrophe! Such exclamations are very natural, and very common in such cases. In prosecuting offenders, it is not easy to adapt the process to their taste; and no faction ever exhibited, more clearly, fixed determination to escape the *reign of law*, either by open resistance or dishonest evasion.

We find much serious cause to be dissatisfied with Mr. Barnes’s treatment of Dr. Junkin. His attempt to resolve his conduct into selfish, suspicious, and unhallowed motives, cannot fail to shock every impartial and honourable mind. “To Dr. Junkin I had done no injury, I had made no allusion; his opinions I had not attacked; nor in the book on which the charges are based, have I made the remotest allusion to him or his doctrines.” Strange indeed! Has then Mr. B. the weakness to intimate, or suppose, that process can be properly instituted or reasonably expected against a minister extensively charged with heresy—only where personal offence has been given—where passion has been provoked and is in exercise? Can his *large liberality* and *abounding charity* conceive and admit of no higher, no holier motive, in this solemn and eventful measure?

Is then the love of Christ, the love of his pure gospel, the love of his Church, the love of souls, to him a strange passion? Or does it glow exclusively in his own breast? Judge ye! What shall we say of the effort he makes to hold up Dr. J. to ridicule and reproach as a self-constituted guardian of the orthodoxy and peace of the Church? How unkind and unchristian are such insinuations! The public are not so obtuse as to mistake the meaning. The heretic must go free at all events, and the prosecutor become a victim of party combination and violence. Even the College of Lafayette, which belongs to the cause of science and of truth, is not sacred if it come in the way of such party rancor. Not only the President, but the important and growing institution under his care, must be swept away by this proscriptive besom. And what has excited this exterminating spirit? Why—Dr. Junkin's simply proposing, in a manner which all pronounce necessary, and regular, and christian, after the whole Church had been *invited by Act of the General Assembly* to this issue, proposing to show according to the Book, that the Notes on the Romans contain doctrines opposed to our standards. If innocent and nothing to fear, why this asperity and rage! Mr. B. says—"In my own Presbytery I was in good standing." True—because the whole body, one minister* only excepted, it is believed, embraced the same heresies. But, had Mr. B. no wish to stand well in the Church at large? Trial is the only method of removing suspicions. This, neither Mr. B. nor his associates are prepared for. Hence this outrageous attack† upon a Christian minister, who undertakes an arduous public service, as we believe, from profound devotedness to duty, and exercising great self-denial—not courting distinction—not following the impulses of an irregular and excited mind—not cherishing a lofty pride or unhallowed ambition, as is cruelly insinuated in the defence—but at the often repeated challenge of the aggressing faction, and on the suggestion and with the approbation of many of the advocates of truth and purity in the Presbyterian body. In our Saviour's words, the plain inference is—"Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

The exculpatory sentence of the second Presbytery of Philadelphia in Mr. B.'s case, was such as the public anticipated, knowing it to be deeply tinctured with the same false doctrines. The only fact, therefore,

* Rev. Henry A. Boardman, whose eloquent and able support of Dr. J. has secured the respect and confidence of all who know him.

† That this assault upon Dr. Junkin and Lafayette College is the result of combination, cannot be doubted. The false statement recently employed by the Editor of the Evangelist, New-York, to injure South Hanover College, has been duly exposed, by its venerable President, Dr. Blythe, to that just reprobation and contempt which an outraged and indignant public had long before pronounced upon its author. We are truly mortified at finding Dr. Spring in the same spirit, lending himself to prejudice the infant Seminary, of so much promise, under Dr. Junkin's care. We mention the fact, to show concert, and to give the attempt publicity. Because Dr. J. consented to conduct the process for heresy against Mr. B., Dr. Spring withdraws his name even from a *private paper* recommending Lafayette College! Let the Church and our country look at this! Thus all the literary institutions in our land, in the hands of orthodox men, are marked out as victims of this rapacious spirit! What then is to be the fate of their Theological Schools should this faction acquire the ascendancy?

established by the trial before them, is, that the court are in the same condemnation with their protégé, with this additional enormity, that to previous individual corruption they have added the guilt of public official perfidy as guardians of the Church. Their pertinacious determination to sustain him, whatever else is sacrificed, becomes more and more manifest the farther we proceed in this exposition. After Dr. Junkin's appeal was taken, as is now evident, with a full understanding to the Synod of Philadelphia, a new and dark drama was opened in the inferior judicature—a drama which, for complicate irregularity and mischief, and ultimately for aggravated vexatiousness and contumacy, has probably never been surpassed in the history of our Church. The first leading object of the combination against discipline was, to obtain a victory in the Synod. If unsuccessful in that, a sinister resort was secretly planned and reserved, if possible, to arrest the course of justice. The particulars of this statement are supported by authentic public documents; and the part we now enter upon, rests almost entirely for its accuracy upon the published minutes of the Synod of Philadelphia.

To secure a majority in the Synod, we repeat it, was the first hope, in the affinity Presbyteries, within its bounds. Hence the work was, immediately, most industriously commenced, of forming new congregations, choosing elders, licensing candidates, and ordaining instruments to suit their purpose without regard to constitutional rules or limits, and to the great annoyance of sound Presbyteries lying contiguous to them on every side. All these preparatory operations were conducted on the principle, that the legislation of the last Assembly was constitutional and without a flaw. But as soon as the decision of some preliminary questions in the Synod disclosed the fact, that the party struggling to sustain Mr. B. were in the minority, the expedients of denying the jurisdiction of the Synod, charging the Assembly with defect in legislation, and suppressing the documents and evidence in the case, were embraced as an only alternative to stop the wheels of discipline. Those not already acquainted with these transactions will doubtless pause here, with strong emotions of surprise and disgust! It is truly painful to record the fact, that such are the measures by which all the dearest interests of our Church are reduced to peril! It will be admitted by all, that falsification of record, or entire suppression of documents in such a case, to rescue an accused individual from farther process of law finds few parallels, even in the proceedings of our most corrupt civil courts; in the history of our ecclesiastical judiciary it stands alone. Such conduct, in a judicatory of Jesus Christ, imposes a stigma upon the Christian name; and may justly occasion her very ministers to be held up for derision and contempt by a profane and blaspheming world.

The most truly painful part of the procedure is to be found in Mr. B.'s equivocating and uncandid course. Men of business in the Church, who understand the powers of Presbytery, the rights of individual members, and the forms of process, are not to be misled by specious pretence. In the whole of that transaction before the Synod, Mr. Barnes was his own man—he had his course under his own control—he had the suppressed documents at his own disposal. He did not appear before

the Synod at their repeated call, because he chose to be amalgamated with his Presbytery in their crafty and corrupt policy. He is therefore pre-eminently chargeable with the insincerity, vexatiousness, and contumacy, which have been justly imputed to that body ; and has unquestionably, on a literal construction of the constitution, and on principles both of strict justice and sound policy, made it optional with the Assembly whether at all to hear his appeal.

His subsequent attempts, by artful address, to awaken popular sympathy in his favor, especially as it comes enforced by the plausible charge of unconstitutionality in the proceedings of the Synod, strongly excites suspicions which we reluctantly entertain. As this appearance of unconstitutionality, artfully alleged in his appeal to the public, was produced, evidently, by his own deliberate and refractory refusal to stand trial in the Synod, we are brought irresistibly to the conclusion that his declining its jurisdiction was a mere artifice to provide, indirectly, this popular theme for his premeditated appeal to public opinion. Relying upon this fictitious plea, in connexion with many distorted and imposing statements, his friends—combined with him to carry through this flagrant organized resistance to constituted authority—address themselves to the blind and capricious sympathies of their *true yoke-fellows* in the cause of error, and to the unhallowed passions of the inflammable multitude.

Why were not the transactions of the Synod of Philadelphia left to the deliberate and unbiassed judgment of the Church in her constitutional tribunals ? No light on the subjects involved can be obtained from the common people. Even the best informed part of society are very incompetent judges of these matters. Is it not always found that the popular judgment is given, not upon the merits of the real question involved, but upon points far removed from it ? Indeed, the object of this resort is, not to elicit righteous judgment, but to bury up the real subject in controversy ; to intoxicate the public mind by false, but captivating views of it ; to excite unhallowed passion or sympathy, in order to secure erroneous decision.

Our meaning may be better illustrated by referring to facts in the present case. The charge is heresy—*false doctrine*, dishonouring to God and dangerous to souls. The popular appeal of Mr. B. and his associates is founded on his ministerial qualifications, pastoral fidelity, his studies, his labors, his private character, his respectable station, the wealth of his people, their personal attachment, the *hatred*, the *injustice*, the *cruelty*, of the prosecutor. Now, what have all these things to do with the real question before us ? This declamation is evidently designed to perplex and obscure the subject of investigation ; to prejudice and mislead the public. The point at issue is simply this :—Is Mr. Barnes guilty of heresy or not ? No matter what his character and conduct in other respects. These are distinct things, not at all connected with the proper inquiry. Is it any palliation for a heretic that he is learned, eloquent, artful, and zealous, in spreading his corrupt opinions ? On the contrary, is he not the more dangerous, the more injurious, the more criminal ? and are not all honest and good men the more obligated to come forward to detect him and arrest his desolating career ? What did the inspired

writer of the Epistle to the Romans say : “ There be some that *trouble you*, and would *pervert* the *Gospel* of Christ ; but though *we*, or an *angel from heaven*, preach any other *Gospel* unto you—*let him be accursed !*”—Gal. i. 8. Prominence of character, then, in the *Divine* account, forms no palliation for heresy ; but in proportion as it may augment his capacity to do evil, plunges the heretical teacher into a more aggravated condemnation.

Here let us ask, What has been the conduct of this combination against the truth ever since the adjournment of the Synod ? Our large cities, our country towns and villages, have been deluged with their inflammatory publications. Most of the Post Offices in our country have been made distributing points for their uncandid missiles. Mr. Barnes himself, assuming the office of an agitator, has been diligently engaged in travels, in speeches, in private interviews, in letters, appeals and addresses, to give effect to this disorganizing process. And among the most nefarious, and hitherto unheard-of means of corrupting and inflaming the public mind, Congregational meetings have been held in sundry places, combinations formed, harangues delivered, resolutions passed, recommendations issued, and all spread out before the Church evidently to promote this work of rebellion. In carrying up an appeal, it is an established principle in all courts, civil and sacred, the propriety of which no sane man will question, that, to obtain an impartial hearing on both sides and an equitable decision, nothing should go before the judicatory appealed to but the law and the evidence on which the judgment in the lower court was rendered. And the same principle will, of course, preclude the use of all means directly or indirectly tending to prejudice and corrupt the minds of those who are to constitute the superior tribunal. We appeal, then, to the world—to the common sense, and candor, and justice of all rational beings ; and protest against the *ex parte* statements, arts and devices, by which the opposers of our Presbyterian faith and order are endeavouring to corrupt and mislead her high court of appeals.

We ask the public, whom they have addressed, Why do they take this unfair and disorderly course ? Does a righteous cause need such unjustifiable resorts ? Do the honest and the pure, conscious of innocence, employ such methods to arrest inquiry and impair the channels of justice ? Are not such means, in civil matters, the last resorts of knaves and desperadoes, despairing of their unrighteous objects from the regular and uncontaminated tribunals of their country ? Greece and Rome, in the days of their deepest moral defection and political degeneracy, present no higher models of systematic and combined organization against established law and salutary government. These are the very arts and efforts which designing demagogues and revolutionists have ever employed to pollute the public fountains of truth ; to take the honest and unsuspecting people captive over whose understandings and rights they mean to tyrannize ; to gratify, indeed—regardless alike of law, of justice, and of honor—whatever passion of ambition or of envy, of error or of evil, may happen to predominate within them.

Rely upon it ! *that man and those men* who refuse to seek redress for alleged grievance through the regular administration of justice, and ac-

ording to constitutional provision—who appeal from the known and venerated tribunals of justice and judgment, the refuge of the injured and innocent, to an irresponsible, unintelligent, and excitable mass of mind, with a view to corrupt and control the final decision of the grand assizes of the Church—in the judgment of all the enlightened, discreet, and unprejudiced of every name—proclaim their cause as desperate—capable of support only by the vilest means, and themselves as lawless and rotten to the core!

After openly and repeatedly announcing the fact, that he entered the ministry with reserves and exceptions—after a laborious and protracted argument to vindicate his heretical sentiments on the assumed right of construction; and after boldly declaring his *settled* purpose always to disregard every confession and formula, we are really surprised and grieved to find Mr. B. adding, to the egregious mass of inconsistencies elsewhere displayed, the gross absurdity of an attempt to reconcile his *Notes* with the *Confession of Faith*. His whole defence is conducted on the admission, that these discrepancies exist as stated. Hence the attempt to distort the nature and impair the force of the ordination *Vow*. Hence also the various excuses and pretexts offered to vindicate the errors alleged and their author. What is the import of the following extract from this defence? “The question which this Presbytery is now called on to decide, is, whether the views which are expressed in these Notes are any longer to be tolerated in the Presbyterian Church in the United States; whether a man who *held* them at the *time* of his *license*, who has held and preached them for ten years, is to be allowed peaceably to hold them still; or whether he is to be pronounced heretical and unsound?” What opinions are these here referred to? Certainly not any doctrines of the Confession of Faith. There is no controversy about them. No: they are undoubtedly the heresies presented by Dr. Junkin. The whole charge is here, as in other places, substantially admitted. But, presently, Mr. B.’s courage fails, and he turns short about, adding to the guilt of acknowledged error the criminality of uncandid subterfuge, and commences a jesuitical process to prove these very opinions to be the same with those of our standards. To such monstrous absurdities heresy never fails to reduce its deluded propagators. The impossibility of this reconciliation will appear from a comparison of Dr. J.’s argument with the standards of the Church.

Let the public observe—Mr. B. has brought upon himself all the guilt—the charges—the censures—the mortification and disgrace—and the painful apprehensions he may suffer, by his rash and incorrigible course. He has nobody to blame but himself and his cruel advisers. His plea for suspension of process, or discharge from condemnation, amounts to the *simple, modest, and reasonable* request, that all the sworn friends of truth and order in our Church, who feel sacredly “bound, with zeal and fidelity, to maintain the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church,” shall profanely violate their vows, and stand idly by, when the Ark of the law and testimony is rapaciously assailed by aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and *strangers* from our *covenant and promise*. What renders his case most desperate is, that his defence, now before the public,

constituted as it is, contains from his own hand the elements of self-destruction. Unless the sentiments it contains are promptly and totally retracted, and the whole ground he there assumes for defence abandoned as untenable, that very defence will prove a bill of indictment and must seal his fate. If the principles which that defence avows are sanctioned in the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church, as established by our wise and venerable forefathers, is that moment, and for ever after, dissolved; on those principles no pure church ever existed, or can exist, beneath the sun. So that we have here presented a bold, insidious, and determined assault upon the vital existence of our sacred union—an attempt, at a stroke, to sever the tie that binds us in this great Christian fraternity—and then to plead the profane dissolution itself, as a defence for the enormities under process before our sacred tribunals.

Our former remarks upon Mr. B's statements respecting his views of the engagement made on first assuming the sacred office, were intended chiefly to correct his erroneous and dangerous construction of that sacred promise as a part of our Church policy. We now proceed to consider the morality of Mr. B's conduct in this solemn transaction, as developed by himself. The subject is truly momentous and impressive; and nothing but a lively view of its comprehensive bearing and influence, and a solemn sense of duty, awakened by Mr. B's alarming disclosures, prompts us to enter upon this solemn discussion. We pity this deluded and unhappy man, whose friends, by foolish flattery and infatuated counsel, have brought him blindfold to the precipice. As the *question* with us now, is *between the Church of Christ and Albert Barnes*, we have no alternative but to proceed with the exposition.

From our view of this subject in its moral relations, the conclusion is, that Mr. B's conduct involves an offence of the greatest magnitude and guilt. The office of a Christian minister is the most exalted and responsible office existing in this world. Ministers are representatives, "sub-delegated messengers," of the great God, in his dispensation of grace. "We are ambassadors of Christ," says the great Apostle; "We pray you in Christ's stead;" &c. To this high vocation are they appointed, and the Presbytery is the divinely constituted instrument to clothe them with its sacred functions. Now, the whole transaction, in which candidates are received, and bound, and commissioned to this holy service, has ever been considered as partaking the nature and solemnity of a *formal oath*. The engagement being made primarily to God, from whom proceed the office—the call to it—and both the power and form of initiation, every candidate is justly conceived to make a solemn appeal to the searcher of hearts for the rectitude and sincerity of his professions. Hence a violation of this oath, in any of its particulars, according to their natural, obvious, customary, and established import, can justly be viewed no otherwise than as an act of perjury; especially must this construction be put upon the violation, if the candidate, by subsequent declarations and actions, refuse to correct his error, and obstinately persist in a course directly opposed to that clearly required by his solemn vow.

Let us hear the opinion of a man, whose penetration, purity, and fidelity, as a witness for God, have been proclaimed through the world as pre-

eminently deserving universal confidence. "But, for men, at their entrance on the sacred office solemnly to subscribe to the truth of what, all their lives after, they strive to undermine and destroy, is at once so criminal and absurd, that no reproof given to it can possibly exceed in point of severity. This is so direct a violation of sincerity, that it is astonishing to think how men can set their minds at ease in the prospect, or keep them in peace after the deliberate commission of it. The very excuses and evasions that are offered in defence of it are a disgrace to reason as well as a scandal to religion. What success can be expected from that man's ministry who begins it with an act of so complicated guilt? How can he take upon him to reprove others for sin, or to train them up in virtue and true goodness, while himself is chargeable with direct premeditated and perpetual perjury!"*

Falsehood has been properly defined to consist in "That which deceives and disappoints confidence." Perjury is of the same general nature, but inconceivably aggravated in guilt by a direct appeal to God, which involves an imprecation of his judgments upon any thing deceptive in the engagement made, fraudulent or unfaithful in the execution of it. These characteristics will be found, on close inspection, applicable to the case before us. From his own testimony and attending circumstances, it cannot be doubted that Mr. B. deceived the Presbytery of N. Brunswick at his licensure; and it is equally clear that he has disappointed their expectations. The points of greatest importance, in the obligations assumed, on entering the sacred office, are embraced in the following questions:—"Do you sincerely receive and adopt the *Confession of Faith* of this Church, as containing the system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures? Do you promise to study the peace, unity, and purity of the Church?" In all sound Presbyteries these obligations have been uniformly understood to imply the utmost singleness and sincerity of purpose, required also by act of the General Assembly—"In receiving and adopting the formularies of the Church, according to the obvious, known, and established meaning of the terms, as the *Confession of their Faith*." Our Confession itself demands the engagement to be taken "in the plain and common sense of the words, without equivocation or mental reservation." The Presbytery of N. Brunswick have always acted in conformity with these views; the students of the Seminary, who are generally witnesses of their transactions, and especially those on trial before them, could not fail to be impressed with this fact—that Presbytery never conceived the thought that any candidate had presumed to stand before them with any other view; in the act of licensing Mr. B., as there was *no scruple stated*, they supposed him to be honestly receiving and adopting the *Book*, in its known and established import, as the *Confession of his Faith*. Reposing this confidence in his supposed sincerity, they committed to him the momentous trust of *preaching this faith* to dying men. With astonishment we now learn from Mr. B. himself, that he assumed the prescribed obligations and trust, cherishing, secretly, reserves, evasions, and designs, in direct conflict with what the

* Witherspoon's works, vol. 3. p. 197.

Presbytery and the Church at large understand that solemn promise to import; indeed, entirely overlooking and renouncing the Confession of Faith, both in letter and in practical effect. "The system of doctrines contained in the standards I received *as a system*. I received it, *not indeed ever* expressing my *assent* to every expression and form of expression; but as *reserving* to myself the *right* of examining the language, and forming an opinion of its meaning." Language more explicit, testimony more unequivocal and irresistible, to prove the high immorality of Mr. B.'s conduct in this sacred transaction, need not, could not, exist.

The corrupt and dangerous practice of signing Creeds and Confessions, *for doctrine* and for *substance*, with reserved rights of construction and explanation, which the honest friends of truth regard with abhorrence, is here practically introduced, boldly avowed, audaciously held up as an example in the Church, and pleaded as an apology for this unparalleled violation of moral honesty. A most pertinacious adherence to this deceptive course is here fully evinced. "I have not changed my views materially since I was licensed to preach the gospel." Again, he declares, that "He held the views expressed in these Notes at the time of his *licensure* and *ordination*, that he has held and preached them *ten years*." Again: he avows "His intention not to be influenced by regard to any Creed or Confession of Faith:—because it is his *deliberate* and *settled purpose* of mind; the principle by which he expects *always* to be *governed*." This dogmatical, reiterated, deliberate, and determined rejection of our Confession, in the very act in which he pledged his sacred truth and honor, before God, to adopt and maintain it, must produce through our Church indescribable emotions.

False speaking and false swearing are justly held up for public execration by all men. Perjury, even where money, office, or honor, is its object, and where its injurious effects are comparatively trivial, is exposed to punishment by fine or imprisonment. But what man or angel can calculate the guilt of treachery in an ambassador of Christ! It may be estimated in some small measure by considering the extent of a minister's obligations to God, to the Presbytery, to the Church, and to the souls of men. As these obligations are manifold and weighty, a violation of them must incur complicate and awful guilt. It is a most aggravating circumstance in Mr. B.'s course, that he is persisting, against the warnings and entreaties of *years* past, and pursuing an object of the greatest enormity—the perversion of the truth of God and the ruin of his Church.

If this dishonest system should be sustained, and become the law of the Church, it is evident that every licensure and ordination in our land may become an inlet to some new form or grade of heresy, under the impenetrable and imposing guise of reserves and explanations. It surely needs no words to show how well adapted Mr. B.'s model will be, to lead candidates of his non-committal and inventive cast, completely to evade every constitutional guard against error, and to import into the Church every abomination. Hitherto it has been considered the duty of candidates, before admission, *after* or *during* a thorough course of theological reading, to inspect our Book of Faith, ponder its sacred contents, and

decide upon their character; that they may act intelligently and sincerely, if at all, in assuming its obligations and avowing its principles; but a new method of procedure is now exhibited—to *swear* to the Book first as a *Confession of Faith*, and *examine* its language afterwards to form an opinion of its *meaning*!

It is now a very serious inquiry in what light the advocates of Mr. B. are to be viewed. Possessing, we have no doubt, much more accurate knowledge on this point than we can claim, his assertion is not to be passed lightly over “that he holds the opinions here in question, in common with no small part of the more than two thousand ministers in our connexion.” This appears to us unquestionable—that, if they entered our Church with any other view than that of honest compliance with the spirit of their ordination vow and strict conformity to the letter of our Church standards, they committed a profane and criminal violation of the most solemn oath ever administered to man;—and if they continue in our Church, as Mr. B. does, in open conflict with the pledge they gave and the standards they voluntarily assumed, their public ministry and their whole life is a constant repetition and aggravation of the most criminal act ever perpetrated in this world. And whatever may have been at first their principle of action and mode of introduction, their vindicating a man who not only holds heretical opinions, corrupting to the Church of Christ, but assumes and exercises rights directly subversive of that branch of his Church which they have sworn to protect and advance, they are undoubtedly to be considered abettors of heresy—instigators and promoters of consummate mischief to Zion, and are justly held accountable to God and to his Church for all the corruption and confusion produced by their unfaithful course.

To the great body of candid and reflecting men of all denominations, the wonder constantly is—why Mr. B. and those of his class, most manifestly and radically differing from the standards of the Presbyterian Church, pertinaciously pursuing measures which produce incessant discord—which rend congregations, church judicatories, missionary societies, benevolent institutions—which subject large sections of our Church and country to painful conflicts, keep the public mind unceasingly agitated with feuds and animosities:—the wonder is—why they should wish to remain for an hour in connexion with this Church. It is perfectly plain, that if their uncandid, inconsistent, and offensive action and influence were removed from the Presbyterian body, all would be peaceful, prosperous, and happy, within her bosom. No difficulty, no evils of any magnitude, have afflicted the Church for many years not justly ascribable to the influence of New England men, N. S. principles, and sympathies for them. How preposterous and how criminal is it for men to insist on wearing the name of Presbyterians, when their hearts are opposed to Presbyterianism, at enmity with its peculiar and essential doctrines and forms! Why do they not retire from the Presbyterian Church and erect an *independent* standard, where they can enjoy, unmolested and without giving offence, the anomalies they so much covet—without cherishing wiles and creating conflicts, perpetual in their character, painful to all, wounding to the Church, offensive to God, chilling to devotion, and

paralysing to the noblest energies and interests of Zion? If they have no regard for truth and consistency—no concern for the comfort of the great body of ministers, and elders, and people, whom they continually disturb and pain—for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, who loves, inculcates, and enjoins *peace*, let them and their adherents *withdraw*, that the land may have rest and Zion throw off her sackcloth. The land is wide enough for them and for us. They have congregations, schools, colleges, seminaries, societies of every name, sufficient to make them respectable in numbers and strength. Thus separated by a voluntary and amicable recession from a Church into which they have dishonestly intruded and continued, only to weaken and destroy it; whose interests they never intended to promote; and whose honest and faithful members never can and never will unresistingly tolerate their wicked abuse of her institutions, and corruption of her faith and purity—thus separated, the fruits of the Spirit may again be hailed among us; and they may, with some appearance of consistency and honour, escape from the guilt and obloquy, which in this connexion must for ever accumulate and rest upon them.

If the hope of plunder keeps them back from separation, the only honourable escape from their present ignominious and self-condemned position—let me tell them that such a hope is desperate. No; let not this detain them. The adjudications of the highest tribunals, both of Europe and America, have recently confirmed the dictates of common sense and sound equity, by repeated declarations—that the faith of a church constitutes her being, decides her character, establishes her rights, and secures her property. The apostasy of the N. School from the Confession of Faith is now as clearly ascertained as it can be, both by their language and their actions. Their heresy has gone abroad, written as with sunbeams, to the ends of the earth. The stand taken and the course pursued by the minority in the Assembly of 1834, were designed to produce this result. Subsequent events have completed the development—a development which cannot fail to prove an impregnable panoply for the uncorrupted Church, against any and every assault of art or of violence which the great King of Zion may permit. The prospect of additional “loaves and fishes,” from the orthodox body, by any other process than insidious and meddlesome gleaning, is too dubious to recompense the sacrifice of public good, and of individual character, consequent upon a farther continuance in this uncongenial connexion, and prosecution of measures so productive of bitterness—so disgraceful to reason—and so scandalous to the Christian name.

From such instances of insincerity and immorality in the ministers of religion, a withering effect must be expected to descend upon the pious affections of the great body of Christian people, who are themselves astonished and mourning spectators of this solemn mockery, this affecting insensibility to crime and guilt, in those who at the altar, and who should, by lives of *simplicity and Godly sincerity*, lead the way to heaven. Need we inquire why religion languishes and the ways of Zion mourn? Can we be at a loss to understand why the Most High has withdrawn his blessed spirit from his Church below? Can we reasonably expect in general

through the Church, those seasons of genuine awakening and revival, which have happily distinguished former days, while the truth of God is corruptly preached; while Christ and his righteousness are *openly made light of*; and the essential principles of his Gospel contravened; while there is visible, under so many symptoms of favour, a combined movement in the citadel of the Church to screen the propagators of heresy, insulting to heaven and damning to souls? Indeed, should not the cold inaction of many true friends of Gospel truth, the indecision of others, and the tardiness with which many advance to the help of the Lord, be considered deeply offensive in his holy sight; sufficient to bring down the rebuke of a frigid winter or a dreary night upon regions recently rejoicing in the sunshine of spiritual day? Besides—have not the intestine wars and confusions enkindled by the invaders of our peaceful Church struck alarm through all our borders, and driven many faithful laborers from the direct care of souls and dissemination of truth, to the painful work of defence against troops of ambushed and of open foes?

It is an inquiry, also, of absorbing interest, what is to be the influence of this public profanation of oaths by the professed ministers of Jesus Christ, on the morals of society in general. We apprehend the most deleterious effects. That the continuance of this system of equivocation and subterfuge, in a matter so sacred, will operate with a paralysing influence on the moral perceptions and sensibilities of the perpetrators themselves, is too clear to be doubted. Indeed, we are much mistaken, in a matter, too, where we would gladly find ourselves in error, if practical indications of a decisive and alarming character have not already been given, in many instances, of the deplorable truth of these apprehensions. The Argus eyes of the unholy multitude are ever placed with invidious scrutiny on the vestments of the holy order. A spot discovered in their lawn will produce a shout of unhallowed satisfaction through all the camp of the enemy. And though it is hard to induce any of their company to follow a step in the progress of holy virtue, yet the slightest signal will prompt a host to triumphant emulation in the career of profligacy and guilt. In vain shall we deplore the general relaxation of public morals, reprove the general violation of truth and profanation of oaths, and the light esteem of every thing sacred, among the common orders, while so large a number of the consecrated teachers and defenders of pure morality, by violating their most sacred engagements, and leaguering together to screen transgressors, enable the multitude, with just reproach and biting sarcasm, to retort—"Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit *sacrilege*? Thou that makest thy *boast* of the law, through *breaking the law dishonorest* thou God? Rom. xvi. 21—23.

Thus have I, with all the honesty and candor I possess, laid open my heart on this very interesting and impressive subject. Before concluding, it seems proper to state one fact,—that no man, or body of men, has had any thing to do with the preparation of this statement, or is in any degree responsible for any thing it contains save the writer alone. The subscriber, moreover, solemnly declares, that while he exposes and re-proves Mr. B. publicly and seriously, he is unconscious of possessing a

single feeling of unkindness towards him. Nay; that he would gladly embrace him, freed from the snares into which he has fallen, with all the affections of his heart. If Mr. B. is dissatisfied with what is here stated in regard to the mind of the Presbytery of New Brunswick on the subject of licensing candidates, he can apply to them for an expression of opinion. The writer would be exceedingly unwilling to offer so great an offence to the understanding and moral sense of that Presbytery as such an application would imply.

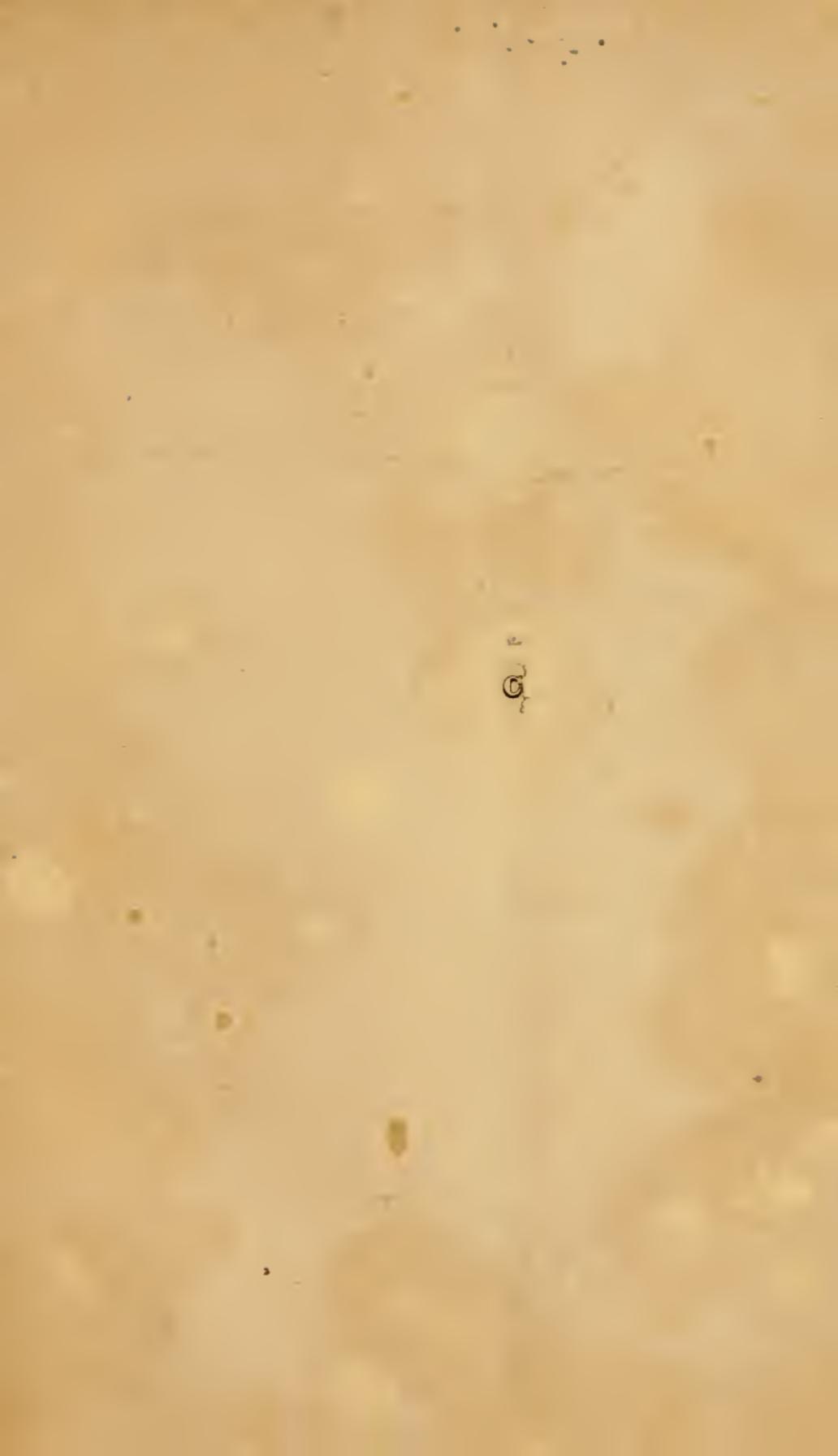
A season of infidelity and darkness is lowering over us. The religious aspect of our Church is now fast putting on the sombre shades predicted more than twenty-five years ago, when German Rationalism and Neology first began to develop their seducing power in New England. Error, like truth, is systematic. One false principle leads to another. A *denial of original sin*, as taught in the Bible, will certainly produce erroneous sentiments in regard to man as a moral agent—mistaken conceptions of the character of Christ and his work of atonement—distorted views of the moral government of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit on the sinner's heart. Whoever doubts or errs in regard to one fundamental point in the evangelic scheme, will be led to attempt, by presumptuous and false speculations, the adjustment of every other principle to his mistaken view, and will be very likely to unhinge the whole economy of grace. Mr. Barnes is, beyond a doubt, far advanced in this fatal course. What are his own practical views and experience as a Christian, God knows. But his principles are subversive of the whole gospel plan. He may, by explanations and refinements of art, persuade himself that he is not in radical error; but he can never satisfy others of this fact without a total change, in thought and word, on the points at an issue. They who read his Notes, especially the young in Sabbath schools and Bible classes, can scarcely fail to be mortally infected by them. And many, embracing his principles and reasoning from them in their several relations and bearings, will almost necessarily arrive at broad infidelity. In truth, if Mr. B's opinions, as I understand them, and as they are understood by readers in general, be correct, I must pronounce the Bible throughout of little value, except as a pure and well-attested code of morals. And this is the comprehensive tenet of the Unitarians—the sum of the religious faith.

This moment, more imperiously than any preceding, summons the friends of religion, morality, and order in our Church, to awake, and most vigorously strive for the preservation of all that is dear in our ancient and venerable ecclesiastical system. That the enemy have come in like a flood, none can doubt; that their designs are revolutionary, if not exterminating, can as little be denied; that their movements can be resisted only by the combined strength of the true and faithful *lifting up the standard of the Lord against them*, is equally clear. Let our action be rendered formidable and efficient, not by bitterness, noise, and contention. May our first resort be to God in faith and supplication: our next, reliance upon firmness and diligence in duty. Let our instruments be enlightened reason—earnest expostulation—the faithful maintenance of law in constitutional process.

To the commissioned leaders in the armies of Israel we need not say—be faithful. To the elders of the Churches, divinely characterized as *helps* and *governments*, we would address an importunate call to come forth with promptness and energy in the discharge of your momentous trust. You are, pre-eminently, the representatives of the people; the trustees and guardians of the faith—the purity—the privileges—the rights of “the great congregation” of Christ Jesus in this world. Pastors may prove corrupt—become unfaithful, or pass away; elders remain amalgamated with the flock, bound to them by dearest ties, entrusted with the care of the lambs, the hope of Christ’s kingdom. The glory of God, the prosperity of his Church, the fidelity of his under-shepherds, the safety of the flock, and the salvation of them that are *without*, depend much upon your wisdom, zeal, and stability. Many are the wiles of the adversary: “Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to *withstand* in the *evil day*, and, *having done all*, to stand!”

A SON OF THE HUGUENOTS.

March, 1836.



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