THE

TRIUMPH OF THE PRESBYTERY OF HANOVER;

OR,

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN VIRGINIA.

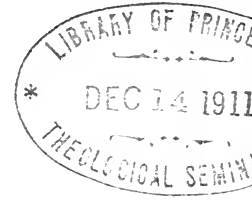
WITH A

CONCISE HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES FROM 1705 TO 1888.

BY

JACOB HARRIS PATTON, M.A., PH.D.,

AUTHOR OF "A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE," "NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE UNITED STATES," ETC.



NEW YORK:

ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY,

38 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET.

EDWARD O. JENKINS' SONS,
Printers and Stereotypers,
20 North William St., New York.

PREFACE.

IN 1773, two years before the commencement of the Revolution, the Ministers and Elders of the Presbytery of Hanover inaugurated a movement for the "Separation of Church and State in Virginia," and during the *twelve* succeeding years, never relaxed their efforts until every law on the statute-book of that State which interfered with the religious rights of the people was swept away. Owing to the exciting incidents of that period—the Revolutionary contest—this remarkable episode in the progress of religious freedom was partially overlooked, and has since been only very briefly noticed by writers on the general history of the country.

In order that the American people, and *especially* Presbyterians, might learn of the inner workings of this severe struggle; of the numerous obstacles the Presbytery had to overcome, principally because of the bad faith of the majority in the Virginia House of Assembly, the

latter being aided and abetted by the authorities of the Church of England, then established in the Colony—the author wrote a history of that contest, which was published in the *Presbyterian Review* for January, 1883.

In accordance with the views of those whose opinions are worthy of respect, the author has republished that article, and to which he has also added a concise history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States from the organization of its first Presbytery, at Freehold, N. J., in 1705, to 1888. This booklet contains a summary of the incidents and characteristic principles whose influence moulded the inner life of this Church and promoted its progress; while it omits the numerous details in respect to the separate organizations of Presbyteries and Synods and of individual churches, it goes into detail sufficient to afford the general reader a clear, and, it is hoped, a satisfactory idea of the subject. It is highly proper to give the *younger Presbyterians* of to-day an opportunity to learn of the remarkably consistent career of their own Church; of its steady and uniform progress from that early day to the present—covering a period of one hundred and eighty-three years.

This publication is in view of the prospective reunion of the Northern and Southern branches of the Presbyterian Church in 1888; which reunion, if consummated, will be under conditions that will render its influence far-reaching and beneficial, not merely to the Church itself, but likewise to the Nation. The reasons for this hope and opinion are given in the booklet itself.

Among many other authorities, the following have been consulted:

DR. ROBERT BAIRD—*Religion in America.*
HON. H. S. RANDALL—*Life of Thomas Jefferson.*
DR. FRANCIS Q. HAWKS—*Episcopal Church in Virginia.*
BISHOP MEADE—*Old Churches in Virginia.*
DR. W. H. FOOTE—*Sketches of Virginia.*
DR. ABEL STEVENS—*History of Methodism.*
DR. E. H. GILLETT—*History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.*
DR. CHARLES HODGE—*Constitutional History of the same.*

The latter two histories—together comprising three volumes—are specially valuable, and supplement one another, and in order to obtain a minute and exhaustive view of the subject, both should be studied.

J. H. P.

NEW YORK, *Dec.* 10, 1887.

CONTENTS.

SECTION I

SECTION V.

SECTION VI.

SECTION VII.

SECTION VIII.

SECTION IX.

SECTION X.

I.

THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN VIRGINIA.

THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN VIRGINIA.

In a relation so intimate as that of the union of Church and State, it is not strange that in former times civil magistrates should have had a sense of responsibility not only pertaining to the people's temporal affairs, but also in respect to the salvation of their souls. In regard to the latter phase of their duties, though unable to define it clearly, it is evident that in the performance of their official acts in matters relating to the people and the Church, they were more or less influenced by a sense of this responsibility. Here is the germ from which has sprung, and often honestly, much of the interference of temporal rulers with Church affairs. On the other hand, those who willingly or otherwise contributed aid in the form of taxes to the support of the Church, wished to have a share in the advantages of its ordinances; and, though they might not be Christians in a Scriptural sense, and could not fully comprehend their relationship to a *Church spiritual*, they deemed

themselves entitled to the privilege of participating in its rites, including that of the Lord's supper. Thus, even in the present day, where there is a union of Church and State, in such relation that the former receives pecuniary aid from the latter, we see a great laxity in the admission of persons to that sacred ordinance. Much more in former times, if there were any advantages to be gained in coming to the communion-table, this class wished to secure them, since they paid their share of the expense. This was a natural, though a groveling view of the question, and the more intelligent of the unconverted had evidently misgivings on the subject, and, not being satisfied with their own moral condition, partook of the communion with a confused sense, that it might in some way benefit them spiritually.

The Half-way Covenant.—The influences that in process of time brought about the separation of Church and State in this country, may be traced to the preaching of Jonathan Edwards, and to the principles developed in his controversy in respect to what was termed the "Half-way Covenant," by which persons making no pretension to being Christians in a *spiritual*

sense were admitted, among other Church privileges, to the communion. This custom grew out of the union of Church and State more than from any other cause. The objections of Edwards were based on moral and spiritual grounds alone; arguing that none but the *regenerate or converted* had a right to come to the Lord's table. In time this truth permeated the minds of religious people, but more effectually, it would seem, the Presbyterians than the Congregationalists; having its share of influence on the separation of Church and State in Virginia, nearly forty years before a similar effect was produced in New England. This phase of the subject for obvious reasons was scarcely noticed in the debates in the Legislature during the struggle in Virginia, though in that controversy the undercurrent of this sentiment, influenced the minds of the religious people outside the State or Episcopal Church, and strengthened their opposition to such laxity in the admission of persons to Church privileges, which custom they believed to be injurious to pure spiritual religion.

In his early ministry Jonathan Edwards was the pastor of a Presbyterian church in New York, and he seems to have been partial to the

form of Church government practiced in that denomination; and, also, he agreed with their views on the non-interference of the civil magistrate with spiritual affairs. He afterward expressed his opinion of the form of Church rule then prevalent in New England, saying: "I have long been out of conceit of our unsettled, independent, confused way of Church government in this land" (*Dr. E. H. Gillett, vol. i., p.* 3). On assuming the Presidency of Princeton College he connected himself with the Presbyterians.

Up to the time of Edwards there seems to have been little doubt as to the advantage to both parties of the union of Church and State; the prevailing sentiment being, that the former could not be supported without the aid of the latter. The idea of sustaining the Church by the voluntary contributions of its own friends had found lodgment only in the minds of the advanced few. We see prominent among the arguments used in behalf of this alliance, that the Church ought to be supported by the secular power, on the ground of the general well-being of society, as its influence would promote in the community honesty, industry, and material interests as well as good morals.

Why the harsh Intolerance in Virginia.— It is proper to notice why the contest in Virginia partook so much of bitterness, and why the "Dissenters" were treated so harshly in that colony. We can thereby divine why these outrages, continuing for nearly a century, produced their legitimate results in the final retribution which came upon the Established Church, when it retained only its church buildings, while its rectories and glebes were sold under the sheriff's hammer for the benefit of that public from whom originally nearly all the funds to purchase them had been extorted in the form of taxes. The Church of England was established by law in the colonies of New York, Virginia, and the Carolinas. In the first the royal governors were the most intolerant toward "Dissenters," while the churchmen, or its adherents, were more indifferent on the subject. Perhaps they were somewhat influenced by their surroundings—the tolerant spirit of the Dutch residents—and, moreover, the Episcopal element in that colony did not comprise, it is said, more than one-seventh of the population. In the latter three, on the contrary, intolerance was instigated for the greater part by the clergy and lay churchmen,

the governors being disposed to connive at the exercise of religious freedom; that is, they were not very energetic in enforcing the illiberal laws on that subject. Why the churchmen of Virginia were so in contrast with those of New York may be accounted for, since great numbers of royalists—cavaliers—in the times of the troubles preceding and during the Commonwealth fled to Virginia, where they were cordially welcomed. They afterward gave tone to Virginian society by diffusing their sentiments of loyalty to the King and to the Church, which so ardently espoused his cause; they looked upon the "Dissenters" as enemies to both.

The "Vagrants" in Connecticut and New York.—In those days the spirit of intolerance was not found in the Established Church nor in royal governors alone, as it was the natural outgrowth of the union of Church and State and the misdirected zeal of secular rulers. In 1742 the Connecticut Legislature passed a law forbidding a minister preaching in any parish except the one over which he had special charge, unless by invitation of the settled minister or a majority of the congregation. Ministers not residents of the colony thus preaching were to

be arrested as *common vagrants.* Under the latter law Samuel Finley, afterward President of Princeton College, and others were driven from the colony, being characterized as "strolling preachers that were most disorderly." These *vagrants* were Presbyterian clergymen, and no doubt such high-handed measures roused in them an antagonism to the union of Church and State. In consequence of these proceedings and the experience of Presbyterians in the colony of New York, this antagonism spread among that class of Christians in the middle colonies and further South.

The Presbyterians had been specially annoyed in their earlier days when struggling for existence as a religious denomination, both in New York and Virginia, by the intolerance of the Church of England. They associated the State as the immediate power behind the persecution; though the latter, as it was well known, was frequently urged to this course of action by the clergy of the Establishment. "For many years," says a chronicler of the times, "in New York, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina, the growth of the Presbyterian Church was checked by persecution and intolerance."

Illiberal Laws in Virginia.—The laws were grievous and illiberal in Virginia—more severe than in any other colony. The Established churches were built at the public expense in each county town, or where there was a court-house, thus occupying the positions of influence, and the "sects," or "Dissenters," as they were contemptuously called by self-complacent churchmen, were compelled to locate their church buildings elsewhere. For three-fourths of a century rigid laws had been enforced against those who did not conform. It is said that until the commencement of the Revolution there was not a Presbyterian or Baptist church building in a village in Virginia, yet the ministers of the former denomination were by far the most learned of any class of preachers in the colony. The rule of the presbyteries of that Church was then, as it is to-day, to license only those to preach who have been classically and theologically educated, unless under extraordinary circumstances.

Though "Dissenters" were permitted to have church buildings only outside the towns, and even to have these, unless under annoying restrictions, they were sometimes denied, they

were, however, *graciously* warned by the civil authorities to "take the oaths enjoined and to register the places of their meetings, and behave themselves peaceably toward the Government." This discourteous language was used in respect to those Presbyterians who, among other reasons, in order to avoid the annoyances to which they would be subjected in the eastern portion of Virginia, migrated from Pennsylvania to the back part of that colony and settled in the fertile valleys of the Shenandoah and other streams west of the Blue Ridge. As long as these settlers served as a protection against hostile Indians they were unmolested, and were permitted to have meeting-houses where they pleased. In time Germans and Quakers, also from Pennsylvania, and for the same reasons, perhaps, migrated thither; thus increasing the number of the inhabitants as well as the thrift of the several communities. When these settlements had grown in population and prospered, the Establishment wished to occupy the ground, and accordingly the colonial authorities compelled these "backwoods dissenters" to pay taxes in order to build edifices for the Established Church, and to support incumbents when

there were very few of that denomination in the region. The first settlers here possessed remarkable worldly as well as church-militant qualities; they being for the most part Scotch and Scotch-Irish. These characteristics developed themselves when the attempt was made to carry this law into effect.

Freedom from Ecclesiastical Clannishness.—The Presbyterians did not come as a body to this country to form isolated settlements, as did the Puritans in New England, the Dutch in New York, the Quakers in Pennsylvania, and the Roman Catholics in Maryland. When persecuted in England, they preferred, rather than emigrate in a body, "to struggle for liberty at home; a struggle which eventually was crowned with success" (*Dr. Charles Hodge, pages* 19, 20). This may account for the fact that they were so free from a clannish ecclesiasticism; though strong in their opinions, they fell in with the religious people of the colonies and promoted the cause without arrogating to themselves any special pre-eminence. They held that Jesus Christ had established a form of government for the Church "distinct from the civil authority." When Parliament, in accordance with

"the English idea that the church of any denomination was the creation of the State," abolished Episcopacy and established Presbyterianism, the latter Church, as such, had nothing to do with that action; and, on the same principle, they were opposed *to any interference whatever in spiritual matters by the civil magistrate.* "When the arbitrary measures of Charles I. drove the English nation into rebellion, the partisans of the Court were Episcopalians; the opposite party was, or became in the main, Presbyterian" (*Dr. Hodge, page* 23). These were their traditions, and, true to their influence, the Presbyterians harmonized with the other denominations in the colonies in the effort of spreading the Gospel, irrespective of the patronage or opposition of the civil authority.

Grades of Ministerial Education.—In the earlier days of Virginia, the College of William and Mary was established ostensibly "to educate a domestic succession of Church of England ministers," as well as to teach the children of the Indians. But for nearly a half century preceding the time of which we write, the education of native clergymen was rather discour-

aged than otherwise. There was, in truth, no special inducement for pious young men to qualify themselves for the sacred office, as so many of the ministers in the Established Church in the colony were from England. The latter were appointed by the Home Government at the suggestion of the Bishop of London, to whose diocese the colonies were assigned, and who ordained them, as there was no bishop in America till after the Revolution.

Meanwhile, the "Dissenters," and notably the Presbyterians, were making strenuous efforts to educate young men for the sacred office. Early in the eighteenth century the latter established schools to educate young men for the ministry, and persistently refused to license any to preach who had not a classical and theological training, knowing that the influence of an educated ministry must ever be beneficial. In 1748 it was proposed in the Synod of New York and Philadelphia—then the highest judicature in the Church—to relax the demands for the classical, literary, and theological qualifications of candidates for the ministry. This proposition was voted down by a large majority. Instead of diminishing the time assigned for such prepara-

tion, the Synod, as if to be emphatic, added another year to the prescribed course of study for their theological students. This same spirit as much influences the Presbyterians of to-day as it did those of nearly one hundred and fifty years ago. They now excel all others in the number of their Theological Seminaries and in the richness of their endowments. This strictness in demanding a thoroughly educated ministry has had a marked effect in raising the plane of general intelligence among the private members of their denomination.

Says Benedict, in his History of the Baptists of that day in Virginia: "Their preachers were without learning, without patronage, generally very poor, plain in their dress, unrefined in their manners, and awkward in their address." Dr. Foote, when writing of the same period in his sketches of Virginia (p. 375), says: though generally without education, "the zealous Baptist ministers, with all the energy of excited spirits inflamed by their contemplation of Divine truth and visions of the spiritual world," preached and labored, and by their fervid exhortations, multitudes were brought to believe and be saved. Dr. Robert Baird, in his "Religion in

America," makes a similar statement, both as to their education and their zeal. The ministers of this denomination, especially in the earlier portion of the eighteenth century, suffered more from harsh treatment than the other preachers. Their comparative lack of education may have been the occasion of their being treated so contemptuously by the Establishment and the civil authorities. Oftentimes, when imprisoned for proclaiming the Gospel in their way, they preached to the sympathizing people from the grated windows of the jails in which they were confined. Let their unflinching Christian zeal and self-denial be honored and emulated!

Severe Conflicts—The Act of Toleration.—Previous to the time of which we write occurred many struggles between the "Dissenters" and the civil authorities, because of the intolerance of the latter. These controversies continued for more than a third of a century, and, by eliciting discussion, prepared the minds of intelligent people for the grand result—the separation of Church and State. In Hanover County—"the birthplace of Presbyterianism in Eastern Virginia"—were several churches of that denomination, and here labored and preached the

celebrated Samuel Davies. His ministrations were interfered with by the Governor and Council; they being urged on by the clergy of the Establishment. On one occasion the matter came before the General Court; when Davies argued with great force and eloquence in opposition to Peyton Randolph, the King's Attorney. Davies contended that the English "Act of Toleration" applied to the relief of "Dissenters" in Virginia, as well as to the same class in England. He won, by his eloquence and learned arguments in favor of religious freedom, the admiration of the better portion of his opponents, who complimented him by saying he "was a good lawyer spoiled." The Presbyterians determined to test the question further, and when Davies afterward went to England to solicit funds for Princeton College, they authorized him to bring the case before the King in Council. He did so, and obtained the decision that the "Act of Toleration" did apply to the colony of Virginia (1748). In consequence of this decision, the General Court of the colony permitted the Presbyterians to establish three new places for preaching. These church buildings were twelve or fifteen miles apart. Under the

circumstances, this concession was an immense gain, and it was obtained by the perseverance and learning of the ministers belonging to the Hanover Presbytery. The other denominations —Baptists and Quakers—were deeply interested and did all they could to promote the cause of religious toleration by petitions, but the Presbyterians had the boldness to demand religious freedom as a *natural right*, and to argue the question before the civil courts, or with the Legislature, and, after a long struggle, secured the ultimate result in the separation of Church and State. This was the legitimate effect of their being able to enforce their own arguments and refute those of their opponents.

Efforts to reform Clerical Morals.—In no country where the union of Church and State existed, did the civil authorities ever appear to have clear conceptions of that religious liberty which arises from the spiritual condition of man. The magistrates, from their official acts, seem to have had only a dim perception of that all-important qualification of a preacher of the Gospel—a change of heart, or to be a Christian. It is not unreasonable to suppose the main cause of this has been that they, themselves,

for the most part, were, individually, strangers to spiritual religion. No matter how pure in their private life, and evangelical in doctrine preachers were, these essential qualifications were oftentimes unrecognized by the secular rulers in appointing them to parishes. The prevalence of these deficiencies was one of the objections alleged against the clergy of the Established Church in Virginia at a much earlier period than that of which we write. Sir William Berkeley—that staunch churchman—complained, nearly a century before the final struggle began, when writing of the clergy, that "as of all commodities so of this—the worst are sent us—and we have few that we can boast of." The Legislature of Virginia found it necessary to prescribe by law certain negative qualifications of a minister of the Established Church. "He was not to give himself to excess in drinking or riot, and spending his time idly by day or night; but to hear or read the Holy Scriptures, catechise the children, and visit the sick." A writer states that "many clergymen of profligate lives had found a home in these unfortunate colonies, and found impunity in crime from the want of a power able

to correct them." These evils were so glaring, that it was assumed that those sent to the colonies as clergymen were not exemplary Christians, and the evil was not limited to Virginia, as it was enjoined that "on the arrival of any ship in the waters of Maryland, the nearest clergyman (of the church) was to make inquiry whether any minister was on board, and, if so, what his demeanor had been upon the voyage." The clergy themselves complain (1755) that "so few from the two Universities (Oxford and Cambridge) came to the colony," and that "so many who are a disgrace to the ministry find opportunities to fill parishes" (*Dr. Hawks, vol. i., p.* 117, *and vol. ii., pp.* 80–101). At a still later day it was charged that "these gentlemen clergy spent much of their time fox-hunting and aping the sports of the aristocracy at home, and in company with the more dissolute of their parishioners." Says Bishop Meade (*vol. i., p.* 10): "It is a well-established fact, that some who were discarded from the English Church yet obtained livings in Virginia." As these ministers were appointed by the civil government, their theological education and their moral worth were not scrutinized as they should have

been. These deficiencies had much influence in forming a sentiment by no means favorable to the clergy of the Establishment in the minds of the truly religious, not only among "Dissenters," but among the same class of churchmen themselves; and a tacit protest existed against a system that permitted men of such character to enter upon the sacred office. It must not be inferred from these statements that there were no excellent Christian men in the Establishment, who labored faithfully in their parochial duties; especially could this be said of the native-born.

It has been charged that on the part of the "Dissenters" there was an unwarranted hostility toward the Establishment. The Presbyterians found no fault with the doctrines of the Church of England as set forth in her Articles, nor did they with her mode of worship or government, as her own members preferred. They demanded for themselves the same religious privileges that they were willing to concede to other denominations, but they denied most emphatically the right of a Legislature to interfere, in any manner whatever, with "the spiritual concerns of religion." Said the Rev. Samuel Davies: "Had

the doctrines of the Gospel been solemnly and faithfully preached in the Established Church, I am persuaded there would have been few 'Dissenters' in these parts of Virginia, for their first (main) objections were not against her peculiar rites and ceremonies, and much less against her excellent Articles."

Preachers appointed by the Crown.—It was a grievance of which intelligent Christian churchmen themselves complained, that their preachers were appointed by the Crown without reference to the wishes of the people of the parish. In Virginia and Maryland the vestries might present or recommend a preacher who had not been thus appointed, but even then the Governor had the *absolute* right of inducting or putting him in actual possession. Under the more liberal system of the union of Church and State in Massachusetts and Connecticut, the churches were built where needed and the money raised from the whole people of the town or district, who voted the amount and taxed themselves to pay it. The minister was chosen by the members of the church, and in consequence he was acceptable to the majority, and if not, he could be changed for another; but, as a general rule,

he remained for life or during a long pastorate. This was quite in contrast with the arbitrary system that obtained in Virginia and Maryland.

The English Church Established—When?—The Church of England was established in Maryland by the act of King William in 1691, and in North Carolina fifteen years later; the population being composed of "Presbyterians, Independents, Quakers, and other evil-disposed persons." This, it was said, was accomplished by a Legislature illegally chosen. The taxes imposed in consequence roused a bitter feeling in the minds of the "Dissenters," who by the same Legislature were deprived of many of their civil rights; the latter were not recovered until the close of the Revolution. The same Church was established in South Carolina in 1704 by a majority of one vote in the Legislature, while two-thirds of the population were "Dissenters." Meanwhile it had been established in the colony of New York (1693), and was supported by taxes from all the people in proportion to their wealth, though seven-tenths of them were not in sympathy with the favored denomination. In New Jersey special favor was asked for the Church of England, but was never fully granted, and in

this anomalous condition it remained till the Revolution. There was never any union of Church and State in Pennsylvania. This freedom from annoyance may account somewhat for the rapid progress made in the growth of Presbyterianism in these two colonies.

Influence of an Educated Ministry.—The comparatively superior education of the Presbyterian ministers gave them a commanding influence in New Jersey and Pennsylvania as well as in Virginia and in the Carolinas. Their zeal and name were identified with the movements leading to more religious freedom, particularly during the period from the close of the French war (1763) till the commencement of the Revolution. For years they had been ardently inculcating these principles in the back counties of Virginia and North Carolina, and, in the end, prepared the minds of their hearers to issue the famed Mecklenburg Declaration (May 11, 1775). In the convention which issued it were several Presbyterian ministers and elders. This influence had already been recognized in England, and the threat was often made by the "Church party" that "Bishops should be settled in America in spite of all the Presbyterian oppo-

sition." The objections of the latter, as often explained, were not against bishops in their spiritual character, but in the temporal power inherent in an Established Church, as then existing in England and Virginia and the Carolinas. They believed that civil and religious liberty should go hand in hand, but saw the reverse of this in "Lords spiritual," being supported to a great extent by the hard earnings of those who did not sympathize with the ritual and doctrines of the Established Church.

Conflicts in respect to Salaries.—During this period there were frequent contentions between the Virginia Assembly and the clergy of the Establishment in respect to the latter's salaries and their payment. This unseemly contest alienated more or less the public sympathy from the latter. A law of Maryland demanded a poll-tax of "forty pounds of tobacco" for the benefit of the clergy, but did not specify the quality of the article in which it was to be paid. Many of the planters manifested their view of the justice of the law by furnishing the full weight, but of a villainous quality of tobacco. One of these contests in Virginia was the famous

"Parson's case," 1763, in which Patrick Henry performed a part so important.

A Great Principle Established.—In the earlier colonial days the "Dissenters" contented themselves with protesting against the infringement of their rights as citizens and the burdens imposed upon them in the form of tithes or taxes by the colonial authorities, oftentimes, as they believed, at the instigation of the clergy of the Established Church. The Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers all chafed under this tyranny, that compelled them to aid in supporting a Church whose system they did not approve. These annoyances—many of them by no means petty—led finally to one of the most interesting episodes in our history; the struggle to separate Church and State in Virginia. This contest really lasted about twelve years, from 1773 to 1786, covering more than the entire period of the war of the Revolution, and within one year of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. Owing to the stirring times of which it was contemporary, this remarkable movement has been overshadowed and has not received the attention which its importance deserves. *To establish the principle of supporting*

the Gospel by the voluntary contributions of its own friends, was as unique in sustaining the Church as two years afterward, was the anomaly in history of founding a Republic composed of States independent in the administration of their own affairs, and yet under a united National Government. In each case it was the application of great principles, and both have been equally successful.

The Struggle begins—The Memorial.—This contest assumed tangible form in October, 1776, though three years before the Presbytery of Hanover began the agitation in respect to church privileges or religious rights by appointing commissioners to lay the matter before the Virginia Assembly, but "nothing was done in the Assembly that year to remedy the disabilities of 'Dissenters.'" The commissioners took action on the subject during the two following years, but with a similar result. The Presbyterians were thus the first in taking measures to secure the separation of Church and State, nor did they desist till the end was accomplished twelve years afterward.

When the Declaration of Independence was made, the ground was changed, and, at the first

meeting of the Presbytery of Hanover after July 4, 1776, that body memorialized the Legislature or House of Assembly to dissolve the union of Church and State, and thus leave the support of the Gospel to its own friends. This memorial discussed the principles on which they demanded the separation. Their arguments were not successfully controverted, and their cogency in the end compelled the Assembly to comply with the demand. The Memorial showed that such union conflicted with the Declaration of Rights, on which, as the Magna Charta of the Commonwealth, all the privileges and rights of the people, both civil and religious, depend; that in the frontier counties in the valley of the Shenandoah, in which region were very few Episcopalians to aid in bearing the expense, those not in communion with the Establishment were compelled by law to bear heavy burdens in building church edifices and rectories, purchasing glebes, and in supporting the Established clergy. As *all* the colonists were now engaged in a contest with the mother country on account of infringements of their rights, it was inconsistent that *all* the people should not be protected in the freedom of conscience. They expected their repre-

sentatives in the House of Assembly to remove every species of religious and civil bondage. They argued that this oppression retarded immigration to Virginia, and also the progress of the arts and sciences of the State and of its manufactures. In proof of this statement they instanced the rapid growth and improvement of the Northern colonies compared with Virginia, and at the same time directing the attention of the Assembly to the many advantages of soil and climate of the latter, yet men refused to migrate to a colony where they could not enjoy the rights of conscience.

They argued that the Gospel asked the support of only its own adherents, and did not in that respect need the secular aid; that Christianity would prevail and flourish by its own merits under an all-prevailing Providence. They did not ask ecclesiastical establishments for themselves, nor did they think them desirable for others, as such must of necessity be partial, and in the main injurious to the people at large. They demanded that every law that countenanced religious domination should be immediately repealed; that every religious sect should be protected in the full exercise of its mode of

worship; that all invidious distinctions in respect to religious denominations should be abolished, and every person be free to support any one he chose by his voluntary gifts. Such were the sentiments the Presbytery of Hanover advanced on the subject of religious freedom; their arguments cover the whole ground, enunciating the principles held and practiced to-day as truisms throughout the Union.

Committee on Religion and Morality.—With other petitions on the subject, this memorial was referred to a committee on religion and morality; of this committee Thomas Jefferson was chairman. As evidence of the difficulties with which the memorialists had to contend, and how little the members of that Assembly appreciated their true relation to the preachers of the Gospel, may be cited the following resolution passed November 19, 1776, "That provision should be made for the continuing the succession of the clergy [of the Establishment] and for superintending their conduct" (*Randall's "Life of Jefferson," vol. i., p.* 205). This resolution, designed to forestall or control action on the subject, was passed after the petitions and memorial had been received and referred by the Assembly to the com-

mittee, and on which the latter had not yet reported.

The Petitions—The Demand as a Right.—The year before (1775) the Baptists petitioned the Assembly, "That they might be allowed to worship God in their own way without interruption; to maintain their own ministers separate from others, and to be married and buried without paying the clergy of other denominations,"—meaning of the Establishment—(*Dr. Baird, p.* 219). The Quakers also petitioned to the same effect. The Presbyterians took higher ground; that it was their *right* to do this. They did not ask for a similar permission, but, on the contrary, demanded that *an end be put to the assumption of any such authority in the Legislature by dissolving the union of Church and State.* The struggle did not soon end. The Episcopalians presented counter-memorials and so did the Methodists, who in that day deemed themselves in a measure allied to the Church of England, and were known as the Wesleyan Connection. When the Revolutionary contest began great numbers of the Church of England clergymen, who had come from England, went back to that country and left their parishes vacant. These

parishes in large numbers were filled by Methodist ministers; the latter falling heir in a measure to the emoluments of the parishes. The Methodists maintained that the State violated its pledges given in the early days of the colony to the Established Church, and that its claims were in the form of a vested right. In truth they never were "Dissenters"; on the contrary, their sympathies and Church interests were with the Establishment; while their ministers in Virginia, during this struggle, were for the most part Englishmen. These were sent first (about 1770) by the London Conference, America being constituted on that occasion as the *fiftieth* circuit. (*Dr. Stevens' "Hist. of Methodism," vol. i., p.* 442).

Upon whom fell the Burden of the Conflict.—The brunt of this conflict fell upon the ministers and laymen of the Presbyterian Church. As preachers and exhorters the Baptists were very successful, but it required better-educated men to cope with the lawyers and statesmen in the Virginia Assembly, and to repel the arguments for the continuance of the union of Church and State. "The Baptists," says Dr. Hawks, "though not to be outdone in zeal,

were far surpassed in ability by the Presbyterians. The latter's ablest memorials came from the Presbytery of Hanover" (*vol. i., p.* 140). To sustain their views the Church advocates pointed to the history of such union as existing from Constantine onward, while the prospective good effects of a separation were at best only a conjecture, as the experiment had never been tried, while the arguments in respect to the injurious moral influence of appointing improper men rectors of parishes, had but little influence with the Legislature.

The attempt to support the ordinances of the Gospel by voluntary contributions of its own well-wishers, appeared to the members of the Assembly visionary in the extreme, especially as the "Dissenters" in comparison were poor indeed. The wealthy land and slave holders belonged almost entirely to the Established Church, and from this class a large majority of the members of the Legislature were chosen. "The Establishment," says Jefferson, "was truly of the religion of the rich, the dissenting sects being entirely composed of the less wealthy people." And again, "Although two-thirds of our citizens were 'Dissenters,' a ma-

jority of the Legislature were churchmen." "Among these, however, were some reasonable and liberal men, who enabled us on some points to obtain feeble majorities." "A majority of the inhabitants were obliged by law to pay contributions to support the pastors of the minority. This unrighteous compulsion was grievously felt during the royal government when there was no hope of relief."

The Legislature met on its own Ground.—The advocates of the system in the Assembly were met on their own ground by Presbyterian clergymen, who, by their superior knowledge of the subject in all its bearings, won their cause, and the influence of that example banished the system of the union of Church and State from the land. One of the positions honestly taken by good men, was that injury would be done the cause of religion; they assumed that unless aided by the State the Church would languish and fail because of insufficient support. On the contrary, the opponents of the system argued that the true friends of a pure Gospel would, as a matter of duty, support the Church; and moreover, there would not be so much inducement for those who were not governed by

the genuine principles of religion to connect themselves with the Church—this would be a great gain. The arguments for the continuance of the system had greater weight then than they would have to-day, since the results of voluntary contributions for the support of the Gospel and its ordinances have proved their fallacy; as well as the remarkable development of the principle of personal responsibility in its influence upon individual Christians in making them more benevolent and more zealous in aiding the cause of religion. This principle now pervades the minds of American Christians to an extent impossible under a system of the union of Church and State, where the responsibility of supporting the Gospel is shared between its friends and the world at large, or State.

Objectionable Laws partially repealed.—On the 5th of December, 1776, an act was passed by the Assembly which repealed the laws making it an offence to hold any particular religious opinions, and also removing the penalties inflicted upon those who did not attend the service of the Established Church or worshiped elsewhere. This act, though imperfect, virtually dissolved the union between Church and State,

by repealing all former laws relating to that union; it also exempted "Dissenters" from contributing to the support of that Church, but left the latter in possession of all the wealth it had acquired by taxation in the past — this wealth consisted mostly in glebes, parsonages, and church edifices.

The following is the text of the bill: "*We the General Assembly do enact:* That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

In relation to minor points the contest continued, and the bill for the separation did not go fully into effect till ten years afterward (1786); Jefferson was a member of the Assembly in 1776, and chairman of the committee when this partial repeal was made. During the two years following many memorials or petitions were pre-

sented by both parties to the Assembly; some of these asked for a general assessment or tax for the benefit of all denominations, and some in opposition; while other petitioners stepped back a century and asked that the "sectaries" be prohibited from holding meetings, and none but "licensed preachers" (meaning of the Establishment) be permitted to conduct public worship.

Prejudices roused—Tories—Whigs—Quakers.—After the commencement of the war of the Revolution a strong prejudice was roused against the Established clergy, as the great majority of them were ardent Loyalists, or "Tories"; the Presbyterians and Baptists were even more ardently "Whigs"—their ministers preached with great zeal the doctrine of resistance to tyrants. The Quakers were, for the greater part, from principle opposed to war in any form, and thus they were often misjudged as to their motives. Under the circumstances, which we of to-day cannot fully appreciate, it was not strange that so many of the clergy were Tories; the traditions of that Church were in favor of royalty, and, moreover, a large majority were Englishmen by birth. Unfortunately they in-

fluenced their parishioners almost as much in favor of royalty as the dissenting pastors did their flocks in favor of liberty.

The General Assessment—Another Memorial.—The advocates for the union of Church and State did not relax their efforts to retain the secular advantages which the Establishment had already, but earnestly contended to secure emoluments, however small. First the attempt was made to have a general assessment of taxes to support all the denominations alike. The Baptists and Quakers as well as the Presbyterians opposed this system; the latter especially, on the ground that aid for the Gospel in that form was *injurious* to spiritual religion. Accordingly the Presbytery of Hanover came forward with another of their well-reasoned memorials (1778); and after courteously thanking the Assembly for what they had done in repealing some of the offensive and illiberal laws, they proceeded to oppose the "plan of a general assessment." They argued that the only proper object of civil government was to promote the happiness of the people by protecting them as citizens in their rights; to restrain the vicious by wholesome laws and encourage the virtuous

by the same means; that the obligations which men owe their Creator are not a proper subject of human legislation, and the worship of God according to the dictates of conscience was an inalienable right. "Neither does the Church of Christ stand in need of a *general assessment* for its support; and most certain we are persuaded that it would be no advantage, but an injury to the society to which we belong; and we believe that Christ has ordained a complete system of laws for the government of His kingdom, so we are persuaded that by His providence, He will support its final consummation." This memorial was also seconded by the urgent protests of the Baptists; the result was that the following year the proposed plan of general assessment was abandoned for the time being. We, to-day, take for granted the principles here enunciated, they having been so thoroughly discussed, while experience has as clearly proved their soundness and utility. These Christian men were fully convinced that the effect of the union of Church and State was, for many reasons, injurious to spiritual religion. Many of these legislators, though they talked so learnedly, were unable to appreciate the question in its spiritual bear-

ings, and for this reason alone, the authors of these memorials never urged to much extent the arguments derived from this phase of the subject, but judiciously waived them, although they were so convincing to themselves, and to the Church members whom they represented.

Defects in the Act of Repeal.—It was only in general terms that the law of December, 1776, dissolved the union of Church and State, and the clergy of the former "still retained the glebes—the lands belonging to the parishes—and also claimed the right of performing marriage ceremonies with the accustomed fees." Therefore the Assembly found it necessary (1780) to enact: "That it shall and may be lawful for any minister of any society or congregation of Christians to celebrate the rites of matrimony, and such marriage, as well as those hereafter celebrated by dissenting ministers, shall be and are hereby declared good and valid in law." Yet under this law the Episcopal clergy were, *ex officio*, authorized to celebrate marriages throughout the State, while the ministers of other denominations had to obtain a *license*, and in addition, were limited to certain districts or counties. In answer to this insulting legisla-

tion, the Presbytery of Hanover came forward with a carefully prepared argument covering the whole ground of controversy, in which the wrong of the law in relation to performing the rites of matrimony was thoroughly discussed and shown. In due time the law was so modified as to be virtually repealed.

Security of Religious Rights demanded.—The Presbytery also complained that "the security of religious rights was left to the precarious fate of common law, instead of *being made a fundamental part of our Constitution as it ought to be.*" They likewise complained that the Episcopal Church was the only one incorporated and could hold property, while all other denominations "were obliged to trust to the precarious fidelity of trustees chosen for the purpose," and they, asking nothing for themselves, demanded that these inequalities in the treatment of Christian denominations should be removed. The Assembly continued from year to year to suspend *Church levies;* this policy necessitated continual watchfulness on the part of the "Dissenters," till in the latter part of 1779 these levies were abolished; but this action was not acquiesced in sincerely, for after the return

of peace the Virginia Assembly again attempted legislation (1784) on the subject; the intention now being to incorporate "all Societies of the Christian religion, which may apply for the same." The reason for this apparent liberality cropped out when to the bill was added an amendment authorizing a *general assessment* "to establish a provision for the teachers of the Christian religion." The Hanover Presbytery took measures to oppose this renewal of that project; but meanwhile, though secretly, its friends had been so active that it was apprehended it would pass in spite of all their efforts in opposition. The question was now in a new form, and in it was a temptation. As all would receive aid from the public funds, and the experiment of voluntary support might possibly result in failure, it was not strange that a few Presbyterian ministers for a time wavered, but in the end they came back with still greater force to their former convictions of the truth, that the ordinances of the Gospel ought to be supported as a matter of Christian duty by its own adherents, who should in this action be free and untrammeled by any secular or legislative influence whatever.

Protest against Incorporating the Episcopal Church.—Consistent with the original movement was another. A bill was brought forward in the Assembly to incorporate the "Protestant Episcopal Church"—the name assumed after the close of the Revolution. This measure was designed to secure to that Church the absolute ownership of all the glebe-lands and the buildings thereon erected—all obtained at the public expense by taxation. The persistent Presbytery of Hanover appeared again before the Legislature in opposition to this revived measure with its still more objectionable features. The celebrated Dr. John Blair Smith, who at one time was inclined to favor the "general assessment," was heard at the bar of the House in an exhaustive argument in opposition to the enactment of the bill. He continued his address for three days; in which the whole subject was so thoroughly discussed, and the evil effects of the proposed law were so clearly pointed out, that the scheme was abandoned forever.

The General Assessment again.—The Presbytery took high ground, saying: "We hope that no attempt will be made to point out articles of faith, or to settle modes of worship, or to

interfere in the internal government of religious communities, *or to render the ministers of religion independent of the will of the people whom they serve.*" Again, that body protested (August, 1785) against "the incorporation of the Protestant Episcopal Church," so far as *to secure* to that Church "properties procured at the expense of the whole community." The truth is, that in this controversy, lasting for nine years, the Assembly having a majority of its members churchmen, did not keep faith with their opponents outside that denomination. From their point of view they thought the ordinances of the Gospel would be unsupported and Christianity crippled in its influence. They had never fully realized as individuals their personal responsibility in the duty of supporting the Gospel, as the "Dissenters" had done during the many years in which the latter, as a matter of conscience, sustained their own ministers and the ordinances of the Gospel, while at the same time, paying, in the form of arbitrary taxes, their share in supporting a church Establishment, whose ritual and form of government they deemed "unscriptural." It is strange that the self-respect and Christian manhood of the churchmen of that

day did not induce them to decline receiving money thus wrung from their neighbors, whom they were pleased to characterize as "Dissenters." Some of the best minds among the Virginia statesmen were in favor of the "general assessment," such as Patrick Henry, who thought an assessment "should be made for some form of worship or other"; Edmund Pendleton—"an honest man, but zealous churchman," whom Jefferson characterized as, "taken all in all," the ablest man in debate he had ever met," and Richard Henry Lee, who wrote that "avarice is accomplishing the destruction of religion for want of a legal obligation to contribute something to its support," and even George Washington wrote to George Mason (1785), "that he was not much alarmed at the thought of making people pay toward the support of that which they profess." On the other hand, the assessment was opposed by James Madison and George Mason (the intimate friend of Washington), and others—Jefferson being abroad at that time as Minister to France. In 1799 all laws made for the benefit of religious societies were repealed, and, in 1801, "the '*glebes*,' as soon as vacated by existing incumbents, were ordered to be sold by the overseers of the poor."

The different Effects of Petitions and Arguments.—We would not detract one iota from the merit of the Baptists and the Quakers in this struggle, but from the nature of the case—as they presented only petitions and protests—their efforts were not as influential as the Presbyterians, who, from their position on a higher plane of education, both ministers and laity were able to meet their opponents in open debate or by written arguments well put; thus they became the controlling force in bringing about the reform. The latter never wavered in their determination to secure the desired end, but, amid discouragements and false faith, they calmly persevered in refuting the arguments of their opponents, and, in the end, winning to their sentiments the more enlightened and liberal-minded churchmen, not only in the Assembly, but in the State.

Contest in respect to the Glebes.—The question of the glebes, which grew out of the repealing act, was also strongly contested, and deserves a passing notice. It was argued that the glebes should be retained by the Episcopal Church, as some of the funds applied in their purchase had been donations. On the other

hand, it was contended that the glebes and parsonages were public property, bought almost entirely by funds raised by unjust taxation—the donations being a very small portion of the whole amount. Moreover, the Established Church had had, up to that time, the exclusive use of the funds thus raised, the advantages of which use far overbalanced the loss of these limited donations, even if they could be separated from the common fund; and in addition it retained its church buildings, though erected by means of moneys derived from taxes imposed upon the whole community. It was suggested that the churchmen were mostly wealthy land and slave holders, and it was much easier for them, by voluntary contributions, to sustain their own Church than for the other denominations of Christians to support theirs.

On the subject of selling the glebes for the benefit of the whole people, the Baptists were more strenuous than any of the other "Dissenters." Says Dr. Hawks: "There was a bitterness of hatred in this denomination (Baptist) toward the Establishment, which far surpassed that of all other religious communities in the colony; and it was always prompt to avail itself of every

prejudice which religious or political zeal could excite against the Church" (*vol. i., p.* 121). One reason of this hostile feeling may have been that the Baptists had been persecuted more than the other denominations, and in more degrading forms. The remembrance of these outrages came down from generation to generation, and roused a feeling that was closely allied to righteous indignation. The Presbyterians appear to have viewed the dissolving of the union of Church and State as the all-important question at issue, and when that was accomplished they looked upon that of church property as secondary. In accordance with this general sentiment of rejecting secular aid in any form, the Presbytery of Hanover refused incorporation for their denomination, as had been granted the Episcopal Church, on the ground that it was contrary to their views of propriety, and, from principle, they declined any advantage to be thus obtained. The Assembly reconsidered its action, and finally (1787) repealed the law incorporating the Episcopal Church.

A half century of Intolerance remembered.—The Presbyterians also remembered that their church members and ministers had labored for

more than a half century under disabilities caused by the intolerance more or less instigated by the Church of England; that in the colony of New York ministers of their denomination had been imprisoned and otherwise maltreated. Notably was this the case of Rev. Francis Makemie, who, when on a visit to that colony from Maryland, was sent to jail by the Governor—Lord Cornbury—because he dared preach in a private house when every hall or church building had been denied him by the same authority; that at the instigation of the "Rector and Church Wardens of Trinity Church," they were not permitted to have a "charter of incorporation" for their then only church building, but were compelled to resort to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (1730), in whose name as legal trustees the building and land belonging to "the First Presbyterian Church" was held till the Revolution changed the order of things. They had met the same hostile feeling in Virginia, and in a still more repugnant form. Yet in the famous Memorial presented by the Presbytery of Hanover to the Virginia Assembly (October, 1776), and in the many which followed, no bitterness was ex-

pressed, but, on the contrary, reasoning on the injurious effects of the union of Church and State, on religious freedom, on the spread of the Gospel and its pure and holy influence on the minds of the people.

An Apology urged.—It is often urged by way of apology that these intolerant proceedings were characteristic of the times; but why were not churchmen as liberal as the "Dissenters"? The latter did not interfere with the Church of England in its ordinances; they never were the aggressors; but, as best they could, only defended themselves from the assaults of the former. The truth is, this self-complacent age, though thus apologizing, is scarcely justifiable in assuming to be perfect examples of tolerance in religious matters, when we take into consideration the higher plane on which all denominations of Christians are presumed to stand at the present time in respect to religious freedom. Is not the spirit which to-day manifests itself, sometimes even in evangelical denominations, of virtually *unchurching* those who do not use the same mode as themselves in their rites, or in ordaining preachers of the Word, as *intolerant* in proportion to the light they are pre-

sumed to have on the subject of religious liberty, as those who figured so ignobly more than one hundred years ago?

Who began the Movement and secured the Result?—Justice and the truth of history demand that the services of those who accomplished this important result—the separation of Church and State in Virginia—should be recognized. If the statements of certain authors are implicitly received, the inference would be, that Thomas Jefferson originated the measure and carried it to a successful issue. In proof of this theory, they cite the bill he drew up to secure religious freedom, which, as chairman of the committee, he introduced into the Legislature. This measure was not brought before the Assembly until some weeks after the first memorial of the Presbytery of Hanover was presented to that body, and referred to a special committee (October 11, 1776), "to take into consideration all matters and things relating to religion and morals." Of this committee Jefferson was appointed chairman, and in that capacity he drew up the bill and presented it to the House. There is no historical evidence that he would of his own motion have introduced a bill of that

purport, had not petitions and the memorial furnished him an occasion. This memorial was the first to intimate the necessity for the separation of Church and State. The arguments which it contained covered the whole ground of religious freedom; discussing the questions in a manner lucid and terse, leaving nothing more to be added. There is not an idea in Jefferson's preamble and bill that is not expressed or clearly implied in the memorial; the latter is concise and to the point; the former is clothed in easy-flowing terms of generalities; a sort of *theoretical style*—if the term is admissible; a characteristic of the author's manner in treating similar subjects. The *preamble* consists of one sentence, containing fifty-two lines of small print, on an octavo page.

The Presbyterians leading, the "Dissenters" were the first in that colony or State to move in this reform; Jefferson joined them, not they him. It is well known, however, that he held liberal, and now deemed correct, views on the general subject of free thought and its free expression, and that the presentation of the memorial gave him an opportunity of which he availed himself to express his sentiments. There

is no evidence that he debated the question in the Assembly; his influence was exerted privately and by writing. In 1784 he went to France on public business, and the bill which bears his name, when modified by amendments, was passed in 1786—after the lapse of ten years; thus going into full effect through the exertions of George Mason and James Madison, especially the latter, who was an accomplished debater and writer.

During the ten years mentioned the advocates of the union of Church and State in the Assembly, changed their tactics almost every session, and under different forms sought to gain advantage, however small. These various phases of the contest were counteracted by the persistent efforts of the Presbytery of Hanover. Jefferson, in his "Notes on Virginia," as quoted by Randall (*vol. i., p.* 204), charged the Presbyterians with intolerance toward other denominations in the Northern colonies. He made the inexcusable mistake for a man of his position of confounding the Puritans and Congregationalists with the Presbyterians. He cites no authority for the charge, but he ought to have known that the latter were, and had been, consistent advo-

cates for all to enjoy the same religious freedom which they *demanded* for themselves; and this right, they argued, was derived from a higher authority than that of the civil magistrate. This vital idea was in the first memorial they presented to the Assembly, and, moreover, he ought to have borne in mind, that even if the Presbyterians wished, they had no opportunity to practice intolerance, as they stood aloof—*never desired and never had any control in the civil government of the colonies.* Jefferson, afterward, expressed his gratification that: "All beliefs, whether Christian or Infidel, Jew or Mohammedan, were put on an equality." It does not follow from this statement, as has been charged, that Jefferson held that one system of belief was as worthy of respect as another, but rather that he had in his mind the abstract theory of the freedom of thought and its free expression.

Religious Freedom and Patriotism.—The Presbyterian Church has ever been on the side of religious freedom and against intolerance. Throughout her entire history, and in all her records, "there is not an act on this great subject that received her sanction, for which she

need offer an apology" (*Gillett, vol. i., pp.* 169–170). They were equally as explicit in regard to their patriotism. The Synod, their highest court at that time, when in session in Philadelphia, in May, 1775, as patriots declared: "That they did not wish to conceal their sentiments, either as ministers or citizens." Looking forward to a conflict of arms, they say: "That man will fight most bravely who never fights till it is necessary, and who ceases to fight as soon as the necessity is over." This was the position taken and maintained by them throughout the Revolutionary struggle.

Opposition to Slavery.—Their liberal principles were not limited to religious freedom alone. In 1787 the United Synod of New York and Philadelphia expressed the views of that Church, by resolving that they were in favor of "promoting the abolition of slavery"—a sentiment they had expressed again and again—and closed by "recommending the people under their care to use prudent measures consistent with the interest and state of civil society in the parts where they live, to procure eventually the *final abolition of slavery in America.*" This was the same year in which the Constitution of the

United States was formed. The convention which framed it, met on the 14th of May, in Philadelphia, and continued in session four months. The Synod met also in the same city, and at the same time, and its published utterance on the subject was not without influence. Six years later (1793), when the Presbyterian Church had been organized on a National basis, the General Assembly—then as now its highest judicature—reaffirmed the same utterance in respect to the system of slavery.

Influence of the Measure in New England.—It is interesting to note that the separation of Church and State in Virginia was not without influence, as within a few years afterward, similar results were produced in New York, Maryland, and the Carolinas, wherein the Church of England had been established in colonial times. The Legislatures of these States dissolved the connection expressly by law, but in New England, where the system was not so arbitrary and unjust, it lingered for nearly forty years longer.

Personal Responsibility Recognized and Strengthened.—An important element of influence—that of personal responsibility in relation to religious duties—was strengthened by this

separation, as the Church was thus thrown for its support entirely upon its individual members. From the time of Jonathan Edwards forward the true position of the individual in regard to personal religion became more fully understood, and the responsibility for the souls of those whom they governed, which we have seen assumed by the civil magistrate, was gradually shifted *from the latter to the individual.* Consistent with this view, evangelical denominations have demanded only one qualification, entitling a person to the privilege of the communion—that of being converted or a Christian. In addition, this sense of responsibility was still further strengthened and made practical when individual members, irrespective of the State, learned to sustain the ordinances of the Church of Christ, and labored to extend the blessings of the Gospel; to this principle may be traced that remarkable spirit of benevolence, which, in various forms, has made our times, when compared with the past, the golden age of the world.

Self-denial and Benevolence.—The "Dissenters" in colonial times in their hard discipline acquired the grace of being benevolent.

In their zeal for what they believed the truth, they made immense sacrifices; they paid their share not only in supporting a religious establishment with which they had no sympathy, but, in addition, sustained their own Church ordinances—thus manifesting a self-denial which, because of their exertions, American Christians, since that time, have had no occasion to practice. The churchmen of that day were strangers to such self-denial. They had never been in a school where it was taught; nor had they learned the truth of each one's responsibility in proportion to his means, to aid in supporting the Gospel. In the broadness of liberal sentiments they were far behind the "Dissenters," and it became a great blessing to the spirituality of that Church when its entire support was thrown upon its own members.

Influence of the Voluntary Principle.—The voluntary principle, based as it is on individual responsibility, has since pervaded the churches of the whole Union, the beneficent effects of which are seen not only in the support of the Gospel in all its special relations, and in aiding institutions of learning, but in originating and sustaining the benevolent operations of the day

—greater in proportion than ever before—while the whole missionary enterprise in the land, Foreign and Domestic, may be attributed to the same principle. These "Dissenters" were far advanced for the times in the great principles of religious freedom and Christian charities. To them the purity and the free preaching of the Gospel was paramount to all other considerations. They held the doctrine, which obtains to-day among the Protestants of the Union, that the Church should not dominate the State, nor the State the Church, but that they should mutually sustain each other—the one by inculcating good morals and obedience to law, and the other by protecting the free preaching of the Gospel, and the practicing of its principles.

II.

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES, FROM 1705 TO 1888.

II.

THE NATIONAL AND CHURCH GOVERNMENTS.

The Two Movements.—During the latter part of this hand-to-hand contest between the Virginia Assembly and the Presbytery of Hanover, another important movement was also in progress throughout the entire Presbyterian Church, the discussions in respect to which became more earnest after the close of the Revolution and the signing of the treaty of peace. The question thus agitated was in relation to a plan of church polity that could be adapted to the new order of affairs, which had grown out of the separation from the mother country. These Presbyterian ministers and intelligent laymen took comprehensive views of the situation of their Church, which was now free and untrammeled to extend its influence over a continent. It had already crossed the Alleghanies, and in two divisions—one in Kentucky, the other in Western Pennsylvania—had taken position and

founded churches as outposts on the eastern edge of the valley of the Mississippi.

Meanwhile another movement was in progress in respect to the civil or political relations of the States, in which the leading statesmen and intelligent, thinking minds took an absorbing interest. The political question was in what manner the thirteen States could be consolidated into one government, for they were now partially disintegrated, since the resistance to the common enemy, which had held them so long in union, had disappeared, when peace was concluded with England. The lengthy discussions of these questions of government, both in Church and State, no doubt elicited a sympathy that was reciprocal between the leading minds thus engaged; especially can this be said of those statesmen who were members of the churches of the several denominations, while in respect to civil affairs all were deeply interested.

Kinds of Church Governments.—The leading principles of the government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States—though modeled somewhat after that of the same Church in Scotland—were from the first republican in form; that is, having the delegates to

its judicatures chosen by the people or church members, in order that the former might be truly their representatives. This mode of government was so constituted that it could be adapted to a large or a small number of churches, and also to a large or small number of the members of each church. As a matter of history, it may be noted that the Presbyterian Church established this republican form of government (1705) long before the Declaration of Independence was made, and it has continued virtually unchanged in its application to the present hour. It is clearly seen that this church government is consistent in its principles with our republican institutions—both National and State—that were afterward established.

In contradistinction, the mode of church government adopted by the Congregationalists and Baptists was democratic in the extreme, and limited to each church, while the churches themselves were virtually independent of one another in respect to any authorized mode of discipline, or of a uniform confession of faith or doctrine. In accordance with this theory of government, there could be no measures introduced which, in connection with church judica-

tures, could aid practically in bringing the members of their own churches throughout the entire country into doctrinal and religious sympathy with one another; instead, each church was so much isolated that its influence in consequence was greatly limited. Before the Revolution the Church of England in America was governed by that of the mother country, and almost without reference to the wishes of its church members. Its rectors being appointed by the Bishop of London, under whose jurisdiction the churches of the Establishment in the American colonies were placed, and, in addition to this arrangement, the colonial governors had the absolute authority of inducting or not as they pleased these rectors into their sacred office.

Presbyterians and the Pilgrims.—Among the early colonists of New England were great numbers of Presbyterians. The Pilgrims were, it would seem, for the greater part of that Church; Robinson, their pastor at Leyden, was a Presbyterian, and William Brewster an elder, and in that capacity the latter came with them to Plymouth, it being thought expedient for Robinson to remain at Leyden a while longer. Though in these early days there were many

Presbyterians in connection with the New England churches, yet in that part of the country they never, till more recent times, organized themselves as a separate body of Christians.

The first Congregational church in America was formed in Charlestown on the 30th of July, 1630. Soon afterward, "crossing the Charles River, it became known as the First Church of Boston," and it also became "the seminal centre of the ecclesiastical system of Massachusetts." It embodied as one of the principles of Congregationalism: "The equality of the several churches, free from the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical court or bishop; free from the jurisdiction of one church over another, and free from the collective authority of them all" (*Bancroft, vol. i., p. 238, last revision*).

The members of the Independent or Congregational churches in New England were largely in the majority, and prospered greatly, but in the course of time they unfortunately became somewhat intolerant in respect to other denominations of Christians (*see this Booklet, pp. 8 and 9*).

The genius for systematic government seems, from the very first, to have imbued the minds

of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church, as well as those of its intelligent laymen; the latter always being associated with the former in the exercise of such government. This method assures the individual members of the church, that they themselves by means of their representatives—the elders—have a voice in the management of its affairs; such knowledge also enhances their own individual responsibility to aid in promoting the extension of the Gospel through the medium of their own church, by means of their personal Christian character and their contributions.

The First Presbytery.—We intend—for the sake of the connection—to give a summary of the historical facts that pertain to the government of the Presbyterian Church, and to its divisions and reunions, previous to the formation of the General Assembly in 1788, as well as a concise account of its subsequent history.

The first Presbytery constituted in America was at Freehold, in the colony of New Jersey, in 1705 or 1706; from the minutes of a meeting in the latter year, we learn that it consisted of seven members. Though there had been Presbyterian ministers in the middle colonies for

about a quarter of a century; and who labored in the capacity of evangelists or traveling preachers, and also as settled pastors. As the number of churches increased more and more in these colonies, a Synod (1717) was formed in order to promote intercourse, and also uniformity of doctrine and practice among the several Presbyteries, and from this time onward, as exigencies demanded, new Presbyteries were organized; then Synods as required, and finally (1788) the General Assembly, to include the Church throughout the land.

Fraternal Intercourse—The Synod.—The traditions of the Presbyterian Church are, and always have been, in favor of much and genuine fraternal intercourse among its members. One of the means which it has used in accomplishing this grand result, is in having frequent meetings of its church judicatures; more than usual in number, when compared with those of other denominations. The meeting together so often has had, among other desirable effects, that of eliciting sympathy between the members of the different churches in the various sections of the country, and thus promoting a Christianized sentiment of brotherly love. Accordingly, as

the number of the churches increased and were scattered in the land, new Presbyteries were organized, and as the members desired still more intercourse with one another, since they met only with the brethren of their respective Presbyteries, they formed a Synod which should bear a similar relationship to the Presbyteries as that of the latter to the churches. The Synod was constituted in the same ratio as the Presbytery—each minister was accompanied by an elder from the church or churches of which he was pastor; in this manner were the rights of the members of the church recognized and respected. All the ministers belonging to the Synod were required to meet in session once in each year. This mode of government prevailed for about seventy years; that is, from 1717 to 1788, when the General Assembly was organized,—the latter being a representative body, but drawing its delegates not from the Synods but directly from the Presbyteries, they being nearer the people or church members.

For a number of years after the formation of the first Synod, the increase of the churches was great, and they were much extended along the Atlantic slope, south of Connecticut, while the

number of the Presbyteries also increased in proportion. It was found that owing to the distances and difficulties of travel a great many ministers and elders were unable to attend regularly all the meetings of the Synod. To obviate this inconvenience it was decided (1724) to make the Synod a sort of representative body—that was done by the Presbyteries sending half their number of members in alternate years. It was also arranged that every third year there should be a full attendance of all the members.

III.

THE TWO VITAL PRINCIPLES.

TWO leading and practical ideas have pervaded the Presbyterian Church in this country for more than one hundred and fifty years, and to such an extent as to have become a vital element in its inner life. One of these is, the strict adherence to the rule of having a ministry as *thoroughly educated as possible;* the other, to preserve an unwavering adherence to the *Bible itself, as the only infallible rule of faith.* From the first rule the judicatures of the Church have never deviated, though often urged by well-meaning members, to license uneducated men to preach as regularly ordained ministers on the plea of expediency under certain circumstances. The first struggle on this question was in 1748 (see p. 14), but after a full discussion the rule was sustained triumphantly, and instead, even an additional year of study was required of candidates for the ministry. As there have been made only two persistent attempts in the Church

to lower the standard of the education of its ministry for the sake of the connection—though not strictly in the order of time—we now notice the incident. More than sixty years after the first struggle a second one occurred, but only within the bounds of the Synod of Kentucky; and which, after lasting several years, was ended in 1814 (*Gillett, vol. i., pp.* 453–456).

Cumberland Presbyterians.—There had been extensive revivals within the bounds of the Synod of that State, and great numbers professed themselves Christians. In connection with these revivals were many irregular practices, and of the converts, a number of uneducated but zealous men essayed to preach, and an effort was made on the part of some ministers belonging to the Cumberland Presbytery to have these men licensed as such. The Synod refused to give their sanction, and in the course of several years many attempts were made to reconcile the parties at variance, and also appeals were made to the General Assembly. The sum of the latter's final action was to sustain the course of the Synod "as firm and temperate," in not licensing uneducated men to preach, but gave permission for the Presbytery to "sanction

catechists and exhorters." A number of these men were of exceptional ability, but over whom "the Presbytery was to keep careful watch and supervision." This decision failed to satisfy some members of the Presbytery, and they withdrew and formed the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. If we may judge from the efforts made to-day by the latter branch to supply its churches with a thoroughly educated ministry, we would infer that the present members think that these good men on the point then at issue, may possibly have made a mistake. The rule was again sustained, as the secession of a portion of the Presbytery did not infringe the principle involved. The scholarship of the Presbyterian ministry has always kept pace with every branch of advanced secular and theological education, and to-day *the former study science much more than scientists study theology.*

Value of an educated Ministry.—The influence of the Presbyterian Church has been greatly enhanced by its persistent policy for more than one hundred and fifty years, of having none other than an educated ministry. There is clearer evidence to-day (1887) than ever, of her unrelaxed zeal in the education of her

clergymen — witness her Theological Seminaries, taken as a whole, the finest endowed institutions of that class in the land, and each one manned by a carefully selected corps of Professors. To these seminaries, as a rule, no student is admitted, unless he can bring a diploma from some college or give evidence of an equivalent preparation; while the curriculum of study is extended from time to time to keep pace with the advance of the biblical scholarship of the age. The researches in the lands of the Bible itself, and in those intimately connected with the history of the people of God, are utilized to the full extent in the instruction given on the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. In this connection—though we would not detract from what others have done—it is not out of place to note the large number of eminent biblical scholars that have been and are in the Presbyterian Church, and who in addition to their instructions given students, have sent forth to the world in the form of books, the ripe fruits of their scholarship. In these volumes different authors belonging to the Church have treated extensively of the original languages in which the Scriptures were written; theology in its several phases; col-

lateral studies pertaining to the mental powers, and the relations of all to morals,—in truth, in every form in which the grand subject can be elucidated. In this field of instruction and learning the Congregationalist Church has, also, sustained a noble part. It is unfortunate that the great influence of the theological learning and ardent zeal of this body of Christians in education, and in promoting the cause of Christian brotherhood within the Nation, is somewhat diminished in consequence of their form of government; as the latter does not admit, by means of regularly constituted church judicatures, an extensive intercourse between the brethren—clerical and lay—who, coming from distant portions of the land, would, in the nature of the conditions, induce a more vivid feeling of Christian brotherhood and sympathy, that might extend and become more national. It is noticeable that this great advance in biblical learning has been confined in the United States almost entirely to the two denominations mentioned, wherein prevails the *parity* of the clergy; can it be that in consequence of that fact, each minister recognizes his duty and responsibility to become properly fitted for his work in secur-

ing for himself the qualifications of a thoroughly educated theologian?

The General Assembly is the final authority in the appointment of the Professors in the Seminaries. Is it strange, in view of all this care, that the Presbyterian Church members should place so high a value upon an educated ministry, through whose efforts they themselves have been raised to an unusually high plane of biblical intelligence?

Guarding the Faith.—The Church was much agitated during a portion of the existence of the first Synod (1717–1729). The occasion of this excitement did not originate within the Synod itself, but abroad, where a laxity in respect to evangelical doctrines had prevailed to a large extent among the ministers of the Presbyterian churches in Scotland and Ireland. Some of these held "Arminian and Pelagian errors," and it was known that a number of ministers holding these views had already migrated to the colonies, and others were about to follow; the latter in all probability would wish to unite in this country with the same Church. It therefore became a question as to the most efficient mode of guarding against the intrusion into the churches

of ministers holding these objectionable views. After the subject had been under discussion in various forms for some years—because at first the members were far from being unanimous as to the best means of warding off the impending evil—the Synod finally united upon a plan, which was as follows: "We do, therefore, agree that all the ministers of this Synod, or that shall hereafter be admitted into this Synod, shall declare their agreement in, and approbation of, the Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, ... and do also adopt the said Confession and Catechisms as the Confession of our Faith" (*Gillett, vol. i., p.* 55). This was the "ADOPTING ACT" of 1729. The Presbyteries were, also, enjoined to require their licentiates to subscribe the same Confession, etc.

IV.

DIVISION AND REUNION.

The Great Revival.—The Synod continued to prosper; during twelve years (1729–1741), more than forty ministers were added to its number; of these, a few had been trained in the American Church, but nearly one-half were from Scotland and North Ireland. Near the close of this period a new element of discord intervened. Differences of opinion were prevalent and had their respective influence. Some of these pertained to the establishment of schools for the instruction in theology of candidates for the ministry, and also in respect to the manner of preaching the Gospel; one phase of the latter grew out of the great revival that commenced in 1735 under Jonathan Edwards, at Northampton, Massachusetts, and whose influence extended to the middle colonies (*Patton's American People, pp.* 266–268). Among the leading preachers in the latter, were the Tennants—the father and four sons—of whom the more promi-

nent were William and Gilbert, but they all preached with power and their labors were greatly blest. They were aided also by the celebrated George Whitefield, then on his preaching tours through the colonies. Many members of the Synod did not approve the manner of the revivalists, nor certain measures which they introduced, neither did they seem to be in full sympathy with the revival itself; there were, perhaps, as many others who looked upon the work as having the blessing of the Head of the Church.

The Old Side—The New Side.—Unfortunately difficulties obtruded themselves, and a few good men were indiscreet, while others were harsh in their judgments. The opponents of the work were characterized as holding "a dead orthodoxy," while it was admitted that the revivalists were equally orthodox, though they were spiritually alive and vividly imbued with zeal for the salvation of men—the latter's style of preaching being exceedingly impressive. The steady conservatives, who were opposed to any innovations in the usual manner of preaching, were known as the "Old Side," and the fervid revivalists as the "New Side." Thus the agi-

tation continued for several years; meanwhile much bitterness was evolved, and also an immense amount of good in spite of the disturbing elements by which many good men were carried beyond their usual Christian demeanor.

The Division of the Synod.—These differences of opinion and practice finally resulted in the division of the Synod, inasmuch as the "New Side" or New Brunswick party and their sympathizers withdrew, thus causing the division. The moderate and conservative in both "Sides" mourned this result.

"The New Brunswick party were zealous for what they regarded as vital evangelical truth, and, in the over-earnestness of their purpose, forgot charity and discretion. . . . . The others, indignant under a sense of wrong, were forced to appeal to the authority of the common standards and the rules of the Synod, which their brethren had too much disregarded. Thus one party appealed to the Word of God, the other to the Confession of Faith. One, zealous for the truth, fell the victim of its theories; the other, resolute for order, could see only the letter of the constitution." The two Synods were therefore constituted (1741),—the "Old Side," known as the

Philadelphia, and the "New Side," as that of New York; though the latter did not take form till four years later, when it was duly organized by union with the New Brunswick Presbytery (*Drs. Gillett and Hodge*).

Zeal for Religion.—The period of the division—seventeen years (1741–1758)—was characterized by an increase of religious influence, especially on the part of the New Side, who continued their fervent mode of preaching, and which was followed by great increase of communicants in the Church, and also in the number of young men who became students and eventually devoted themselves to the ministry. In the course of these years such accessions were nearly eightfold when compared with that of the Old Side. The New York Synod exhibited great zeal in supplying destitute fields within its bounds, and in consequence the friends of the revival sympathized with them deeply. The Old Side, meanwhile, labored under almost insurmountable difficulties. Their lack of interest in the revivals, if not their direct opposition, deprived them of the sympathy of great numbers of ardent Christians within their own ranks, who, perhaps, were there from location rather

than choice. Both parties established schools for training candidates for the sacred office; out of one of these grew Princeton College, and, subsequently, the Theological Seminary.

The Reunion.—During these seventeen years continued efforts were made by many in both parties to bring about a reunion, as the cause of religion and brotherly love was deeply injured by the contention, which on the part of some did not partake to a large extent of the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount nor of the golden rule. But these asperities were gradually worn away by the attrition of Christian love and forbearance practiced by the prudent in both parties, till the way was prepared for a more stable union of the Synods than had ever existed before. At length the leading minds of the majority in both parties were fully prepared to unite the Synods, and thus heal the breach in the Church. During the seventeen years of the separation there had been no virtual deviation on either side from the doctrinal principles on which the *Adopting Act* was based thirty years before, and they could now unite consistently. The first article of the basis of the union reads: "Both Synods having always approved and received the West-

minster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms as an orthodox and excellent system of Christian doctrine, founded on the Word of God, we do still receive the same as the Confession of our Faith." After a number of minor details in relation to some of the Presbyteries were arranged, the union was completed (1758).

V.

THE TROUBLOUS TIMES.

THE prosperity of the Church was great during this period of union (1758–1788), but troublous times with the mother country were impending, and when the Synod seventeen years later met in Philadelphia on May 17, 1775, blood had already been shed, for just one month before, to a day, the conflicts at Concord and Lexington had taken place. The news had spread throughout the country, producing great excitement and anxiety in the popular mind.

Patriotism — The Pastoral Letter. — The Synod, in addition to its ordinary cares and duties which it owed to the churches as such, also realized the dangers that the approaching contest would bring upon their country, and they made known their patriotic sentiments, and in no uncertain tone. They, it seems for the first time, addressed a pastoral letter to the members of the Presbyterian Church throughout the colonies. The spirit of this

pastoral was such as to inculcate union among the colonies, and mutual charity and good-will among the different religious denominations, and the promotion of good morals and good government; reformation of manners, personal honesty and humanity on the part of those who might soon be called to the field, as a conflict of arms between the colonies and the mother country seemed inevitable. The Synod ordered 500 copies of this pastoral letter to be printed at its own expense, and circulated throughout the churches, from whose pulpits it was read to many thousands. "The Presbyterian Church, by the act of its highest judicatory, thus took its stand at Philadelphia by the side of the American (Continental) Congress then in session (in the same city) and its influence was felt in a most decisive manner throughout the bounds of the Church."

A comprehensive Church Government.—After the close of the Revolution and when the States were in their respective governments independent of one another, it would seem the Continental Congress, nominally a legislative body over all, had little influence, as the laws it enacted rose only to the dignity of rec-

ommendations. The far-sighted ministers and laymen of the Presbyterian Church saw the necessity for a more comprehensive application of their system of government in order to promote unity of the Church throughout the land; at the same time the leading statesmen of the now disintegrated States were devising for them a more compact union, and the formation of a general government in which all should be comprehended. The former foreshadowed the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and the latter the National government of the United States. Both were representative bodies; the delegates to the one were duly authorized to represent the people or church members; to take cognizance of the fundamental doctrines, and a uniform discipline, and all affairs that related to the well-being and prosperity of the whole Church, while matters of a local nature were left to the supervision of the minor judicatures; the other to legislate on all affairs foreign and domestic that pertained to the whole Nation, while local matters were intrusted to the care of the individual States.

The Church was the first to move in inaugurating this comprehensive system, and as if these

men had a prevision of the vastness of the territory occupied to-day by the Presbyterian Church, the plan was so devised that it could be adjusted to all probable exigencies that might occur, and in respect to such adaptation it has been found adequate. Meanwhile the secular or political world was moving on parallel lines in the effort to form a more united government under a constitution.

Discordant and Rival States.—The several States, though neighboring, were virtually independent of each other, and history records that they were more or less governed by selfish interests, which caused anxiety in intelligent minds, as to whereunto these evils would grow. This spirit of gain was specially manifest in the States that had suitable harbors, and they yielded to the temptation of imposing duties on imported merchandise in such manner as to advance each one's own interests irrespective of the general effect upon their neighbors. This condition of affairs induced the influential men in the several States to take measures for remedying these evils by bringing about a union, thus consolidating them into one government that they might become in fact, as well as in the

eyes of the world, a NATION. George Washington said, "We must have a government under one Constitution; we must treat with other nations as a whole, for we cannot separately." This political agitation continued from the disbandment of the Continental army to the formation of the United States Constitution and its adoption by the people, (Nov. 3, 1783–1788). During this period of four or five years, one or two local conventions were held by delegates from neighboring districts, but never before from all the States did delegates assemble, until in the great convention held in Philadelphia in 1787 (see pp. 54, 55), and which framed the present Constitution of the United States, and under which, after it had been adopted by the people, George Washington was inaugurated President (1789), and we began our National life.

VI.

ORIGIN OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE movement in the Presbyterian Church began practically in 1785, when, as preliminary to constituting a representative judicature of last resort for the Church throughout the whole land, a motion was made to divide the Synod of New York and Philadelphia into three Synods. The following year the motion was amended so as to read *three or more* Synods; the latter provision covered the whole ground, as it left the number of Synods to be extended according to circumstances, while over all it was in contemplation to constitute a General Assembly,—the delegates to which, were to come as representatives from the Presbyteries, not from the Synods—the former being in more direct relations with the people or church members. There is not a self-perpetuating judicature in the Church, since all its members derive their authority as such, ultimately from the church members themselves, with whom is lodged the

power of choosing their representatives, as it is in our civil government.

Increase of the Church.—A brief notice of the American Presbyterian Church at this period may interest the reader. The Synod of New York and Philadelphia had been in existence *thirty years*, and it was now to be divided into *four* Synods. It had received 230 ministers as new members, and had grown from eight Presbyteries to sixteen, under whose care were 420 churches; of these, 380 were south of New York State, while in the latter were forty. The great body of the ministers were native born and educated in the bosom of the Church. The others came for the most part from the Presbyterian churches in Scotland and North Ireland. The Synod had (1786) under its control churches on the Atlantic slope extending from the State of Connecticut to the State of Georgia, and also beyond the Alleghanies in Western Pennsylvania and in Middle Kentucky.

Four Synods organized.—The Synod of New York and Philadelphia, according to its own resolution, was divided and arranged into four Synods, having the following names: New York and New Jersey, Philadelphia, Virginia,

and the Carolinas. The first Synod included the Presbyteries of Suffolk, Dutchess, New York, and New Brunswick; the second, those of Philadelphia, Lewes, New Castle, Baltimore, and Carlisle; the third, those of Hanover, Lexington, Redstone, and Transylvania; the fourth, those of Abingdon, Orange, and South Carolina. The third or Virginia Synod covered by far the greatest extent of territory, as it alone extended beyond the mountains, including the Redstone Presbytery in Pennsylvania and the Transylvania in Kentucky.

It is easily seen that the ministers or pastors of these churches, scattered over so extensive a territory, found it exceedingly difficult to attend the annual meetings of the Synod, as required by the rule, and that in consequence the important and beneficial influence of such frequent and fraternal intercourse was much diminished, but by having four Synods such advantage could be in a measure retained, as the ministers would be more able to attend the meetings.

Alterations in the Constitution being required in order to apply to the new condition of church affairs, a committee was appointed to prepare such Constitution. The committee was in-

structed "to examine the book of discipline and government, and digest such a system as they should think adapted to the state of the Presbyterian Church in America." It was also arranged that this draft or plan of the committee should be printed and sent down to the Presbyteries, "who were required to report *in writing* their observations upon it at the next meeting of Synod." The committee performed this duty and sent the plan to the Presbyteries, and the latter presented their observations to the Synod at its meeting in 1787. After thorough discussion and adoption of amendments, the plan of government and discipline agreed upon by the Synod was then ordered to be printed and again sent to the Presbyteries "for their consideration, and also for the consideration of the *churches* under their care," thus recognizing the propriety of consulting the church members. This plan of government was also to be reported and acted upon at the meeting of Synod the following year, 1788. The plan having been discussed and approved by the Presbyteries and churches was returned to the Synod, which, in due form, ratified the former's action, and resolved: "That the true intent and mean-

ing of the above ratification by the Synod is that the Form of Government and Discipline and the Confession of Faith, as now ratified, are to continue to be our Constitution and Confession of Faith and practice unalterably, unless *two-thirds* of the Presbyteries shall propose amendments, and these shall be agreed to and enacted by the General Assembly" (*Dr. Hodge, p.* 414).

The General Assembly constituted.—On the adoption of the plan, the Synod ordered that the General Assembly about to be called into existence should consist of delegates from the several Presbyteries in the ratio of *one minister and one elder* for every six members or ministers belonging to the Presbytery. The Synod divided itself into four, in accordance with the Act of 1786, as already noted. Then it was ordered: "That the first meeting of the General Assembly to be constituted out of the above Synods be held at 11 A.M. on the *third* Thursday of May, 1789, in the Second Presbyterian Church in the city of Philadelphia." Dr. Witherspoon was appointed "to open the Assembly with a sermon, and to preside till a moderator was chosen." Its organization being com-

pleted, the Presbyteries were enjoined, in accordance with the rules laid down, to elect and send delegates to the Assembly which was to meet in 1789.

The Address to President Washington.—George Washington had been inaugurated President of the United States in New York City only a few weeks previous to this first meeting of the General Assembly in Philadelphia in May, 1789. In this connection we notice two coincidences. The leading men of the Presbyterian Church and the leading men of the States had been moving on parallel lines in the effort to secure a more comprehensive government both for the Church and the Nation. Both went into operation within a few weeks of each other, and both having remained virtually unchanged for a century, give evidence of the excellences of the respective systems, which, as such, have been recognized by the people of the Nation and by the members of the Church.

It was under these circumstances that the Assembly appointed a committee to prepare an address to the President of the United States. Its chairman was the celebrated Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, who was one of the signers of the

Declaration of Independence, and had been a member of the Continental Congress during the troublous times of the Revolution, and was now President of Princeton College. The committee's report was quite lengthy, but being appropriate in terms and in tone, it was received and approved by the Assembly, who directed the presentation to be made. After referring to Washington's past career as a soldier, a patriot, and a statesman; to his voluntary retirement from public affairs to the longed-for rest and quiet of private life, and especially to his self-denial in the acceptance of the office of President, at the unanimous call of the people, they say: "A man more ambitious of fame, or less devoted to his country, would have refused an office in which his honors could not be augmented. . . . . We are happy that God has inclined your heart to give yourself once more to the public. But we derive a presage even more flattering from the piety of your character. Public virtue is the most certain means of public felicity, and religion is the surest basis of virtue. We therefore esteem it a peculiar happiness to behold in our Chief Magistrate a steady, uniform, avowed friend of the Christian

religion, and who on the most public and solemn occasions devoutly acknowledges the government of Divine Providence." They define also their own position, saying: "We shall consider ourselves as doing an acceptable service to God in our profession when we contribute to render men sober, honest, and industrious citizens, and the obedient subjects of a lawful government." They close with the prayer that God would prolong his valuable life and continue him a blessing to his country. To this address Washington replied in appropriate terms, acknowledging his gratification at their goodwill, and coinciding with them in declaring his "dependence upon Heaven as the source of all public and private blessings," and that "piety, philanthropy, honesty, industry, and economy seem, in the ordinary course of human affairs, particularly necessary for advancing and confirming the happiness of the country." He closes by thanking the Assembly for their efforts "to render men sober, honest, and good citizens, and the obedient subjects of a lawful government," and for their prayers for the country and for himself.

VII.

THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH.

It is not within the scope of this booklet to trace fully the growth and influence of the Presbyterian Church since the time when its first General Assembly was constituted. It has advanced in a remarkable and substantial manner; kept in the front rank with the progress of the country; has, with untiring zeal, promoted the education of all classes, and raised higher and higher the standard of theological learning; has enlisted the sympathies of the private members of the Church and imbued them with the spirit of benevolence; witness their endowments of institutions of learning, and their ordinary liberal contributions, with which they have nobly sustained the ministry in their efforts to bring their whole land under the influence of a Christianized civilization. Since that time it has formed within its own Church limits a number of associations, such as Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, organized for evangelical purposes,

and to combine and more effectively utilize the benevolences of the Church members; meanwhile, it has also availed itself of the privilege of aiding the cause of the Saviour, through the medium of societies more general in their character, such as the Bible, Tract, etc. These benevolences have not been confined to our own country alone, but have passed beyond to foreign and heathen lands.

Doctrinal Truth guarded.—Doctrinal truth, as embodied in its standards, has been carefully guarded in the Presbyterian Church ever since 1729, when the Adopting Act (page 77) was agreed upon as a rule, by which examinations, thenceforth, were required as to doctrine of the ministers desiring admission to the Church, as well as of their own licentiates. This rule has been virtually in force and carried out for one hundred and sixty years. Afterward, in 1788, when the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, as we have just seen, took measures to organize a General Assembly for the entire Church, they also, as a summary of Christian doctrine for the same, "ratified and adopted the Larger Catechism"; this summary has been in force in the Church down to the present time. These two

historical facts may account for one peculiarity that has always been present in the several divisions and reunions that have occurred in times past within the Presbyterian Church—not *one* of them has been on *distinctively* doctrinal grounds; other causes have intervened. It is true there have been within the last half century one or two instances in the Church, in which individual ministers have been charged in regular form before their Presbyteries with holding doctrines inconsistent with the Confession of Faith. But these exceptions did not impugn the doctrinal faith of the Church itself. The charges appear to have grown out of misapprehensions of the real views of these good and eminent men.

The Reunion of 1871.—During these several separations both parties adhered loyally to the Bible, to the Westminster Catechism, and to the Confession of Faith, claiming the summary of Bible doctrine therein contained as equally their own. Thus when the reunions took place, there was no necessity for interposing questions in respect to the orthodoxy of either party. In the division that occurred in 1837, the outgrowth in the main of the Plan of Union (1801) (*Gillett*,

vol. i., pp. 393–396), both Assemblies, after the separation, adhered to the same doctrinal standards; occupied the same territorial ground, side by side, and each Assembly claimed the same name, and this continued till they were again united (1871) on the old basis.

The salutary effect of this care in preserving in their purity the doctrinal standards of that Church, is manifested in the uniformity with which the essential truths of the Gospel are, and ever have been, preached by its ministers in good and regular standing. Though, as we have seen in relation to its own doctrines and polity, the Presbyterian Church is exceedingly strict, yet it is liberal toward other evangelical denominations, and deems as valid their rite of baptism in whatever form administered, and also recognizes the validity of their ordaining men to the sacred office, whether of one order or of three.

A prospective Reunion.—We have, in this booklet, very briefly noticed the divisions and reunions of Synods and General Assemblies that have already occurred in the Presbyterian Church, and the remarkable fact that these divisions grew out of causes extraneous to its doctrinal standards. The Church has in pros-

pect, in 1888, another reunion—that with the Southern branch. This reunion, for numerous reasons, will far transcend in importance any other in its history, as the conditions under which it will be consummated are, in many respects, far different from those under which the previous ones were made. We intend to leave to the ministry and leaders and writers in the Church to treat of the spiritual blessings that under the providence of God may accrue to the whole Church when thus united, but rather confine ourselves to a somewhat different but collateral phase of the subject.

A Christianized Patriotism.—We will, therefore, speak only of those advantages that in the future may be the outgrowth of the free and untrammeled extension of the Presbyterian Church throughout the length and breadth of the Union, wherein, with the Divine blessing, it will have facilities for applying its principles in developing a *Christianized patriotism*. A patriotism that will have an eye not only to the material progress of the country, but to the promotion of a practical union of national feeling and sympathy between the people of every section; if they all practice the precepts of the

golden rule. This type of patriotism includes an element unknown to the patriots of Greece and Rome. The latter looked no further than to promote the public safety and welfare, but only in a material point of view—for when did their leading men make an effort to elevate the people morally? Christianity adds the brotherhood of man, a principle that through the medium of the churches of every denomination can be applied specially to our own household—the American people. There never has been a period so auspicious for the reunion of the Presbyterian Church, in spirit and in fact, as at the present time. Slavery has passed away, for which blessing millions who once thought otherwise, are thankful, while in the section where it once existed, and where, under its influence, labor was deemed degrading to a certain class, there, to-day, labor by every one is becoming more and more respectable. This sentiment ere long will be all-pervading in that portion of our country, and it will tell immensely on its future material progress, and indirectly upon the prosperity of the entire Union.

A Church Government, Republican in Form—The government of the Presbyterian Church

is arranged so as to give the people—the church members—an equal share in its administration, and which right is carefully guarded. In accordance with the rule, a minister is the moderator in the sessions of all the judicatures, and who has no vote except in the case of a tie; and, also, the rule that each pastor or minister in all the judicatures, except the church session, is accompanied by an elder, and, likewise, if a church is without a pastor it can send an elder as its representative to the Presbytery or the Synod. In the application of these rules the rights of the elders and of their constituents—church members—are specially recognized and guarded. The government of the Church is strictly republican in its form; the people or church members having the right to choose their own representatives, be they pastors or elders, as in our secular governments—State and National—the people elect their own representatives to the Legislatures or to Congress; thus in this respect the government of the Presbyterian Church is remarkably consistent with those of the separate States and of the Nation. It may be noted in passing, that this representative mode of government was introduced and

practiced in that Church in colonial times, commencing in 1705.

Ex officio Members.—In the meetings of the judicatures of the Presbyterian Church, there are, strictly, no *ex officio* members. The only one that approaches that position is the moderator of a previous Assembly, who, by the rule, "if present," preaches an opening sermon and presides till a new moderator is chosen. In truth, his presence depends on a contingency, because his Presbytery may not send him as their delegate. History demonstrates that *ex officio* or *hereditary* members of church judicatures or of parliaments—being less in direct sympathy with the church members or with the people at large—are the persistent opponents of changes and measures that are designed to result in reforms, and to which they seldom give their sanction unless compelled by popular pressure; much less do they lead in such movements. The *ex officio* members of a church convention recently refused to sanction the ordinary courtesy of exchanging fraternal messages with the representatives of an evangelical sister denomination, and which were assembled in the same city, after the lower house had passed,

almost unanimously, resolutions to send such Christian greetings.

Voting by Orders.—The system of voting by orders in church judicatures seems to be unfair, unless on the supposition that the members of the *higher order* have in the aggregate as much brains and intelligence as the aggregate of the same qualifications belonging to the members of the *lower*. The higher house or order has in number fewer members, but they are *ex officio;* the lower has a greater number, but who are presumed to be equally educated. The result of such rule is, that a vote in the higher order is worth from two to three times as much as one in the lower—its value being in proportion to the number of members respectively present in each order. Nor is the unfairness of voting by orders obviated, when it depends upon the contingency of a limited minority of either or der, demanding that the vote should be by orders. Such rule is very liable to be abused. It may be known, or supposed, that one order is in favor of a certain measure, while the other is not; the latter, by using the prerogative of a limited minority, can frustrate a full expression of opinion of both orders by preventing a joint vote.

The mode of constituting the Assembly leaves the way open from year to year for a change in its membership, as it does not adjourn to meet the following year, but *dissolves*, while the choice and election of individual delegates to the next Assembly depend upon the will of the Presbyteries. The delegates, therefore, come fresh from the people or church members—a principle recognized in constituting the Lower House of Congress and the House of Commons in England, hence the propriety of the rule that financial measures, in which the people are specially interested, must originate respectively in these two Houses.

The Ecclesiastical Despotism. — All the Protestant denominations act in accordance with the spirit of the civil institutions of the land when they recognize the right of the laity to have a share in the management of their own church affairs. In this respect the government of the Roman Catholic Church is in marked contrast, inasmuch as the rule is entirely in the hands of the priests, the laity being rigorously excluded. By this system the intelligent and representative lay members of that communion have no opportunity, through being members of

church judicatures, for cultivating fraternal and Christian intercourse with their fellow-members throughout the Union. On the contrary, the government of that Church is an ecclesiastical despotism; it ignores the rights of its own lay members, and is antagonistic to the spirit of our political institutions—State and National.

VIII.

THE PARITY OF THE CLERGY.

THERE is a well-defined opinion abroad that the *parity* of the clergy has an unusual and far-reaching influence upon the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, inasmuch as that relation to their brethren impresses the fact on each one, that upon him rests an equal share of responsibility in respect to what is done for the well-being of the religious progress of the country, and also of his own church specially. In accordance with the form of government every minister has a share in directing the affairs of the Church, he being by right a legislator and overseer, a member of the Presbytery, and also of the Synod, and may be sent as a delegate to the General Assembly, where meet ministers and elders, representatives from the entire Church in the United States. The latter come together on an equality, to confer on questions pertaining to the progress of religion in the Church and of its extension in the land; they mingle in

sympathy with each other as brethren, and without a *shade of a clerical caste feeling.* No member can divest himself of the responsibility as a minister of the Church. He is conscious of this much more than if he was under an ecclesiastical superior, whom he was bound to obey, or to whose wishes he must *tacitly* consent. On the other hand, thus acting for himself, and on an equality, ecclesiastically, with his fellows, gives him self-reliance, broadens his views and strengthens his character.

Ministerial Responsibility.—The parity of the ministry, therefore, leads each of its members to recognize the responsibility of his individual position, that it is incumbent upon him to study the current questions of his time, which pertain to the domain of pure religion and morals, as well as those which partake of both an economical and moral character, such as to-day that of temperance, and the complex relations of capital and labor. In the four grades of judicatures of the Presbyterian Church, each one in its sphere has legislative authority, while in the three lower the privilege is accorded of appealing, in case of grievance, to the next higher. It is not strange, under the circumstances, that the

ministry of a church whose mode of government is so just to all its members, and which without impairing its efficiency can be so extended as to grasp a continent, should be stimulated to study the questions of the day and thus acquire comprehensive views of their responsibility in the premises. The Presbyterian form of church government in its construction is so comprehensive and elastic that its clergymen and leading minds are under no necessity of resorting to abnormal "Church Congresses" or "Conventions," in order to discuss questions that agitate the public mind, and which combine the elements of ethics, education, temperance, and other topics that may have a moral bearing. Cognizance of such questions, if deemed expedient, can be normally taken in the meetings of the Church judicatures, where they can be discussed, and in relation to them, resolutions adopted—such action is, of course, not legislative, but advisory in character. The ministers deem it a duty to be prepared when called upon to discuss thoroughly and vote intelligently upon the best measures to extend the blessings of the Gospel throughout the land, thus elevating the whole people to a still higher plane of

Christian purity and love of country—a patriotism based upon the benign principles of Christianity.

Pastorates may be long.—There is also present another element that stimulates the educated and conscientious pastor to continuous exertion, and which, to him, is full of encouragement—it is that the pastorate may be long; its length not being dependent upon another's will or an arbitrary church rule. The pastorate is continued at the combined pleasure of the pastor and the church members and congregation whom he serves. The dissolution of the relation or its assumption, does not depend upon the decision of an ecclesiastical superior, who may make the appointment or limit its continuance, but, on the contrary, it is upon an invitation given by the congregation and members of an individual church to a clergyman to become their pastor, and his acceptance of the same, and the presumption is that it is to continue during the pleasure of both parties to the contract. It is consistent with this feature of the rule, that a minister may be called from one congregation or church to another; but whether he accepts or not, remains entirely with himself. Should it

be evident that the call is to a field of greater usefulness, then, all things being equal, it becomes clearly his duty to accept, as he can thus promote more extensively the interests of the Church at large. When the path of duty is not sufficiently clear to him or his congregation or to both, the matter is often mutually referred to the Presbytery for advice.

Advantages gained. — Lengthy pastorates enable the minister to become familiarly acquainted with the members of his church and their families. This advantage could not be attained if he were liable to be transferred to another field, there to commence an acquaintance with a congregation composed of strangers. Meanwhile the influence he had acquired over the youth and people of the former congregation is broken off or frittered away, inasmuch as from the first neither party could have a deep and enduring interest in each other because of the influence exerted by the fact that the connection between them as pastor and people must ere long be broken by an arbitrary rule. It is, therefore, a source of great encouragement to an educated pastor that he is not subject to such rule, but, on the contrary, without inter-

ruption he can continue his labors with the hope of success, especially in training the youth of his congregation. He, himself, by ample study, will improve in every accomplishment that pertains properly to his office. He knows his people; he learns their wants, and in consequence he is the better able to judge what mode of instruction will produce the best results. People thus schooled appreciate the teaching. The more thoroughly educated is the minister, the more equipped is he for a long pastorate. His mind being trained, he can preach sermons well prepared, and imbued with freshness of thought; he keeps up with the times, and notes the discoveries that throw light upon the study of the Bible; nor does he ignore the progress of the age in science, and its misapplication when it is made to antagonize the Christian system; nor the industrial advances of various kinds; neither does he fail to recognize the influence of Christian ideas in his own country nor in other lands. Thus favored by his opportunities he gradually elevates his people to a higher plane of general intelligence; the latter is not limited to Christian knowledge alone, but takes in the history of the past and the current events of the

present. The careful education of clergymen trains their minds to think, and thus they are able to give instruction to their congregations from year to year, as they study earnestly to supply the ever increasing wants—spiritual or otherwise—of an intelligent people.

Biblical Training.—The effect of an educated ministry in pastorates whose lengths are dependent upon the combined will of the church members and the pastor himself, is seen in the remarkable intelligence in respect to practical biblical knowledge, of the private members of the Presbyterian Church. Under the systematic training of children and families that obtains in that denomination, its members are continually rising to a higher plane of general religious intelligence; an influence that extends to the generation following. This feature of progress in the knowledge of biblical truths thus acquired by the church members themselves, makes it essential for the pastor in the preparation for his pulpit, not to relax his efforts to occupy an advanced position, in order to instruct a congregation whose members are intelligent and accustomed to study the Bible as a whole; not being tempted to learn its truths only from cer-

tain prescribed lessons. The study of the whole Bible is also promoted by the mode in which it is read in the worshiping assembly, as the portions or chapters selected can be so chosen as to have a bearing on the special religious wants or affairs of the time; not being restricted to the lesson for the day, be it appropriate or not under the circumstances. The fact that it is incumbent upon the pastor to select appropriate portions of the Holy Scriptures to be read in the Sabbath services, also stimulates him to a more diligent study of the inspired Word.

IX.

TWO FORCES MADE AVAILABLE.

AMONG the manifold good influences this reunion of 1888 can exert in a religious point of view, will be the utilization of all the moral and material forces in the united Church, which, owing to the separation, have hitherto not been fully available. The Northern portion of the Church has at present more means arising from their greater success in manufacturing industries and in commercial pursuits, and in such proportion would they aid the churches of their Southern brethren. Says an intelligent Southern Christian gentleman: "The grand reason in favor of organic union, is that the field for missionary work in the South is so vast, and its need so great, that the energies and means of the whole Church ought to be employed to meet the calls of the hour." What intelligent American has not learned of the bitterness of feeling that formerly existed in relation to the mixed question of slavery?—and ever since that curse has

been removed, there have been other vexed questions of a political character—the *débris* of slavery—that have had a baneful influence upon the spirituality of the Church. These impediments being removed, will not the reunion induce a higher tone of Christian and national feeling? It is hoped that in the reunited Presbyterian Church, these former prejudices will soon be heard no more forever, as a new and almost matured generation are entering upon their active duties as Christians and citizens, and who—in the North as well as in the South—have only *hearsay prejudice* to overcome, while the impetus of the onward movements in Christian and industrial progress will sweep such prejudices to oblivion by a strong current of patriotic public opinion. Unless Christians fail in their duty, there is in prospect an advance in the religious progress of the united Church, which will promote, as it always does, a material prosperity, that from the nature of the case could never before have occurred to such an extent.

Blending the elements, Clerical and Lay.—The parity of the Presbyterian clergy has also in it an element which of itself produces among

them an unusually strong feeling of Christian brotherhood, as they meet on all occasions on an equality and with equal responsibility, while in performing the duties of their ministerial office, they alike participate in managing the affairs of the entire Church. In another respect is manifested the expediency and justice of blending the lay element equally with the clerical in Church government. It is proper and consistent that in the judicatures, and in the management of the institutions of the Church, that the laity who furnish the funds for all its benevolences, should have a voice in their disbursement. The ministry avails itself of the contributions of the laity and often calls to its aid in financial affairs the assistance of lay members who have experience in business transactions. When appropriations of money are voted from time to time by the General Assembly to defray the expenses of carrying on the enterprises of the Church, such as missions at home and abroad, the lay members participate equally in the decision, both as to the amount to be raised, and in the special appropriations in which the money is to be disbursed. Does not the practical influence of this combination of

the ministers and laity—the church members—induce the unusual interest that the latter take in the benevolent operations of the Church?

Fraternal Intercourse promoted.—The system of church government which requires frequent meetings of its judicatures, secures an unusually large range of acquaintance and fraternal intercourse, both between the ministers themselves and the laity—the church members—whose *direct* representatives, the elders, meet with the former on an equality, while the influence of such fraternal intercourse extends throughout the land. We venture the assertion that the members of no other denomination of Christians in the Union have so much heartfelt sympathy with each other as those of the Presbyterian. This is not without a cause. Could this kindly feeling and acquaintance exist to such an extent if the Presbyteries and Synods met less often, and if the General Assembly was differently constituted and met only once in three or four years?

Ignoring State Lines.—Is there not, however, danger in confining Presbyteries and Synods within State lines of introducing a provincial system that would somewhat limit effort

and influence only to within such specified boundaries? In a nation constituted as we are, it would seem better for the furtherance of Christian brotherhood, and of enkindling kindly and patriotic sympathy among the people of different sections, for church judicatures to ignore State lines. Should not the limits of Presbyteries and Synods be arranged for convenience of attendance and for mutual benefit rather than be cramped in a sort of iron framework by State lines? Would it not have a harmonizing influence upon the church members and their pastors if the boundaries of the Presbyteries and Synods that border on the old line, known as "Mason and Dixon," should henceforth overlap that line? If the Church limits the boundaries of Presbyteries and Synods by State lines only, will there not follow, as has been proposed, "Provincial Assemblies"? Who can tell where this disintegration would end? Would it be when there were three or four, as has been suggested, or perhaps a dozen? Such divisions would surely diminish the present fraternal interest that Presbyterian church members entertain for their brethren throughout the whole land. Some of these "Assemblies"

would occupy territory that was rich in wealth, in population, and in all the appliances of education; others would be poor in this world's goods, poor in the facilities of education, and, comparatively, their people few in number. For instance, it has been suggested to have "A General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church west of the Mississippi." Suppose that suggestion was carried out. That "Assembly" would cover a large territory with, in the main, a comparatively scattered population; it would be greatly limited in the means to carry on evangelical work within its own boundaries, and equally straitened in its means of education. Could we expect the churches east of the Great River to have as much interest in their brethren on the west side as if they were in connection with a General Assembly that was national in its character? It is impossible that there could be as strong bonds of sympathy between the members of the Presbyterian Church, thus broken up, as there would be if united under only one General Assembly. The American people, for obvious reasons, have resolved to be one Nation—pure and simple—and it is essential that the sympathies of its citizens should be with their fellows

in all sections of the vast territory of the nation, and the church members in the various denominations can do much in promoting this blended feeling of love for their brethren with that for their country. Previous to the civil war the divisions in the churches, occasioned by slavery, disturbed greatly the fraternal relations of the church members of the three denominations whose supreme judicatures are composed of delegates from the entire Union. A lower tone of Christian feeling thus induced had its share in bringing on that conflict.

National Church Judicatures.—Of ecclesiastical bodies in the United States, the Episcopal, the Methodist, and the Presbyterian are the only ones that have judicatures to which come delegates from all portions of the Union. The Episcopal General Convention meets once in three years; the Methodist General Conference once in four, and the Presbyterian General Assembly every year. In consequence of this feature of their respective systems of government, these three denominations have greater facilities than others for bringing about a unity of Christian love among the members of their own churches throughout the land, and also of indi-

rectly promoting outside their own ranks a fellowship similar in its character, but in the form of a *Christianized patriotism*, among the people of the whole Nation, thus neutralizing the evil influence of misguided men who may endeavor to prejudice one section of the country against another.

X.

NATIONAL AND MUTUAL GOOD-WILL PROMOTED.

THE interests of the church people of the various denominations should be blended with those of the whole Nation and the sentiment of patriotism so absorbing as to promote mutual good-will among the people throughout the land. There must be something wrong when the spirituality of an individual congregation or church is not increased by the frequent intercourse between its members. Similar means produce similar results, and why may not the frequent coming together from all parts of the Union of the representative men of any Christian denomination enhance their brotherly love and indirectly increase their patriotism? It is unfortunate that many of our public men seem to place the harmony of the Union upon a mere *material basis*, apparently without reference to *moral power*, when the true foundation ought to rest upon the combination of the two forces—

material and moral. Herein the Presbyterian Church, because of the adaptability of its form of government and the frequent meetings of its judicatures, can exert a vast influence for good by inducing a genuine type of Christian and national brotherhood. The prayer is that its members may harmoniously labor to apply all its means to accomplish the grand result!

The Assembly's Annual Meetings a national benefit.—In accordance with this view the comparatively frequent meetings of the General Assembly have an important and beneficial influence. It has been objected, however, that the necessarily large membership of the Assembly makes its annual meetings burdensome to the Church, because of the expense and of the inconveniences connected therewith. To this it is answered that the Assemblies meet in cities, where accommodations for the members in hotels and otherwise can be obtained. Moreover, it is suggested that members of the churches in these cities in great numbers deem it a privilege to entertain delegates to the Assembly at their own homes in accordance with their ability; but still, under the circumstances, there will, perhaps, always be a large number of dele-

gates to be otherwise provided for. This latter expense the Church in general incurs, as well as that of the fares in traveling. In this connection it is a pleasure to note that railways have always been liberal in making reductions in their fares for the members of the Assembly.

Progress and Expense.—When we recognize the future progress of the Church, which will be greatly advanced by this form of frequent intercourse between its representative men, it would seem that the money used to defray the expenses was well invested, not only for advancing the spiritual interests of the Church itself, but that such frequent meetings confer a blessing upon the nation at large, by promoting a true spirit of brotherly feeling among the people of the different portions of the country. Could there be an investment more influential in promoting a genuine Christianized patriotism than that of a fund, the income from which should be expended in defraying a portion at least of these expenses? The deficiency should be collected *pro rata*, as at present, from the churches, for it is better that the individual members themselves share the responsibility and the privilege of thus providing the necessary

funds. In view of the prospective good results, will not some generous Presbyterian patriot in making donations for benevolent purposes connected with his own church, establish a fund, the income from which would defray a portion of the expenses incurred by holding the annual meetings of the General Assembly? Such meetings quicken the spiritual life of the members; expand their views of the grandeur of harmoniously and zealously aiding throughout the land Christian movements, which, humanly speaking, will be more effective than those of the past, since there will be no impediments in the way—political or otherwise—to interfere with the continuous development of a higher Christian national life. This onward progress on the part of the Presbyterian Church will be of untold advantage, even to the material interests of the Nation at large.

There never has been a period in the history of the Presbyterian Church wherein, with the Divine blessing, there loomed a future so glorious for doing good, as there will be when it is again reunited, and prepared to bound forth in vigorous strength in the line of Christian and patriotic duty. What are the favorable circum-

stances? One is that of a Church organization extending throughout the Union; strong in its numbers of learned men, and a membership on a high plane of general intelligence—these command respect; still more is it reverenced, when it promotes pure morality among all the people, while binding closer and closer its own members with ties of Christian sympathy, and thus far sustaining the unity of the Nation itself.

National Unity desired.—The desire for a genuine heartfelt national unity is to-day increasing among the intelligent and patriotic people of the United States. The circumstances suggest that this unity would be greatly promoted by frequent intercourse between the representative men in the various denominations of Christians coming often together in their church judicatures, and from all sections of the Union. The influence of such Christian intercourse would extend beyond the limits of the church proper, while in their church relations strengthening a closer acquaintance among the members themselves. How can this most desirable object be best attained? Unquestionably, the various denominations of Christians in the land can secure that wished-for blessing by practically

carrying out the genuine spirit of brotherhood and charity, as shown in the amenities of the Gospel. If the members of all denominations take a kindly interest in the spiritual and secular welfare of their own brethren throughout the Union, the effect, though indirectly, would be salutary upon those who are not members of the Church at all. It is worthy of note, that the great majority of the American people, especially the native born, by association with friends and relatives, are in a large sense in sympathy with Christian morality, while the influence that would banish Christianity and its spirit from the land, is but the smallest ripple upon the great current of the religious sentiment. On the contrary, the influence of the Church upon those who are not its actual members is much more than we often imagine. Owing to the marked interest which Americans take in religious matters, nearly every village of ordinary size has at least one congregation representing each denomination. The members of these congregations constitute a large majority of the residents of the village, and each family has a circle of acquaintance, which often includes many that are not professing Christians, so that perhaps nine-

tenths of the latter class are brought directly in contact with church members, and indirectly with church relations.

Consecrated Influence.—It should be borne in mind that the dearest rights of all are recognized under our unique constitutional government, and this sentiment practically carried out individualizes the interest that intelligent and upright persons have in the material and moral progress of the Nation. Our government is based on the principle that "the people constitute the State," and it is designed to protect the rights of all citizens, and to advance their individual interests, when they do not infringe upon those of their fellows—in so doing it promotes the welfare of the whole Nation. A responsibility in proportion to his intelligence rests upon each voter, and the recognition of this fact adds to the latter's interest, and dignifies the privilege of suffrage. All denominations of Christians should consecrate their influence to increase that class of intelligent voters, on the ground that education in connection with good principles is the only moral antiseptic to political or social evils.

Two Classes of Progress.—Taking as a

basis the general progress of the United States in the various forms of industry that conduce to material wealth, during the century that has elapsed since the organization of the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1788, we may safely infer that the ratio of a similar progress will be as great from the present time to 1988. There are, however, unmistakable indications that such advance will be increased in a much greater ratio than it was in the century just closing, inasmuch as the latter's progress was so much less rapid in its first half than in its second. The impetus thus attained will, unquestionably, pass over into the coming century, and in the nature of the case will increase in force almost indefinitely.

Many are inclined to take a partial view of the subject by marking only the progress in the acquisition of material wealth; for instance, what has been done in developing and utilizing our natural resources; the increase in manufacturing industries and general prosperity; the subjugation of the land, and causing it to produce abundant crops for the sustenance of man and beast. On the other hand, the student of history will recognize that there has been

equally as much progress, during the last century, in the general education and diffusion of useful knowledge among the people; and that the humanizing influence of Christianity has raised them to a higher plane of morals, culture, and refinement. It was that influence which struck off the shackles of slavery: a system that much impeded the moral and material progress of the Nation. Thus the way is now clear for a continuous and well-balanced advance in the moral improvement and prosperity of the people, and which, judging from present indications, will far transcend that of the last century.

Patriotic Duties of Church Members.—National sympathy among us Americans is greatly increased by the facilities for intercourse between the different portions of our large domain; and patriotism urges that every judicious means be used to promote such interchange between our own people as shall enlarge their acquaintance with one another. Can there be a stronger bond of sympathy uniting the people of the different sections of our land than this almost instinctive feeling, combined with the Christian sentiment of brotherhood? The appeal is to all American Christians of whatever

name, to aid in inaugurating a patriotism that shall have in addition to love of country for its material welfare, another element which partakes of a national family feeling that is based on the golden rule and the recognition of a Christian brotherhood.

There never has been a period in our history so favorable as the present for leading minds in the churches of all denominations to inculcate among their members an exalted idea of love of their own country, as a force to promote its prosperity both materially and morally. Intelligent church members understand why it is essential in our Nation, governed as it is by the popular will, that the people themselves be kindly disposed toward their brethren in every section of the land. To secure this grand result there is no influence equal to that of prudent zeal combined with a *Christianized patriotism*, that imbues with its spirit the thinking and influential minds found in the various denominations. Thus, as citizens of a vast territory, all can be united in sympathy with one another, and as one compact whole constitute a harmonious nation, linked together by mutual interests. An important element of success in this

respect is involved in the people of the different sections knowing more of one another and of their own country, its varied climate, its productions and resources. A government founded as that of the American Union, on the principles of civil and religious liberty, and sustained by the hearty good-will of the people toward one another, cannot be otherwise than imbued with the spirit of justice and charity, and in consequence, be known only by its blessings.

Denominational Responsibility.—Owing to their forms of church government, some denominations have greater facilities than others for exerting a well-defined influence upon the whole Nation. This privilege is obtained by means of the meetings of their supreme judicatures which are constituted by delegates from the whole land; while the others, because also of their form of government, are limited, as to their influence, too much to the localities of individual churches. Of the three denominations—the Episcopal, the Methodist, and the Presbyterian—that have representative men as delegates to their supreme judicatures from all portions of the Union, only the last has annual meetings, while the other

two meet respectively every third and fourth year.

The comprehensive system of the Presbyterian Church government imposes upon her a greater responsibility than upon her sisters, because of her superior facilities in obtaining authentic knowledge from every portion of the Union of the spiritual condition and wants of the people. She learns this more especially by means of the equal representation of her church members in her several judicatures, and also in consequence of the latter's frequent meetings. Thus she is able more intelligently to prosecute evangelical work in the places destitute of Gospel privileges, and where there is a reasonable hope of success in founding permanent churches. The machinery of her church government is so systematic that it works throughout the land without friction—from the session of a single church in an obscure neighborhood to the General Assembly, with its hundreds of delegates from the whole Union. The frequent meetings in judicatures of her representative church members—clerical and lay—in which meetings there is no *ecclesiastical caste feeling*, but all are on an equality and imbued with a sense of individual

responsibility,—these conditions afford the Presbyterian Church superior facilities for exerting influence throughout the Nation.

This influence will be greatly enhanced when a perfect reunion—in fact and in spirit—is consummated, and the whole Presbyterian Church, thus untrammeled, enters upon her glorious future in acting harmoniously with other denominations in the grand work of making this Nation one that shall be pre-eminently righteous.

A Concise History of the American People.

By JACOB HARRIS PATTON, M.A., PH.D.

Illustrated with Portraits of Ninety-eight Representative Men, Charts, Maps, etc., Full Indexes, both Analytical and Topical.

New Revised Edition.

A history "of the people for the people," *at once comprehensive and compact.*

"Prof. PATTON approaches much nearer to the ideal historian than any writer of similar books. His work must be given the highest place among short histories of the United States."—*Christian Union*, New York.

The result of Prof. PATTON'S plan, arrangement of material, and style of execution, in this work is to give a complete civil and military **History of the United States**, from the discovery of the Continent to Arthur's Administration, divided into Presidential terms, showing the characteristic bearings and accomplishments of each And, pervading all, the general effect is that of an animated narrative of the **Life of the American People**—an admirably **complete view**, attractive in color and clear of comprehension.

"Prof. PATTON . . . has thorough command of his material. . . . We regard the book as, on the whole, the most valuable popular manual of American History now in the market. It is a book to be placed in the hands of young people. . . . Students and readers of all kinds will find it an invaluable hand-book for reference."—*The Presbyterian Review.*

Special facilities for reference are found in the continuous Marginal Dates, Cross references from one part of the work to another, interesting Statistical Tables, and full Indexes. The Analytical Index is very complete, giving alphabetically more than 2000 References. The Topical Index is of great value in the study or search after *special subjects.*

" . . . We have in it a panoramic view of the nation, from its origin, through its wonderful progress, to its present standing among the nations of the world. . . . The publishers have brought out the work in very handsome style. The numerous engravings of eminent men give it also the attractiveness of a National Portrait Gallery."—*New York Observer.*

"It is without doubt the best short history of the United States that has ever been published. No progressive teacher can afford to do without it."—*Teacher's Institute*, N. Y.

2 Vols., Extra Cloth, gilt top, $5.00 | 2 Vols., Half Morocco, $9.00
1 Vol., Half Russia..... $7.00

New York: FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT,
and A. D. F. RANDOLPH & CO.

Complete from the discovery of the Continent to Arthur's Administration, embracing the Colonial, the Constitutional, the Rebellion and the Reconstruction periods.

PATTON'S CONCISE HISTORY of the AMERICAN PEOPLE.

"Mr. Patton is a scholar; his history is one of the very best ever published."—*Christian World*, London.

"The style is clear and simple, and the author does not fail to be comprehensive and thorough in the attempt to be succinct. It is an excellent history by which to form the minds of youth to an intelligent appreciation of liberty and an enlightened patriotism."—*N. Y. Independent.*

"This book is a marvel of conciseness. From preface to index, everything in the volume speaks of systematic and laborious concentration. The facts of American History have been subjected, seemingly, to some rare power of condensation, and, as here presented, are truly a sort of double extract of history. It is brevity itself. All that is needed is to be found in it and nothing superfluous has been admitted. That which meets the reader's eye is the *sum* of the whole matter."—*Boston Post.*

"The religious and Christian elements are emphasized. The proportion of the parts, too, is well maintained. It seems to us to be a valuable work, and one which fills a place hitherto left vacant."—*American Theological Review.*

"The man's heart is in his work, and he has put his Christianity in it as well, and these merits, combined with its accuracy and succinctness will render these volumes acceptable to every student worthy of the name."—*Toronto Globe.*

"Mr. Patton's style is deserving of unqualified praise. It is pure, simple, strong, free from mannerism, and singularly easy and graceful. We anticipate for the work a cordial reception and extensive popularity among those who know how to prize the best books."—*North American Review.*

"As a convenient family history, portable and easy of reference, Mr. Patton's work cannot fail to fall into very general use "—*N. Y. Herald.*

"Prof. Patton's 'Concise History of the American People,' having been in such frequent demand, has been kept (not on the shelves, but) among other books of ready reference in the library."—F. SAUNDERS, *Librarian, in The Astor Library, New York.*

"* * * The writer has done his work well. The style is easy, and the book is written in the form of a continuous narrative. The author has consulted original authorities, but he makes no parade of this fact in cumbrous foot-notes. And, what is particularly gratifying, he does ample justice to the religious elements that enter into the making of the American people. Any one can satisfy himself on this point by reading what he has to say concerning the effect of the Reformation on American history, the Huguenots, John Eliot, the Pilgrim Fathers, and Jonathan Edwards. The contrast in this respect between the present volume and another recent publication on the same subject is very great We hope that Mr. PATTON'S work will have a place in many Christian homes."—FRANCIS L. PATTON, *D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Princeton Theological Seminary.*

One hundred copies are in use at Cornell University in the class of U. S. History, conducted by Prof. MOSES COIT TYLER, Author of "History of American Literature," etc. It is also kept for reference in the libraries of many private and public schools.

Date Due