A Digest

OF THE

Acts and Proceedings

OF THE

General Assembly

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

1861-1965

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General

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A DIGEST OF THE ACTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

1861-1965

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PREFACE

THIS ASSEMBLY'S DIGEST is in the tradition which began with the order of the Assembly of 1809 (Minutes, p. 424), which charged the Stated Clerk "with the business of preparing a book, and having entered therein such decisions of the Assembly as relate to the general government and discipline of the Church, and the duties of judicatures, that such decisions may hereafter be selected and printed for the general use of the churches, if a future Assembly shall so order."

The function of a Digest, in the Presbyterian Church prior to 1861 and in our Presbyterian Church, U. S., has been conceived by the Assembly as limited to those actions of the court which are of permanent authority.

In consequence this Digest is not to be looked to as a complete history of the Assembly or as a comprehensive index to the Minutes of the Assembly. Matters of simple history are not included.

JAMES A. MILLARD, JR.
Stated Clerk

Atlanta, Georgia
December, 1965.

CONTENTS

Preface v
Directions for Use of the Digest ix

Part I

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Constitution Declared 3
The Confession of Faith 4
The Catechisms 43
The Creed 44
Miscellaneous Deliverances of Doctrinal Nature 45

Part II

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Observance of the Order of the Church enjoined 53
Revision of the Book of Church Order 53

Form of Government
- Nature and Authority of *in thesi* deliverances of church courts 70
- Powers of the Session 78
- Powers of Presbytery 95
- Powers of the Synod 106
- Powers of the General Assembly 113
- Miscellaneous deliverances of the General Assembly 136

Part III

THE RULES OF DISCIPLINE

The Nature of Discipline 223
The Rules of Discipline 223

Part IV

THE DIRECTORY FOR THE WORSHIP AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

The Lord's Day 237
Public Worship 259
The Preaching of the Word 262
The Sacraments 264
The Work of the Church 281

Part V

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY ORDER 281

Part VI

JUDICIAL CASES 285

Part VII

RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES

Correspondence 365
Unions accomplished 365
Union—general attempted 370
Union—particular attempted 383
Cooperation and Comity 448
Participation in Councils, etc. 451

INDEX 479

DIRECTIONS FOR USE OF THE DIGEST

1. ARRANGEMENT OF MATERIAL.

The Digest is a compilation of Assembly actions interpretative of the Constitution. Consequently its arrangement is that of the Constitution. Under each chapter and section of the Confession of Faith, and under each section of the Book of Church Order are given those actions which bear upon that portion of the Constitution.

These actions are subdivided under topical headings (which will be referred to in cross references as "items".)

2. QUOTATIONS FROM THE MINUTES.

Year and page references (thus, **1861, p. 37)** introduce direct quotations from the Minutes of the General Assembly.

3. EDITOR'S MATERIAL.

A. Matter in brackets occurring in paragraphs of direct quotation from the Minutes is the editor's explanatory interpolation.

B. Matter in brackets prefaced by the phrase, "Ed. note:", is the editor's more lengthy explanation, or his summation of material, full quotation of which is not essential to the Digest.

C. Editorial notes, similar to (B) above, but followed by "A", are notes taken from Alexander's earlier editions and presenting information not elsewhere available.

4. CROSS REFERENCES.

A. Cross references are made to the primary type of headings, and to subheading as necessary.

B. Cross references are of three sorts:

(1) "See especially,", or "See also," which means the matter referred to is necessary for understanding of the topic.

(2) "See," which means the matter referred to, while not necessary, is desirable for understanding.

(3) "Cf.," which means the matter referred to is of interest.

5. REFERENCES.

References will occasionally be made to the Standards, not to another passage in the Digest, when the sections cited may facilitate understanding of the matter.

Part I.

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

Part I.

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

The Constitution Declared.

1861, p. 7. [Resolved:] That this Assembly declare, in conformity with the unanimous decision of our presbyteries, that the Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Directory of Worship, which together make up the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, are the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, only substituting the term "Confederate States" for "United States."

[Ed. note: For change of names see this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-9.]

Preface to the Confession—Sketch of Westminster Assembly.

[Ed note: In 1879, p. 55, the committee on the revision of the Book of Church Order was directed to add a short sketch of the Westminster Assembly, which direction was never complied with. In 1904, p. 50, a request for such an account to be printed in future editions, simply for information, was declined. However, in 1906, p. 24, the same request was granted, and the Committee of Publication authorized to prepare and publish a brief historical statement when a new edition should be issued. This statement has appeared as a preface to the Confession in editions subsequent to 1906.]

A Brief Statement of Belief.

[Ed. note: In 1912, p. 26, an ad interim committee was appointed to prepare a brief popular statement of the belief of our Church. Such a statement was, 1913, p. 44, approved by the Assembly for general information and distribution as a tract. In 1931, p. 64, the Assembly ordered that the Brief Statement be bound with the Confession, with the direction that the explanatory note ordered by the Assembly at the time of its adoption be published with the Statement. In 1937, pp. 38, 141, and in 1938, pp. 39, 136, the Brief Statement was referred to the presbyteries for their study. In 1939, pp. 75, 139, only 55 of the presbyteries gave informal approval to include the Brief Statement in the Standards. The Assembly again ordered, 1939, p. 68, that it be published with the Standards and include the explanatory note.

A similar committee was appointed, 1958, pp. 26, 54, and reported another brief statement in 1962, pp. 37, 147. The statement was adopted "with the understanding that it shall not be considered a substitute for or an amendment to our Standards."]

Amendments to the Confession.

[Ed. note: Amendments to the Confession have been few. In 1886, pp. 13, 48, the final clause of then numbered Chapter XXIV, Par. IV, which forbade marriage with a deceased's wife's sister, was stricken out, closing a debate which began in 1881, p. 358.

A general revision began in 1935, p. 19, with a number of overtures, some proposing, some opposing, changes. Out of this revision changes were made in 11 paragraphs in 1939, pp. 68 ff. In 1942, p. 67, a new Chap. IX, "Of The Holy Spirit," and a new Chap. X, "Of The Gospel," were enacted, including their proof texts.

Minor changes in punctuation and five small phrasing changes were made in 1944, p. 52. In 1959, p. 68, present Chap. XXVI. "Of Marriage and Divorce," was enacted. Enactment in 1963, pp. 38, 109, 113, of the new Directory for the Worship and Work of the Church involved deletion of one phrase from Chap. XXXI, 3, to make it proper to take the Lord's Supper to the sick. The Assembly, 1964, p. 87, authorized use of arabic numbers for the paragraphs of the Confession.

One change was made in the Larger Catechism, Ques. 156, in 1939, pp. 68, 71, to make the answer conform to the amended form of the Confession. A general revision biblical references of the Confession began in 1902, pp. 259, 294, and was finally enacted in 1910, pp. 47, 48.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. I, PAR. II.

1. Inspiration of the Scriptures.

1897, p. 43. [Overture asking the General Assembly] to make an *in thesi* deliverance setting forth the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture as contained in the words "inspiration" and "inspired" which are used in our Standards. [Answer:] The Scriptures and the Confession of Faith are sufficiently explicit.

1928, p. 45. Overture asking for certain advance interpretations of the Confession of Faith, and certain advance deliverances on inspiration and evolution.

[Answer:] "No doctrinal advance deliverance of an Assembly can displace the constitutional doctrinal basis of our Church.

"Our form of government prescribes this question for ordination, 'Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?'

"Our Confession of Faith declares that the Scriptures 'are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life.'

"Our Shorter Catechism states that 'the Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.'

"The requirement is, therefore, clear: namely, belief in the Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and life.

"A man's position in this matter is to be determined as follows: In the case of an applicant for ordination, by examination; in the case of a minister, by judicial process, in accordance with our form of government.

"The Assembly can deal with specific cases only when they come before the Assembly upon appeal or complaint and with the full record of the case before it.

"This answer applies to both questions asked in the overture."

[See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. IV, Par. II; General Deliverances on Doctrine; Form of Govt., § 14-1, 2, 3; 27-6.]

2. Inspiration of the Scriptures in the Seminaries.

1867, p. 150. The Assembly would earnestly impress on the minds of all having in charge the government and instruction of our theological seminaries, the vital importance of training our future ministers not only to be able and faithful ministers of God, but also to be fully imbued with an implicit faith in the plenary and literal inspired authority of the sacred Scriptures.

3. Genuineness of the Scriptures.

1905, pp. 13, 41, 99. We . . . note rules adopted by the ad interim committee, and assert as far as practicable in a general way how these rules have been observed. These rules, so far as the rejection or selection of proof passages is concerned, are four—viz.:

1. Reject passages of doubtful genuineness.
2. Reject passages of doubtful interpretation.
3. Reject irrelevant passages.
4. Add other texts where required.

So far as we have been able to judge, the added texts are generally, if not universally, apt, and are neither of doubtful genuineness nor of doubtful interpretation. In some instances we have noted that texts which seem to be of doubtful interpretation or which are irrelevant have not been rejected. We also find instances in which passages cited have been retained about which it may be said that their truth, as a part of God's Word, is not vouched for by the inspired authors of the books in which these passages occur. . . .

1923, p. 70. We reassert the "stand by the Bible" position of our Church. By this we mean that we stand for it as the sole rule of faith and practice—that we stand for the integrity of the Scriptures, for the integer presented by the Canon found in our Confession of Faith, rejecting the changes made by the so-called higher criticism, and believing the entire Bible, irrespective of human preference or prejudice, is still to be recognized as the agent of the Holy Spirit in the redemption of the world.

[See this Digest, same references as in preceding section. Also, Confession of Faith, I, 7.]

4. Use of "Shorter Bible" and versions other than King James'.

1882, p. 572. [Answering an overture, the Assembly declined to express its disapprobation of the use of any other version of the Scriptures in public worship than the King James' translation.]

1922, p. 69. In answer to overtures asking for a deliverance on the "Shorter Bible," the Assembly expresses its abhorrence of the publication known as the "Shorter Bible," and deplores the spirit which gave it being; that we renew our acceptance of the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing more or less, as the recorded will of God for our salvation. We affectionately and earnestly caution our members against it in its endeavor to supplant the Word of God, and urge our Committee of Publication to refuse all orders for it and decline in any way to advertise it.

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. III, PAR. 3.

1. Possible Revision of Chap. III Studied.

1961, pp. 39, 132. The report of the Ad Interim Committee on Possible Revision of Chapter III of the Confession of Faith was received as information and the summary statements were adopted.

[The "summary statements are the following:]

1. That no revision be made in Chapter III of the Confession because it is an historic and integral statement. Any revision would destroy the unity of the creed without resolving the problem.

2. That the General Assembly declare that in its judgment the doctrine of foreordination to everlasting death as formulated in the Confession is not an adequate statement of Christian faith, because it implies, regardless of the intention of the authors, an eternal negative decree; and that the doctrine, as stated in the Confession, is not essential to Reformed theology as is indicated by its absence in this vigorous form in such authentic Reformed creeds as The Scots Confession of 1560, The Second Helvetic Confession, and The Heidelberg Catechism.

3. That the General Assembly recommend to presbyteries, sessions and members the study of the doctrine of God's sovereignty as it is taught in the Bible and as it has

been understood in our Reformed tradition, that we may come to a deeper under-
standing of this great doctrine.

4. That the General Assembly emphasize the importance of studying the Confes-
sion in the context of the *total* Reformed tradition, especially in the light of other Re-
formed *confessions* and *catechisms*.

5. That the General Assembly call attention to the importance of the following
truths in the study of paragraphs 3, 4 and 7.

a. The God who elects is the God who has made himself known to us in Jesus
Christ. Therefore, his sovereignty involves his love as well as his power.

b. In Jesus Christ we find the meaning of our election and God's will concern-
ing all mankind.

c. God always deals with us as men and not as sticks or stones. God's dealing
with us is personal, not mechanical.

d. Election is to service, holiness, and blessedness.

e. God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."
I Timothy 2:4.

6. That the General Assembly consider the need for a contemporary formulation
of Reformed Faith and the desirability that this work be undertaken by the world-
wide Reformed community.

7. That recommendation #6, if approved, be transmitted to the Theological De-
partment of The World Alliance of Reformed Churches for its consideration.

2. Fatalism in the Confession.

1909, p. 48 [Overture] to make such change in Chap. III, Sec. 3, of our Confession of Faith as will eliminate the appearances of fatalism, and thus enable us the more successfully to commend our doctrine to the favorable consideration of our fel-low men.

[This the Assembly declined,] for the reason that this Section, when read in con-nection with the other parts of the Confession, furnishes no ground for the charge that it has even the appearance of fatalism.

1910, p. 67. [Above action cited as answer to overture asking revision of statement of Confession touching Predestination.]

[Ed. note: Proposed amendment, to omit Pars. 3 and 4, failed to receive re-quired vote of presbyteries (1939, p. 69.) At the same time an amendment to alter the wording of Par. 7 was not enacted although approved by the requisite vote of presbyteries.]

[See also this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XII, 3.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. IV, PAR. 2.

Evolution.

1886, p. 18. [The Majority report of the Special Committee on Evolution:] To the several overtures on the subject of the evolution of man sent up by the Pres-byteries, the General Assembly returns answer as follows, viz.:

The Church remains at this time sincerely convinced that the Scriptures, as truly and authoritatively expounded in our "Confession of Faith" and "Catechisms" teach—

That Adam and Eve were created, body and soul, by immediate acts of Almighty power, thereby preserving a perfect race unity;—

That Adam's body was directly fashioned by Almighty God, without any natural animal parentage of any kind, out of matter previously created from nothing;—

And that any doctrine at variance therewith is a dangerous error, inasmuch as in the methods of interpreting Scripture it must demand, and in the consequences which

by fair implication it will involve, it will lead to the denial of doctrines fundamental to the faith.

[A minority report was presented as follows:]

We, the undersigned members of the Special Committee on Evolution, recommend that the General Assembly decline to make a deliverance on the subject: 1. Because the answer which in invoked by those overtures, if given, would violate our Constitution (*vide* Confession of Faith, Chap. 31, p. 4.) [pres. XXXIII, 4] 2. Because the word of God as interpreted by our Standards, gives the faith of the Church. 3. Because before one of our lower courts a concrete case is pending involving the matter of these overtures.

[A paper from another member of the committee was presented.]

p. 19. A motion to adopt the majority report was superseded by a motion to substitute the report of the minority. [Lengthy debate followed, in which Dr. James Woodrow was given two hours.]

p. 26. The motion to adopt the minority report was lost. Thereupon the majority report was adopted by a recorded vote: Ayes, 137; *non liquet*, 1; nays, 13.

[Ed. note: The Assembly made the *in thesi* deliverance above despite the fact that a concrete case was then pending before a lower court. Cf. here this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-2, 3, touching *in thesi* deliverances.]

1888, p. 408. Now, therefore, it is the judgment of this General Assembly that Adam's body was directly fashioned by Almighty God of the dust of the ground, without any natural animal parentage of any kind. The wisdom of God prompted him to reveal the fact, while the inscrutable *mode* of his action therein he has not revealed.

Therefore, the Church does not propose to touch, handle or conclude any question of science which belongs to God's kingdom of nature. She must, by her divine constitution, see that these questions are not thrust upon her to break the silence of Scripture and supplement it by any scientific hypothesis concerning the mode of God's being or acts in creation which are inscrutable to us. It is, therefore, ordered that this complaint in this case be not sustained, and the judgment of the Synod of Georgia be, and the same is hereby, in all things affirmed.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. James Woodrow.]

1889, p. 589. The records of the Synod of South Carolina were approved with the following exception:

On page 20 of the printed Minutes of Synod we find the following action:

"On page 314 the records show that the Presbytery (of Charleston) adopted the following paper:

" 'The Committee on Minutes of General Assembly call attention of this Presbytery to the judicial case decided by the Assembly (Sup. 408), and we recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

" 'Presbytery hereby informs its ministers, ruling elders and deacons that the General Assembly has judicially affirmed the decision of the Synod of Georgia, declaring the belief of the Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., as to the origin of the body of Adam, was contrary to the word of God as interpreted in the Standards of the Church, and therefore this Presbytery regards the holding of said form of evolution as contrary to the word of God as interpreted in the Standards of the Church, and forbids the public contending against the decision of the Assembly.'

"Your committee recommends for the adoption of the Synod the following resolutions:

" '1. The Synod condemns that action as unconstitutional, irregular and unwise, for the following reasons: 1. This action is a trespass upon the sacred and inalienable right of private judgment, which belongs to every court and all the officers and mem-

bers of the Church of Christ. 2. This action imposes a restraint upon the right of freedom in the expression of opinion which is unwarranted by the law. 3. This action assumes the infallibility of the General Assembly in the deliverance of judicial decisions, which is a doctrine foreign to the constitution and spirit of Presbyterianism.'"

"'2. This Synod directs the Presbytery of Charleston to convene as soon as practicable, and review and correct these proceedings which Synod has now condemned.'"

The General Assembly disapproves this action of the Synod of South Carolina, together with the reasons assigned therefor, inasmuch as it appears to the General Assembly, from an inspection of the full records, that the action of the Charleston Presbytery was not intended to limit either liberty of private judgment or the constitutional right of proper discussion.

Adopted: yeas, 113; nays, 31.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-7.]

1924, p. 64. [Overture asking the Assembly to reaffirm a former deliverance on evolution (see *1886*, p. 18, above).] The Presbytery of Mecklenburg respectfully overtures the General Assembly to reaffirm the above deliverance and to publish it to the world as our present position. We recommend an affirmative answer and do so reaffirm our convictions and do hereby publish them to the world.

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XII, PAR. 3.

Elect Infants.

[Ed. note: A number of attempts to alter this paragraph failed, beginning in 1900, p. 614 and continuing until 1939, p. 69. Four amendments sent down to the presbyteries for advice and consent failed to receive the requisite number of votes: 1911, p. 27; 1912, p. 35; 1913, p. 29; 1939, p. 69.]

1902, p. 265. This Assembly is fully persuaded that the language employed in Chap. X [now XII], Sec. 3, of our Confession of Faith, touching infants dying in infancy, does not teach that there are any infants dying in infancy who are damned, but is only meant to show that those who die in infancy are saved in a different manner from adult persons, who are capable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

Furthermore, we are persuaded that the Holy Scriptures, when fairly interpreted, amply warrant us in believing that all infants who die in infancy are included in the election of grace, and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit.

[See also this Digest, Conf. of Faith, III, 3.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXII, PAR. 3.

Basis for Binding Quality of Assembly Deliverances.

[See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. IV, 2; Form of Govt., § 14-1 and 16-7; cf. Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXXIII, 3.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXIII, PAR. 3.

"Glossolalia."

1965, pp. 47, 174. This committee, appointed by the 1964 General Assembly in response to Overture 46 from the Presbytery of Central Texas, was instructed "to study the matter of glossolalia . . . taking such time in its deliberations and prayerful considerations as may be necessary to answer at least these three minimal questions:

a. Is Glossolalia valid in contemporary Christian experience?

b. If Glossolalia is valid now, what manifestations of it does the Church deem proper, efficacious, expedient, and wise, and under what circumstances?

c. If Glossolalia is not valid now, does the Church deem it heresy of such nature as to demand excommunication for those who persist in practice of it; or is it to be considered an abuse of Christian freedom, demanding one of the lesser censures?"

The committee has met three times: on October 12-13, 1964; January 17-18, 1965; and March 14-15, 1965. We have had full attendance with the exception of one member who missed the January meeting.

There was available to the committee a considerable amount of material: extensive Biblical studies, theological reports, papers by church commissions and scientific bodies, personal interviews, and direct information about the modern phenomenon under discussion. We have not lacked, therefore, a basis for a report.

The committee has made every effort that limited time has allowed to study the experience of glossolalia in our own denomination. A request was published in each of the Church papers, asking for "reports at this time from any members of The Presbyterian Church in the United States who would like to share their experiences in this matter . . . those who have found the experience of 'speaking with tongues' helpful in their spiritual life, and those who feel that it has had negative or harmful effects in the Church." Direct reports came from eight ministers and indirect reports from two. (Two have left our denomination since having this experience). Personal testimonies were also received from twenty laymen and women from Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Missouri, and Texas. Two of these may not have been members of The Presbyterian Church, U.S., but all the rest were. Members of the committee attended two group meetings of ten or more persons, and were granted permission to use a tape recorder. Other tapes have been made available by interested persons. It is obviously impossible for the committee to judge how widespread this movement may actually be in the total life of the denomination.

If it is possible to make generalizations from such a wide variety of experiences, it should be noted that in almost every case these testimonies came from individuals who are active (and apparently constructive) members of their local churches. They practice "speaking with tongues" in their private devotions, or in small group meetings, but not in the public worship of the congregation. They feel it is an aid to prayer, a means of expressing emotions that cannot adequately be phrased in words.

Our report is divided into three parts:

Part 1: The reply of the 1964 General Assembly to Overture 46 from the Presbytery of Central Texas.

Part 2: Our answer to Question "a."

Part 3: A statement of principles regarding the work of the Holy Spirit which relate to Questions "b" and "c."

Part 1

It is the judgment of this committee that the 1964 General Assembly, in its reply to Overture 46 from the Presbytery of Central Texas regarding "Glossolalia," used inexact theological language which may be misleading to our people.

(1) a. "The normative covenant relationship between God and His people is initiated, confirmed, and maintained through proper preaching and hearing of the word of God and the celebration of the Sacraments as these were instituted by Christ, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper . . ." This might convey the impression that the covenant can be initiated from the human side by preaching and sacramental observance, and that its maintenance depends on the proper character of our preaching or liturgical action. In contrast, the Westminster Standards clearly make *God* the in-

itiator of the covenant; the decisive action is not man's preaching or sacramental ob-
servance, but God's offer of life and salvation to fallen man in the Mediator, Jesus
Christ. The standards very carefully refer to the Word and Sacraments as the or-
dinances in which the covenant is *dispensed* or *administered* (Confession of Faith
VII, Larger Catechism QQ. 30-35).

(1) a. (Cont.) ". . . and the Word and Sacraments in themselves are, by the Grace
of God, more than sufficient to convey to the people of God the full power and fruits
of the Spirit, under the authority of Scripture, of the Confession of Faith and Cate-
chisms and of the experience of the people of God in history." The last phrase, be-
ginning with "under" is unclear. Surely the Word and Sacraments do not draw their
authority from the Confession or from experience. What then is meant?

The crucial phrase, however, is that "the Word and Sacraments in themselves are,
by the Grace of God, more than sufficient to convey to the people of God the full
power and fruits of the Spirit." This reverses the historic position of our church as to
the relative authority of the Spirit and the means of grace. It is not, as this statement
would indicate, the means of grace which convey the power of the Spirit; it is the
power of the Spirit which makes the means of grace efficacious.

Thus our standards declare that "the Spirit of God maketh the reading, but espe-
cially the preaching of the word, an effectual means . . ." (Shorter Catechism Q. 89,
Larger Catechism Q. 155). Again, "the sacraments become effectual means of sal-
vation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only
by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive
them" (Shorter Catechism Q. 91; cf. Confession XXIX, 2; Larger Catechism Q. 161).
Nowhere in our standards is it stated or intimated that Word or Sacraments "convey"
the power and fruits of the Spirit. The Spirit, being the third person in the Trinity,
is quite capable of conveying his own power and fruits "when, and where, and how
he pleaseth" (Confession of Faith XII:3). He does indeed condescend to *use* the Word
and Sacraments, but in so doing he remains free and sovereign.

(1) b. is a quotation from the Confession of Faith, XXIII, 3 to the effect that
prayer, if vocal, should be made in a known tongue. The implication seems to be that
the Confession here explicitly condemns glossolalia. It is the common opinion of his-
torians and commentators that vocal prayer here refers to public prayer in the public
worship of the church, and that this injunction was directed against the practice of the
Roman Church, where prayers were offered in Latin, a language that was unintel-
ligible to the congregation. It is true that the Westminster Divines, when asked by
Parliament to supply Scripture texts, appended I Corinthians 14:14: "for if I pray in
a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful." The Westminster Divines were
concerned that the mind be involved in the worship of God. This would rule out *any*
vocal (public) prayer that the congregation cannot understand, whether in Latin, in
glossolalia, or in outmoded, pietistic terminology that is now meaningless.

(1) c. "The Sacrament of Baptism as treated in Chapter XXX of the Confession
of Faith with its explications is the only baptism known to the people of God . . ." This
statement does not take into account the fact that Jesus could speak of his death as a
baptism (Mark 10:38; Luke 12:50); nor the fact that Scripture in several cases clearly
distinguishes between a baptism with water and a baptism with the Holy Spirit (Matt.
3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5). We would agree that, since Pentecost, baptism
and receiving the Spirit belong together in a single experience (Acts 2:38). But both
Scripture and the Confession face the possibility that there may be a lapse of time be-
tween the two (Acts 8, 10, 19; Confession XXX:3).

For the above reasons we recommend that the 1965 General Assembly rescind the
action of the 1964 Assembly adopting Part (1) of the reply to Overture 46 from the
Presbytery of Central Texas and adopt this report as a substitute therefor.

Part 2

In regard to question (a) "Is Glossolalia valid in contemporary Christian experience?" we reply that the question posed cannot or should not be answered with a direct "yes" or a direct "no." Either a positive or a negative answer would be in error, and we believe that neither committee or court can pronounce in such fashion without involving itself in error. We would like to make it plain that we are not implying a negative answer to the question, nor do we suggest an evasion of responsibility to reach a reasoned opinion. The conclusion we have reached is perhaps best understood in the light of the various presuppositions in the question itself and the implications that must necessarily be drawn from either a positive or a negative answer.

To speak, as the question speaks, of "glossolalia' 'is to imply an answer or to give an *a priori* validity to the experience. To name the phenomenon by the New Testament name at the very least presupposes a clear understanding of the modern phenomenon and a precise definition. More seriously, the implication of the name is that the modern phenomenon is the same as the New Testament phenomenon or is somehow directly connected with it. Thus to name a particular experience "Glossolalia" is already either to answer the question or to urge a particular answer.

We do not believe that it is possible so simply to identify and define a phenomenon which is complex and multiform. In the range of phenomena under study there are experiences that run all the way from utter simplicity of private devotional practice through public and corporate manifestation to more esoteric experiences usually associated with so-called "phychi-phenomena," or extra-sensory perception, and even "drug-mysticism." We recognize that vast differences separate the varieties of experience, but it is difficult, if not impossible, adequately to isolate a particular set of phenomena to which the name "glossolalia" may be given and which by definition differ from similar phenomena. It is certainly not possible to move from such a definition to a description of the circumstances under which the experience is deemed proper and recognizable.

A concomitant matter is the complex and often apparently contradictory character of the New Testament evidence itself. There is agreement that there was a phenomenon which can be named "glossolalia" in the early church, notably mentioned in connection with the account of the happenings at Pentecost and as a factor in the Corinthian life and worship. The *fact* of the experience is clear; the *nature* of the experience cannot be determined with any precision or certainty. In Acts, at least in the Pentecost narrative, although by terminology an ecstatic type of utterance is implied, the author uses the experience as a symbol of the reestablishment of communication between men in the new Age of the Spirit, a reversal of Babel. At other places in the New Testament it is relatively clear that the experience involves the use of a nonrecognizable tongue, as for example, the "tongues of angels." It is probable that at times we are meant to understand a kind of combination of intelligible and non-intelligible utterances. A factor of great importance, although it is often overlooked in contemporary studies of the phenomenon, is the scarcity of references to the phenomenon in the other New Testament writings and especially the relative disinterest in the phenomenon in the early Christian literature. Once again, to recognize these facts is not a hint at a negative answer, but to indicate the difficulty of identifying a modern-day phenomenon with the New Testament experience.

To speak of a phenomenon in the life of the individual Christian or in the total experience of the church as "valid" presupposes that there can be applied some standard of measurement. It is obvious that for the Protestant Church the New Testament itself provides the standard. But to make the New Testament the standard of validity does not mean simply that any practice that occurred in the first century church may or must occur in the twentieth century church. Many first century practices are no

longer current among us, such as baptism for the dead, the kiss of peace, the obliga-
tory covering of the heads of women, foot washing, and so on. On the other hand,
practices never envisioned by the first century church are integral to the life of the
church in our day. The Holy Spirit continues to lead and guide the church beyond the
letter of the New Testament though not contrary to its deep and abiding principles.
Thus, even if we could establish an unequivocal definition of glossolalia in the New
Testament church, we would not thereby have a standard of validity for today. The
church under the authority of the Word of God is called upon not for reiteration of
first century practices, but for obedience in contemporary life.

We have before us the kind of experience that can never be proved or disproved
precisely because it is "immune to proof." The difficulty is more intense because we
are dealing with a phenomenon that seems to be itself "proof," or that is often taken
as confirmatory evidence, and that can be measured and recorded by human instru-
ments. "The Spirit blows where it wills . . . we do not know." To speak of "validity"
in this instance would be to say that we *do* know, can identify, and even chart the
movements of the Spirit. Thus to standardize and categorize the work of the Spirit
would certainly involve us in heresy.

Part 3

Although this committee cannot declare the experiences of contemporary Chris-
tians to be either valid or invalid reproductions of New Testament glossolalia, we can
set forth the following principles regarding the work of the Holy Spirit:

1. *The Holy Spirit is Lord* (II Cor. 3:17-18). The sovereign freedom of the Holy
Spirit to act where and by whatever means He will must be recognized and respected.
Such a recognition eliminates the possibility of manipulating or coercing the Spirit by
audible and physical means to act or speak in a particular fashion.

2. *The Holy Spirit bears witness to Christ* (John 15:26). In the New Testament
the activity of the Spirit never becomes an end in itself but always a means to the
confession, both in public worship and in life, that Jesus is Lord (I Cor. 12:3). Any
genuine manifestation of the Spirit, therefore, will lead to a Christological concern and
witness. An excessive concentration on spiritual phenomena to the neglect of the cen-
trality of the once-for-all revelation of God in Jesus Christ is a false spirituality.

3. *The Holy Spirit convinces the world* (John 16:8-11). In an era in which the
Christian church finds the search for a proper language to express its faith a difficult
one, a preoccupation with ecstatic speaking in which the intelligibility of the gospel is
obscured can be an escape. The urgent need of the church today is not for glossolalia
in which the church talks only to itself or to God, but for a relevant language in which
it can communicate with the world. An inner spirituality which neglects the "worldli-
ness" of the gospel, which is not concerned for righteousness in the world, and which
does not prompt an involvement in the church's mission of service and love in and for
the world, is a false spirituality.

4. *The Holy Spirit is the bond of the church's unity* (Eph. 4:3). Those who claim
to speak in tongues should not regard themselves as the only Christians who have an
authentic gift from the Spirit. It is clear that Christians who do not speak in tongues
have also been baptized by the Holy Spirit and given gifts by him (I Cor. 12:4-13).
They should not set themselves up as a spiritual elite, somehow superior to those who
have different gifts (I Cor. 12:14-21). They should not cultivate a closer fellowship
with others who claim to speak in tongues than with those who do not (I Cor. 12:
22-26). They should not disturb the order and decency of the public worship of God.
(I Cor. 14:14).

5. *The Holy Spirit bestows his varied gifts for the common good* (I Cor. 12:7).
No one should insist that all Christians should have the gift of glossolalia (I Cor.
12:30). There is no indication that Christians should be eager to receive this particular

gift (I Cor. 12:31; 14:1). Rather, we are urged to seek the higher gifts. Those gifts which are to be exercised in public should be those which edify the church (I Cor. 14:4, 12) and equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). Above all, all Christians should seek love, without which tongues are a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (I Cor. 13:1).

6. *The gifts of the Spirit can be counterfeited or sought for the wrong motive* (I John 4:1). There is no reason to suppose that forms of utterance voiced at the prompting of the Spirit cannot be imitated or cultivated by men and women variously motivated. While there may be among us some who "speak in tongues" as the Spirit gives them utterance, there may also be present among us those who, succeeding in the effort to "speak in tongues," unwarrantedly assume their utterance to be an evidence of the spirit of Christ. The gift may be sought and its counterfeit achieved from wrong motives.

This is a time when the church, rather than concentrating upon some one apparent manifestation of the Spirit, should be in prayer for all His gifts and the fullness of His power, in order that the church may be renewed. In this broad sense it is not difficult to say, on the basis of clear and unequivocal New Testament evidence, what the work of the Spirit is and what are his gifts and fruit in Christian life. The prayer of the church has always been *Veni, Creator Spiritus,* seeking these gifts and fruit and praising their Giver for them; and that must be our prayer and praise still.

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXXIII, PAR. 8.

Works of "Necessity and Mercy" not defined.

1909, p. 34. In regard to the request of your Standing Committee that the Assembly should define what is meant by "Works of Necessity and Mercy," your committee is of the opinion that it would be unwise for this Assembly to undertake to specify the individual acts that would fall under these terms, and as a general statement of the principle, the words are as simple and plain as any that could be used. We are sure that a conscience alive to God, and heart in love with Him, to which the Sabbath is a delight, and eager to reduce all work to be done on that day to the smallest minimum, will never have any difficulty in understanding these terms.

[See this Digest, D.W.W., § 201-2.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXV, PAR. 4.

Duty of citizens to the State.

1862, p. 19. We distinctly recognize the right of the State to claim the services of any or all her citizens in this the time of her need. We also acknowledge it as a high privilege, as well as a plain duty, for our people to pledge to each other, and the government of their choice, their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor, in united efforts to drive back the invaders of our soil and the enemies of our institutions.

1918, p. 24. [Telegram from the Hon. Herbert Hoover, U. S. Food Commissioner, on food conservation, particularly regarding wheat.]

p. 41. We recommend that this Assembly hereby call upon all of its members to fulfill to the very utmost their solemn duty as citizens of the United States, and that we urge our people to observe most conscientiously this request of the Food Administration.

1943, pp. 75, 142. The United States of America is in the second year of a war in which the fundamental liberties of mankind are at stake. . . . It is our duty as Christian citizens to do all we can, that is consonant with our faith, to help in its gigantic struggle the nation which has afforded the Church a fair and favorable op-

portunity for development, and to preserve the Christian values which have been at-
tained in this and other lands.
[Cf. this Digest, Pastoral Letters, and International Relations.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXVI, PAR. 1.

Polygamy.

1904, p. 50. In answer to an overture from the Presbytery of Chesapeake in reference to Polygamy, asking the General Assembly to make a deliverance on the subject, in its relation to the work of our missionaries in our foreign fields—

We recommend the following:

In view of the fact that the Presbyterian Church is unalterably opposed to polygamy, and would not, under any circumstances, tolerate the entrance into polygamous relations of any of its members, even in heathen lands, and in view of the great care of our Executive Committee of Foreign Missions in appointing to the work in foreign land only workers of piety and discretion, we deem it unnecessary to make any deliverance on this subject.

1907, p. 57. [Reaffirmed.]

1908, p. 65. The Assembly sympathizes with our missionaries in the many difficulties they encounter in practically applying the teachings of Christianity to conditions in heathen lands, and realizes that much must be left to the discretion of the missionaries on the ground.

At the same time the Assembly affectionately enjoins on our missionaries that in dealing with questions arising out of these conditions, such as, for example, the prevalence of polygamy or of ancestral worship, and other forms of idolatry, they ought all to be very careful not to compromise the honor of our church or any of the principles of our holy religion, nor to pursue any policy that would fail to make it plain, either to the church at home or to the native churches, or to the heathen themselves, that such customs and practices are to be condemned as contrary to the law of Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures.

1912, p. 27. [Ed. note: This 1912 action stands in its position on polygamy. Its view of divorce has been modified by present Chap. XXVI, enacted in 1963.]

We recommend that the Assembly answer the overtures on polygamy as follows:

Polygamy is both unscriptural and unconfessional, and the practice of the Church must conform to this doctrine.

[See also this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Dr. S. S. Laws.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXVI, PAR. 3.

Mixed Marriages.

[See this Digest, Roman Catholicism.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXVI, PAR. 5 AND 6.

1. Divorce—grounds for and right to remarry after.

[Ed. note: The subjects of grounds for, and right to remarry after, divorce were frequently before the General Assembly. See 1898, p. 219; 1900, pp. 613, 643; 1903, p. 469; 1905, p. 23; 1929, p. 43; 1935, p. 43; 1938, pp. 46, 114. Until this Chapter of the Confession was revised, 1959, p. 69, remarriage was permitted only to the innocent party when divorce was on the ground of either adultery or "wilful dissertion."

See also Directory for Worship and Work, § 215-1 ff.]

2. Comity in remarriage of divorced persons.

1904, pp. 40, 96. [The following resolution of the Executive Commission of the Alliance of Reformed Churches was approved:]

"*Resolved,* That in recognition of the comity which should exist between Christian churches, it is desirable, and would tend to the increase of a spirit of Christian unity, for each church represented in the Conference to advise, and, if ecclesiastical authority will allow, to enjoin its ministers to refuse to unite in marriage any person or persons whose marriage, such ministers have good reason to believe, is forbidden by the laws of the church in which either party seeking to be married holds membership."

3. The Minister is responsible for decision to remarry divorced person.

1935, p. 43 [Overture asking the Assembly] "to declare who shall decide whether or not a person may or may not be married by a Presbyterian Minister" . . . be answered as follows:

The Assembly states that the minister has sole responsibility, though subject to censure by his presbytery for an improper course of conduct.

[Cf. Rules of Dis., § 102-1.]

4. Admission of remarried divorced persons to church membership.

1912, p. 37. Overture asking a deliverance on the admission to Church membership of re-married divorced persons.

Answer—Some parties to such marriages are innocent and are admissible to Church membership. The sessions must discriminate in each case, using the Scriptures, the Confession of Faith, and the deliverances of the Assembly as their standard of judgment.

5. Discipline for members remarrying after divorce without meeting conditions of Church law.

1930, p. 40. [Overture] that in view of the deliverance of the General Assembly regarding the matter of divorced persons remarrying, and of its caution to ministers in performing the ceremony for some, should not sessions discipline members of their churches who remarry without having met the conditions laid down by our Church? Answer: The Church, in its teaching and in the practice of its ministers and members, should uphold the scriptural standards respecting marriage, divorce and remarriage. The application of discipline in particular cases must depend on circumstances of aggravation or mitigation to be judged of by the court having jurisdiction.

[Cf. Rules of Dis., § 102-1.]

6. Divorced Minister's serving Church left to judgment of Presbytery.

1941, p. 42. [Overture] as to whether or not a minister who is divorced should serve in our Church: We recommend that this matter be left to the judgment of each individual presbytery.

[Cf. Form of Govt., § 16-7; Rules of Dis., § 107-1.]

7. Marriage of Minors.

1899, p. 433. [Overture:] Is a minister of our church justifiable in performing a marriage ceremony when one or both of the contracting parties reside with their respective parents, are both of marriageable age, but under the age of twenty-one (said ceremony being performed at a place other than the home of one of the parents of the contracting parties), when the minister knows, or has reason to believe, that such marriage is without the knowledge and against the consent of the parents of either one of the contracting parties?

The General Assembly replies as follows:

The Assembly is of the opinion that it would be both unwise and inexpedient to attempt to lay down any inflexible rule for the guidance of its ministry in relation to the performance of this ceremony, the great bond of society. It believes that an enlightened conscience and the laws of the land are, as a rule, the safest and only guides to be followed in such cases. But the Assembly cannot forbear to express the opinion that in the cases described in the overture the greatest prudence and caution should be exercised by the minister; that he should exert his influence, as far as he can properly and prudently do so, to prevent such marriages, and only consent to perform the ceremony in those cases where he is satisfied, from all the circumstances, that the best interests of all the parties (including the parent or parents) will be subserved by his so doing.

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXX, PAR. 2.

What constitutes valid baptism.

1864, p. 274. The committee appointed by the last Assembly to prepare an answer to the overture respecting baptism, would recommend to this Assembly the adoption of the following:

The question, "Unto *what* were ye baptized?" is, without doubt, of vital importance. This Assembly holds, with Calvin, that "a sacrament is an external sign by which the Lord seals his promises upon our conscience," and that "it is a fixed point that the office of the sacrament differs not from the Word of God, and this is to hold forth and offer Christ to us, and in Him the treasures of the heavenly grace." (Inst., Book IV, Chap. XIV, Sections 1-17.) This Assembly holds also, with Pictet, that the sacrament of baptism was instituted in order to set forth "the blood and the Spirit of Christ; our justification by His blood, and our sanctification by His Spirit." (Book XV, Chap. XI, Sec. III.) It holds, with the Reformed Church in general, that baptism was designed to signify and seal our fellowship with Christ in His death and resurrection, with all the benefits thereof, among which are the remission of sins, regeneration and eternal life. These things being so, of course a baptism administered and received in attestation of falsehood cannot be valid Christian baptism. This is the ground upon which our Church has rejected Romish baptism.

But is it equally clear that some distinctions must be made in reference to the cases to which this principle is to be applied?

1. We cannot say that errors, even very serious errors, in the apprehensions with which a person receives baptism necessarily render it invalid. If it be rightly administered, and he should wrongly conceive of it, we are not to repeat the baptism afterward when he becomes better informed.

2. We cannot even say that serious errors in the teachings of the individual administrator render it necessary to repeat baptism. He baptizes by authority from the Church that ordains him, and the baptism which he administers is to be judged according to her doctrines, and not those of each one of her individual ministers.

The first inquiry which arises upon a consideration of the overture submitted to us is, Does baptism symbolize the burial of Christ only in the sense in which the apostle speaks of our being buried with Christ in baptism. What that sense is, in both the passages where the phrase occurs, we consider to be very clear, viz.: as merely embodying an intensive form of the idea of death. The apostle's object is to set forth the believer's being one with Christ in His dying; and, with characteristic warmth, he says not only that we are dead with Christ, but buried with Him. It is just as when we intend to declare, with emphasis, to any person the certainty of another's death; we often say not only that he is dead, but that he is dead and buried. We do not perceive any allusion to immersion in Paul's language, either in Colossians II. 12, or in Romans VI. 4; nor does

the intelligent Haldane, in his Commentary on Romans, point out any, although himself a Baptist.

Indeed, there was nothing in the mode of our Saviour's burial which could possibly have suggested any such allusion to the writer of those epistles. Our Lord was not buried *down in the earth* as *we* bury our dead, and as he must have been buried if His burial had been intended to be symbolized by the believer's immersion in and rising out of what is so often called "the liquid grave;" but He was laid away in a chamber hewn out of the rock, and a great stone was rolled to the door thereof. Surely there was nothing in the mode of our Lord's entrance into the sepulchre which resembles, in the slightest degree, the immersion of a believer under the water.

The next question is, whether the ordinance is invalidated by the notion, on the part of the recipient and the administrator both, that baptism is symbolic of the mode of our Saviour's burial. This question is presented before us in the overture in two forms: *First*, whether this apprehension solely, and *Secondly*, whether this apprehension prevailingly, is error sufficient to invalidate the ordinance.

The proper answer to both these questions we conceive to be, that the prevalence of this idea in either form is not enough to invalidate the ordinance, unless it exclude positively the true idea of baptism, viz.: that it sets forth the death of Christ. It appears to us that those who hold that baptism symbolizes Christ's burial must all do so with this apprehension, that it symbolizes his burial—he *being dead*. So long as this is the case, the Assembly cannot take it upon them to say that the erroneous conception referred to makes it necessary to repeat the baptism accompanying it, if otherwise rightly administered. That baptism does signify real pardon of sin, purification from it by His Spirit, and engrafting into Christ so that we become one with him in His dying and in His rising, there can be no question. Christ is the *matter* or *substance* of the sacrament. It sets him forth to us as crucified for us, and raised for our justification. Let these truths not be shut out of view, and the application of water to the person, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, by any duly authorized Christian minister, is valid baptism.

1865, p. 363. [Overture] dissenting from certain language used in the Minutes of the last General Assembly on the subject of valid and invalid baptism, and requesting this Assembly to make a new and more satisfactory deliverance.

[Answer:] The language from which the Presbytery dissents, that this is "the true idea of baptism, viz.: that it sets forth the death of Christ," taken by itself, is possibly liable to misapprehension. But inasmuch as the minute in question, in two or three different forms, does distinctly state the true doctrine, it is manifest that the last Assembly meant to teach that baptism "sets forth the death of Christ" by exhibiting to us the benefits thereof in their effectual application to us by the Holy Ghost. In the similar expression in the same deliverance, where it is said that baptism "sets Him (Christ) forth as crucified for us and raised again for our justification," it is evident that this language is used in the sense previously explained in the minute itself, viz.: "that baptism was designed to signify and seal our fellowship with Christ, in His death and in His resurrection, with all the benefits thereof." These expressions, thus explained, are assuredly in accordance with our Standards and with the Word of God.

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXX, PAR. 3.

1. Immersion valid.

1894, p. 197. An overture asking whether, "in discretion granted to sessions to receive members from evangelical immersion churches, it is intended to admit immersion to be the scriptural mode of baptism."

Answer: Baptism by immersion is not scriptural as to its mode; but the irregularity of this unscriptural mode does not invalidate the sacred ordinance, and persons who

have been baptized by immersion, by the authority of an evangelical church, are not required to be rebaptized by the scriptural mode of sprinkling or pouring when received into the communion of our church.

2. May a Presbyterian Minister baptize by immersion?

1872, p. 167. [In answer to an overture the following was adopted:]

Our Confession of Faith teaches that "dipping of the person into water is not necessary, but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person;" and our Directory prescribes "pouring or sprinkling water on the face of a child, without adding any other ceremony." This Assembly judges that for a Presbyterian minister to baptize by immersion is such a departure from the ways approved in our Standards as should be discouraged.

1941, p. 42. Overture asking that the General Assembly express its judgment as looking with favor upon the practice of administering baptism by immersion in behalf of candidates who request it, answered in the negative, [with reference] to Confession of Faith, [Chapter XXX, Sec. 3.]

1965, pp. 65, 120. In response to the overture, the Permanent Theological Committee makes the following recommendation to the General Assembly:

That the overture from the Presbytery of Washburn to the 1964 General Assembly (Minutes, p. 26) be answered by the following statement:

The 1871 statement of the General Assembly (Minutes, p. 30) on recognizing the validity of baptisms administered by other branches of the Church was superseded by later actions (Minutes 1882, p. 573; 1949, pp. 27, 57; 1958, pp. 26, 53, 54). By these later actions decisions for such recognition is the responsibility of Session.

The fundamental position of our Church is expressed in actions of 1864 (Minutes, p. 274) and 1865 (Minutes, p. 363) which, taken together, affirm:

"... Christ is the *matter* or *substance* of the sacrament. It sets him forth to us as crucified for us, and raised for our justification. . . . (It) was designed to signify and seal our fellowship with Christ, in his death and in his resurrection, with all the benefits thereof. . . . Let these truths not be shut out of view, and the application of water to the person, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, by any duly authorized Christian minister, is valid baptism."

Such valid baptism should be recognized by our Sessions.

In response to the overture from the Presbytery of Appomattox, the Permanent Theological Committee adopted the following statement for presentation to the General Assembly:

"The heart of this overture is the desire to modify Par. 209-6 of the Directory of Worship by including immersion along with sprinkling and pouring as approved modes of baptism. We recommend that the General Assembly decline this overture on the grounds that a change in our standards is unnecessary to accomplish the objective sought by the overture. The pertinent words are the following: 'Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person' (Westminster Confession of Faith, XXX, 3). The most natural interpretation of this statement would seem to be that immersion as defended by Calvin and other Reformed theologians is not so essential as to be the only possible mode; furthermore, in contradistinction to those who deny the validity of other modes, pouring and sprinkling are stated to be proper forms of baptism. Thus the Westminster Confession does two things: it speaks AGAINST the NECESSITY of immersion and FOR the VALIDITY of pouring and sprinkling. There is no suggestion that immersion might somehow be improper or invalid. It is therefore our judgment that our standards properly decline to elevate immersion to the plane of necessity, and also underscore the rightness of other modes of baptism, while assuming along with Calvin the propriety of immersion."

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXX, PAR. 4.

1. Infant baptism and children of the covenant.

1957, pp. 27, 45. That overture 35, requesting clarification of the doctrine and practice of infant baptism and children of the Covenant, be answered as follows:

Children of the covenant, the infant seed of believers, are, by the grace of God, heirs of the covenant relationship; and the sacrament of baptism has nothing to do with conferring that relationship upon them. Baptism is the sign and seal of a relationship already existing and the grace of God already made evident. In the words of the Confession of Faith, baptism was "ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins . . ." In the words of the Larger Catechism, "The needful but much neglected duty of improving our baptism, is to be performed by us all our life long . . ." Infant baptism is thus a seal that a child of the covenant is already ingrafted into Christ for a fruitfulness that shall continuously increase as diligence is given to improving that baptism.

The term "christening" comes from an Anglo-Saxon and Middle English word meaning simply to "baptize in a religious ceremony." However, the word has far more connotation as commonly used, and is inappropriate to Presbyterian usage.

God-parents, as commonly understood, have no place in the sacrament of baptism.

In the Presbyterian Church infant baptism cannot properly be taught and practiced as anything other than a sacrament.

"The sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered to any person," declares the Confession of Faith. Therefore, it is not proper to repeat baptism to satisfy persons influenced by groups believing only in "believer baptism" and immersion.

The only Sessional action required in infant baptism is accurate record keeping as stated in the Book of Church Order, paragraph 68. [pres. § 15-8.]

It is proper from the ecclesiastical standpoint for a minister to baptize the child of members of another church without request from its pastor or Session, but rules of courtesy and propriety should certainly be observed. The minister shall always send to the pastor or Session of the parents' own church a notice of his action in order that due spiritual oversight may be given and accurate records kept.

Non-Presbyterians, if members of another Christian church, need not become members of the Presbyterian Church before administration of baptism to their infant by a Presbyterian minister, for the covenant relationship is independent of baptism and extends to all believers. However, in such cases special care should be used in determining the motives for such request and instruction should be given as to the nature of this sacrament and as to its obligations upon both parents and congregation.

2. Non-professing parents may not present their children for baptism.

1869, p. 376. Overture: "Is it an infraction of our Standards for one of our ministers to baptize the infant child of a parent, or the ward of a guardian standing *in loco parentis*, who has not professed personal faith in Christ, but who was baptized in infancy?"

Answered in the affirmative. The Assembly would refer the Presbytery to the following portions of our Standards as reasons for this answer: first, Sec. IV of Chap. XXVIII [pres. XXX], of the Confession of Faith; secondly, the answer to the 166th

Question of our Larger Catechism; thirdly, the answer to the 95th Question of our Shorter Catechism.

3. Baptism of the children of suspended members discretionary with Sessions.

1870, p. 537. "Are the infants of suspended members, upon the application of such pended parents, to receive the ordinance of baptism before said suspension is removed?"

The following minute was adopted: The cases being so various in which the discriplinary sentence of suspension, which the Confession of Faith, Chap. XXX [pres. XXXII], defines as "suspension from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season," may be pronounced, it would be inexpedient to enact an invariable rule to cover all cases alike. The decision upon each case as it arises should be left to the discretion of the session of the church.

4. Neglect of infant baptism.

1871, p. 32. Whereas there appears to be in some portions of our Church a degree of neglect on the part of Christian parents in presenting their children, at the proper time, for baptism, which this Assembly regards as giving occasion to those who do not appreciate this holy sacrament to speak against the truth, and which is detrimental to household religion and to the spiritual interests of the children of the covenant; therefore,

Resolved, 1. That the Presbyteries composing this General Assembly, be and they are hereby, instructed to bring this subject distinctly before the minds of all our people, and take measures to ascertain to what extent parents, in their respective bounds, are forgetting their covenant vows, and send up to the next General Assembly specific reports on this subject.

2. That the publications of our Committee on the subject of baptism, and especially on infant baptism, should be disseminated and carefully read throughout our whole bounds, in order to correct the evil referred to; and that the Stated Clerks of the several Presbyteries be, and they are hereby, advised to procure and circulate such publications among their churches.

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXX, PAR. 5.

Baptizing of Quakers.

1908, p. 33. Overture respecting the baptizing of members received on certificate from the Quakers' or Friends' Church.

Answer: That, inasmuch as the Quakers or Friends do not administer the ordinance of baptism, it is the judgment of this Assembly that one of this faith seeking admission to our communion should be required to submit to this sealing ordinance.

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXX, PAR. 6.

1. Baptisms declared invalid—Unitarian, Campbellite (Christian).

1870, p. 537. *Resolved,* That a committee be appointed which shall present to the next Assembly a report of full and clear instruction to the Church on the whole subject of valid baptism, and the extent to which baptism administered by other churches should be recognized.

This committee was appointed, to consist of the Rev. Drs. R. L. Dabney, Thornton E. Peck, J. B. Adger and George Howe.

1871, p. 30. Your committee, in fulfillment of the duty above assigned them, would beg leave to refer to the (Baird's) Digest, Book III, Pt. I, Chap. 2. This chap-

ter, from the enactments of previous Assemblies, presents what appears to us to be a safe and scriptural collection of rules concerning valid and invalid baptism. We are there taught that baptism is in no case to be administered by any save a minister of the Church of Christ, called to be a steward of the mysteries of God (see Directory for Worship, Chap. VII, Sec. I.) [present § 209-2]; that baptism by a clerical imposter, who has in fact never received ordination to the ministry in any church of Christ, or by a minister duly suspended or deposed, is invalid, and so null and void; that, although the personal unworthiness of a minister officiating in any church of Christ does not invalidate the ordinances of that communion, yet peculiar and intentional profanity in the administration of a particular baptism may properly render it invalid; but in this case the church session and pastor are the best judges, and must decide from the particular circumstances whether to re-administer the sacrament in a regular manner; and that all baptisms administered in the Unitarian and Popish communions are invalid. We respectfully recommend to the Assembly to reaffirm all these rules.

The Assembly of 1870, being asked whether persons who have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity in the "Christian Church" (commonly called Campbellite), and applying for membership in our Church, shall be invariably re-baptized, did, from the same principles, answer this question in the affirmative, whereupon was adopted the resolution appointing to the undersigned the present duty.

If any other instruction to the churches is needed on "the whole subject of valid baptism, and the extent to which baptism administered by other churches should be recognized," we would respectfully submit the following:

Inasmuch as contact may hereafter arise with religious denominations now having no relations with our Church, or not even in existence at present, this instruction cannot now be given by a complete specific enumeration. It can only consist of the statement of scriptural principles which determine each case as it arises.

Our Church has always held, agreeably to the Scripture, that the administration of baptism may present irregularities or imperfections which are not to be approved, but the sacrament may still have substantial validity. It is plain from Scripture, that baptism has by the Lord Jesus Christ been given to His true visible Church catholic (see Matt. XXVIII, 19, 20; Acts ii. 41, 42; I Cor. xii. 13; Book of Government, Chap. VII [pres. § 7-1 ff]; Directory for Worship, Chap. VII, Sec. I) [pres. § 209-1 ff], and cannot be out of her pale. The administration of this sacrament may be in two ways invalidated; either by the apostasy of the body wherein it is exercised, so that this society is no true part of Christ's visible Church; or by the utter change of corruption of the element and doctrine of the sacrament. And our Assemblies have correctly held, that the form called by the Popish communion "Christian baptism" has ceased, for both reasons, to be valid; because that society is declared in Scripture to be antichrist, and Babylon, and apostate, out of which the Lord requireth His "people to come, that they may not be partakers of her plagues;" and because she hath, with superstitious design, substituted a mixed element in place of water, which Christ ordained to be used as the emblem, and hath utterly corrupted the doctrine of holy baptism into an incantation working *ex opere operato.*

In other societies, as the Unitarian, their rites may have due regularity of outward form, and yet be no valid baptism, because these bodies are not true parts of Christ's visible Church. The validity of such cases therefore depends upon the claim of the communion in which they are administered to be true churches of Jesus Christ. But the scriptural mark of a true church is its holding forth the Word of God. (See Rom. iii. 2; 1 Tim. iii. 15; Book of Government, Chap. II, Sec. II [pres. Pref. I]; Confession of Faith, Chap. XXV, Sec. III [pres. XXVII, 3].)

In view of the fact that several churches hold grave errors in connection with much saving truth, and that perhaps no church receives in everything the exact mind

of the Spirit, it may be asked with what degree of strictness or liberality this mark of a true visible Church is to be applied. It seems to us consonant with the Scriptures and the judgment of charity to answer, that so long as any communion so retains the essential truths of God's Word and the aids of the Holy Ghost as to save souls by its ministrations, it shall be held a true, though imperfect, member of His visible body. Though it may omit or impugn some principles which we have received from God, and may even deny to our ordinances all recognition, and to our communion all church character, yet we may not imitate its uncharitableness; so long as Christ visibly entrusts it with His saving Word and Spirit, we are bound to recognize it as His visible body, notwithstanding its errors, and to pray for its attainment of a more peaceable unity in the bonds of the truth. But in judging the tendency of its ordinances as a consistent whole, as set forth by this communication. If their only tendency as a whole, taken as souls, it is obviously proper that we shall estimate those ministrations as a consistent it expounds them to its members, is destructive to souls, then we cannot admit that it it a pillar and ground of saving truth, merely because of some disjointed fragments of the gospel verities, mixed with heresies which, if heartily accepted by the people as taught, must be fatal to souls; or because a few persons, through the special teaching of God's Spirit, leading them to select the spiritual meat and reject the poison, actually find Christ under those ministrations; for the proper function of a visible Church is instrumentally to communicate to its disciples spiritual discernment, and not to presuppose it; and the happy escape of these souls from damnable error is due to the special grace of God shielding them against the regular effect of these ministrations, rather than employing and blessing them. If this rule of judgment be denied, then might a valid church character possibly be established for an association of infidels investigating parts of God's Word only for purposes of cavil, since the Almighty Spirit might, against these purposes, employ those parts of the Word to awaken and convert some member.

When we examine the numerous societies founded by Mr. Alexander Campbell and his coadjutors, we find that their distinctive principle is a rejection of all use whatsoever of creeds or symbols of faith of human composition, as anti-scriptural and infringing upon liberty of conscience and Christian unity; but none the less do we find, in the teachings of their recognized founders and leaders, a particular theological system which has generally among them the virtual force of an accepted creed, even to the extent of being employed as a test of ministerial standing and rule of expulsion. The leading points of this system we find to be the following:

The inspiration of the Old and New Testaments is admitted, but the authority of the former as a rule of salvation under the new dispensation is superseded. The death of man's soul in sin, and his inability of will unto all spiritual good, are denied. A temporal sonship of Christ, with His divinity and vicarious sacrifice, are held, as also the personality and mission of the Holy Ghost as Comforter. Justification, which is defined to be remission of sins only, is on account of the merit of Christ's sacrifice alone; and this merit received by faith is first applied and sealed to the believer only in immersion, than which no other water-baptism is recognized. This faith, when genuine and justifying, always worketh by love, producing repentance unto life, but the renewing and quickening agency of the Holy Ghost in producing this faith and repentance is expressly denied, save as he exercises a moral suasion, by holding forth inducements thereto in the Scriptures, and the sinner is required to quicken himself unto the exercise of these saving graces of his own free will. For it is declared that no man can receive the Spirit until after he hath received Christ and been reconciled to him in immersion. The mission of the Holy Ghost is therefore, according to them, only to promote the comfort and sanctification of the believer after his adoption by dwelling in his soul. Regeneration is taught to be no more than the introduction of a

person into an estate of reconciliation. This, taken with other preceding propositions, manifestly abolishes the whole doctrine of effectual calling. As faith is made prerequisite to baptism in every case, infant baptism and the membership of the children of believers in Christ's Church are utterly repudiated. And as the only faith required for adult baptism is the temporary faith of the soul exercising solely its native powers (whereas the Scriptures require of adults a living faith in order to baptism), it is hard to see what part of the doctrine of baptism is left uncorrupted. While this is the system of faith which distinguishes their body, they require, as the only declared basis for Christian communion, the reception of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, expressed and sealed in immersion.

If your committee may believe the current testimony within and without these societies, while some who are admitted to them hold more, many hold less of God's saving truth than is embraced in the above erroneous and fragmentary doctrine. Such must be the result of their rejection of all symbols of belief. If this first principle be consistently carried out, any one who is willing to attest in immersion a profession of his faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son, and his Saviour, must be admitted to communion, and may be admitted to the ministry—whatever may be the sense in which he construes the terms "faith," "Messiah," "sonship to God," and "salvation"—although that construction may be Sabellian, Arian, Pelagian or Socinian. To this must be added the fact that these societies admit no theory of church government save the Independent, and no superior church courts of review and control. Whatever, then, may be the excellence of one member or one congregation in this denomination, the Christian world has no evidence or guarantee that the next is not of a far different character.

In such circumstances, even if the Assembly admitted that the system above delineated contained sufficient substance of saving truth to redeem the soul embracing it, this difficulty would remain: this communion refuses us all guarantee that the person baptized into its pale held at the time even that fragmentary outline. We are persistently left in the dark whether both he and the minister who baptized him, and the congregation which received him, may not have apprehended the Trinity whose name was used, the faith professed, and the salvation embraced, in the sense of the unbelieving Pelagian or Socinian, unless we happen to have the incidental evidence of a personal acquaintance with these several parties. In these circumstances, there appears no way for the Church to protect the testimony and sacraments of her divine Head from disparagement (a sacred duty, in the performance of which no option is left us), except to refuse to recognize in that body, as a whole, a part of Christ's true visible Church. Believing that it embraces many individuals and some congregations who are true saints of God, we sincerely regret, for the sake of these, the necessity of assuming this ground. But it is a necessity which they create, in refusing to separate themselves, by a definite testimony, from those who teach "another gospel"; for our Sovereign Lord has strictly forbidden us to bid Godspeed to such.

2. Roman Catholic baptism.

1871, p. 30. [See this Digest, preceding item.]

1884, p. 206. [Reaffirmed the action of the General Assembly of 1871.]

1909, p. 48. In view of the repeated deliverances of the Assembly in 1845, 1871 and 1884 further action is deemed unnecessary.

1914, p. 62. [The Assembly declined to rescind its action of 1884.]

1949, pp. 27, 57, 1958, pp. 26, 53. That overture (1), with reference to the validity of Roman Catholic baptism, be answered by reaffirming the action of the 1949 General Assembly which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly feels that these changes (i.e. the deletion of the reference to the Pope as the antichrist in our standards) have made little material difference in the attitude of our Church toward the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore recommends that candidates for membership in our Church from that organization be received upon confession of faith. If the candidate is satisfied with his baptism, at the discretion of the session his baptism may be deemed valid."

3. Campbellite baptism invalid, but in reception of members therefrom Sessions and Presbyteries have discretion.

1870, p. 536. "When members in good standing in the Christian Church (commonly called Campbellite), who have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, apply, with or without letters, for membership in connection with our Church, shall such persons invariably be re-baptized?"

[Answer:] The principles set forth in the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1814, concerning the baptism of Unitarians, and in the deliverance of the General Assembly of 1845, concerning Popish baptism, (see Baird's *Digest*, Book III, Secs. 12, 13, pp. 102, 103,) necessarily imply the invalidity of baptism as administered by ministers commonly known as Campbellites; and persons so baptized only by ministers of that body, coming into our connexion, should invariably be baptized before being admitted to the Lord's table.

1871, p. 30. [See this Digest, preceding item 1.]

1882, p. 573. [Overture] asking the Assembly to appoint a committee to consider the validity of Campbellite baptism, and the questions involved in a recognition of the same, with a view to rescinding the action of the Assembly of 1870 in this matter. It is recommended that the Assembly give the following answer:

The organization known as the Campbellite or Christian Church professes to receive the Scriptures as the Word of God, but has no authoritative exposition thereof, or Confession of Faith; further, as each church is absolutely independent of all the other churches, the greatest variety of doctrine must of necessity prevail. It seems difficult, therefore, to deal with the denomination as a unit or organic whole—difficult to affirm or deny anything as true or false of the whole body. To affirm that no minister of that denomination ever administers Christian baptism, is a proposition that this Assembly is not prepared to accept, and the decision of the question of how far the certificates and sacraments of the churches of that denomination are to be recognized and received must be left to the sessions and presbyteries immediately interested in the subject.

1893, p. 55. [Same action.]

4. Swedenborgian baptism not valid.

1894, p. 197. An overture asking whether "Swedenborgian baptism, or baptism performed by a minister of the Swedenborgian or New Jerusalem Church is valid?"

Answer: In the judgment of this Assembly, the Swedenborgian or New Jerusalem Church is not an evangelical branch of the Church of Christ, and baptism performed by its ministers is not valid.

5. Baptism of unconscious adults.

1871, p. 19. Is it right to baptize a person whose recovery from the delirium of fever is despaired of, but who, *immediately* before he lapsed into the delirium, professed faith in Christ, and asked to be baptized? In other words, Is it right *ever* to baptize an unconscious adult person?

Reply: The Sacraments are rational and spiritual means of grace, and cannot change the spiritual state of any soul *ex opere operato*. The Shorter Catechism (Question 94) defines baptism as "signifying and sealing our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking the benefits of the covenant of grace, *and our engagement to be the Lord's.*" The Scriptures hold out sundry instances of believers in a state of salvation without water baptism, thereby showing that it is not in every case necessary to redemption. Experience has also taught us the propriety of caution in judging professions of faith and repentance made in sickness, either favorably or adversely. For all which reasons this Assembly decides that an unconscious adult, in the condition described in the above overture, is not a suitable subject for baptism.

6. Baptism "in extremis."

1878, p. 634. Overture asking: "Is it agreeable to the faith and practice of the Presbyterian Church for a minister of the gospel to administer the sacrament of baptism to an adult *in extremis*, in case said person professes faith in Christ without being received into church membership?"

To this inquiry it is answered:

1. That the Assembly does not question the right of pastors to administer the ordinance of baptism to any who make a creditable profession of faith in Christ, but advises the exercise of great care and prudence in teaching such adult applicants as are in extreme illness the true use and meaning of this ordinance, in order that no countenance be given to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

2. As to use of baptism in admitting such persons into the Church, see Larger Catechism, Questions 165, 166, especially the clause "whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church," and "baptism is not to be administered to any out of the visible Church."

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXXIII, PAR. 3.

Church courts may err.

[See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. IV, Par. 2, Form of Govt., §§ 14-1, 16-7.]

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXXIII, PAR. 4.

The Non-secular Character of the Church.

[Cf. this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-1: *In thesi* deliverances; also, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. Wm. M. McPheeters and others.]

1. "Address to all the Churches of Jesus Christ Throughout the Earth."

1861, p. 7. On motion of Dr. Thornwell, the Assembly—

Resolved, That a committee, consisting of one minister and one ruling elder from each of the Synods belonging to this Assembly, be appointed to prepare an Address to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth, setting forth the causes of our separation from the churches in the United States, our attitude in relation to slavery, and a general view of the policy which, as a Church, we propose to pursue.

p. 9. The Moderator announced the following committee on the Address to the Churches: James H. Thornwell, D.D., Theodorick Pryor, D.D., F. K. Nash, R. McInnis, C. C. Jones, D.D., R. B. White, D.D., W. D. Moore, J. H. Gillespie, J. I. Boozer, R. W. Bailey, D.D., J. D. Armstrong, C. Phillips, Joseph A. Brooks, W. P. Finley, Samuel McCorkle, W. P. Webb, Wm. L. Black, T. L. Dunlap and E. W. Wright.

p. 19. W. P. Webb offered the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, That the Address to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the world, reported and read by the Rev. Dr. Thornwell, chairman of the special committee appointed for that purpose, be received, and is hereby adopted by this Assembly.

Resolved, That three thousand copies of this address be printed, under the direction of the Stated Clerk, for the use of the Assembly.

Resolved, That the original Address be filed in the archives of the Assembly, and that a paper be attached thereto, to be signed by the Moderator and members of this Assembly.

p. 24. On motion of Judge Shepherd, the Assembly directed that the affixing of their signatures on the part of the members to the "Address to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the Earth," should take place in connection with the regular calling of the roll tomorrow morning.

p. 51. [Following is the address:]

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the Earth, Greeting: Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied upon you!

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:

It is probably known to you that the Presbyteries and Synods in the Confederate States, which were formerly in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, have renounced the jurisdiction of that body and dissolved the ties which bound them ecclesiastically with their brethren of the North. This act of separation left them without any formal union among themselves. But as they were one in faith and order, and still adhered to their old Standards, measures were promptly adopted for giving expression to their unity, by the organization of a supreme court, upon the model of the one whose authority they had just relinquished. Commissioners, duly appointed, from all the Presbyteries of these Confederate States, met accordingly, in the city of Augusta, on the fourth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, and then and there proceeded to constitute the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, that is to say, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship, were unanimously and solemnly declared to be the Constitution of the Church in the Confederate States, with no other change than the substitution of Confederate for United wherever the country is mentioned in the Standards. The Church, therefore, in these seceded States, presents now the spectacle of a separate and independent and complete organization, under the style and title of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. In thus taking its place among sister churches of this and other countries, it seems proper that it should set forth the causes which have impelled it to separate from the Church of the North, and to indicate a general view of the course which it feels is incumbent upon it to pursue in the new circumstances in which it is placed.

We should be sorry to be regarded by our brethren in any part of the world as guilty of schism. We are not conscious of any purpose to rend the body of Christ. On the contrary, our aim has been to promote the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. If we know our own hearts, and can form any just estimate of the motives which have governed us, we have been prompted by a sincere desire to promote the glory of God, and the efficiency, energy, harmony and zeal of His visible kingdom in the earth. We have separated from our brethren of the North as Abraham separated from Lot, because we are persuaded that the interests of true religion will be more effectually subserved by two independent churches, under the circumstances in which the two countries are placed, than by one united body:

1. In the first place, the course of the last Assembly at Philadelphia conclusively shows that, if we should remain together, the political questions which divide us as citizens will be obtruded on our church courts, and discussed by Christian ministers

and elders with all the acrimony, bitterness and rancor with which such questions are usually discussed by men of the world. Our Assembly would present a mournful spectacle of strife and debate. Commissioners from the Northern would meet with commissioners from the Southern Confederacy, to wrangle over the questions which have split them into two confederacies, and involved them in furious and bloody war. They would denounce each other, on the one hand, as tyrants and oppressors, and on the other, as traitors and rebels. The Spirit of God would take His departure from these scenes of confusion, and leave the Church lifeless and powerless, an easy prey to the sectional divisions and angry passions of its members. Two nations, under any circumstances except those of perfect homogeneousness, cannot be united in one Church without the rigid exclusion of all civil and secular questions from its halls. Where the countries differ in their customs and institutions, and view each other with an eye of jealousy and rivalry, if national feelings are permitted to enter the church courts, there must be an end of harmony and peace. The prejudice of the man and the citizen will prove stronger than the charity of the Christian. When they have allowed themselves to denounce each other for their national peculiarities, it will be hard to join in cordial fellowship as members of the same spiritual family. Much more must this be the case where the nations are not simply rivals, but enemies—when they hate each other with a cruel hatred, when they are engaged in a ferocious and bloody war, and when the worst passions of human nature are stirred to their very depths. An Assembly composed of representatives from two such countries could have no security for peace, except in a steady, uncompromising adherence to the Scriptural principle, that it would know no man after the flesh; that it would abolish the distinctions of Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, and recognize nothing but the new creature in Christ Jesus. The moment it permits itself to know the Confederate or the United States, the moment its members meet as citizens of these countries, our political differences will be transferred to the house of God, and the passions of the forum will expel the spirit of holy love and of Christian communion.

We cannot condemn a man in one breath as unfaithful to the most solemn earthly interests—his country and his race—and commend him in the next as a loyal and faithful servant of his God. If we distrust his patriotism, our confidence is apt to be very measured in his piety. The old adage will hold here as in other things, *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*.

The only conceivable condition, therefore, upon which the Church of the North and South could remain together as one body, with any prospect of success, is the rigorous exclusion of the questions and passions of the forum from its halls of debate. This is what always ought to be done. The provinces of Church and State are perfectly distinct, and the one has no right to usurp the jurisdiction of the other. The State is a natural institute, founded in the constitution of man as moral and social, and designed to realize the idea of justice. It is the society of rights. The Church is a supernatural institute, founded in the facts of redemption, and is designed to realize the idea of grace. It is the society of the redeemed. The State aims at social order, the Church at spiritual holiness. The State looks to the visible and outward; the Church is concerned for the invisible and inward. The badge of the State's authority is the sword, by which it becomes a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well; the badge of the Church's authority is the keys, by which it opens and shuts the kingdom of heaven, according as men are believing or impenitent. The power of the Church is exclusively spiritual; that of the State includes the exercise of force. The constitution of the Church is a divine revelation; the constitution of the State must be determined by human reason and the course of providential events. The Church has no right to construct or modify a government for the State, and the State has no right to frame a creed or polity for the Church. They are as planets moving in different

orbits, and unless each is confined to its own track, the consequences may be as disastrous in the moral world as the collision of different spheres in the world of matter. It is true that there is a point at which their respective jurisdictions seem to meet—in the idea of duty. But even duty is viewed by each in very different lights. The Church enjoins it as obedience to God, and the State enforces it as the safeguard of order. But there can be no collision, unless one or the other blunders as to the things that are materially right. When the State makes wicked laws, contradicting the eternal principles of rectitude, the Church is at liberty to testify against them, and humbly to petition that they may be repealed. In like manner, if the Church becomes seditious and a disturber of the peace, the State has a right to abate the nuisance. In ordinary cases, however, there is not likely to be a collision. Among a Christian people there is little difference of opinion as to the radical distinctions of right and wrong. The only serious danger is where moral duty is conditioned upon a political question. Under the pretext of inculcating duty, the Church may usurp the power to determine the question which conditions it, and that is precisely what she is debarred from doing. The condition must be given. She must accept it from the State, and then her own course is clear. If Cæsar is your master, then pay tribute to him; but whether the *if* holds, whether Cæsar is your master or not, whether he ever had any just authority, whether he now retains it or has forfeited it, these are points which the Church has no commission to adjudicate.

Had these principles been steadily maintained by the Assembly at Philadelphia, it is possible that the ecclesiastical separation of the North and South might have been deferred for years to come. Our Presbyteries, many of them, clung with tenderness to the recollections of the past. Sacred memories gathered around that venerable Church which had breasted many a storm and trained our fathers for glory. It had always been distinguished for its conservative influence, and many fondly hoped that, even in the present emergency, it would raise its placid and serene head above the tumults of popular passion, and bid defiance to the angry billows which rolled at its feet. We expected it to bow in reverence only at the name of Jesus. Many dreamed that it would utterly refuse to know either Confederates or Federalists, and utterly refuse to give any authoritative decree without a "thus saith the Lord." It was ardently desired that the sublime spectacle might be presented of one Church upon earth combining in cordial fellowship and in holy love the disciples of Jesus in different and even in hostile lands. But, alas! for the weakness of man, these golden visions were soon dispelled. The first thing which roused our presbyteries to look the question of separation seriously in the face was the course of the Assembly in venturing to determine, as a court of Jesus Christ, which it did by necessary implication, the true interpretation of the Constitution of the United States as to the kind of government it intended to form. A political theory was, to all intents and purposes, propounded, which made secession a crime, the seceding States rebellious, and the citizens who obeyed them traitors. We say nothing here as to the righteousness or unrighteousness of these decrees. What we maintain is that, whether right or wrong, the Church had no right to make them; she transcended her sphere, and usurped the duties of the State. The discussion of these questions, we are sorry to add, was in the spirit and temper of partisan declaimers. The Assembly, driven from its ancient moorings, was tossed to and fro by the waves of the popular passion. Like Pilate, it obeyed the clamor of the multitude, and, though acting in the name of Jesus, it kissed the sceptre and bowed the knee to the mandates of Northern frenzy. The Church was converted into the forum, and the Assembly was henceforward to become the arena of sectional divisions and national animosities.

We frankly admit that the mere unconstitutionality of the proceedings of the last Assembly is not, in itself considered, a sufficient ground for separation. It is the consequences of these proceedings which make them so offensive. It is the door which they open for the introduction of the worst passions of human nature into the deliberations of church courts. The spirit of these proceedings, if allowed to prevail, would forever banish peace from the Church, and there is no reason to hope that the tide which has begun to flow can soon be arrested. The two Confederacies hate each other more intensely now than they did in May, and if their citizens should come together upon the same floor, whatever might be the errand that brought them there, they could not be restrained from smiting each other with the fist of wickedness. For the sake of peace, therefore, for Christian charity, for the honor of the Church, and for the glory of God, we have been constrained, as much as in us lies, to remove all occasion of offense. We have quietly separated, and we are grateful to God that, while leaving for the sake of peace, we leave it with the humble consciousness that we ourselves have never given occasion to break the peace. We have never confounded Cæsar and Christ, and we have never mixed the issues of this world with the weighty matters that properly belong to us as citizens of the kingdom of God.

2. Though the immediate occasion of separation was the course of the General Assembly at Philadelphia in relation to the Federal Government and the war, yet there is another ground on which the independent organization of the Southern Church can be amply and spiritually maintained. The unity of the Church does not require a formal bond of union among all the congregations of believers throughout the earth. It does not demand a vast imperial monarchy like that of Rome, nor a strictly universal council like that to which the complete development of Presbyterianism would naturally give rise. The Church catholic is one in Christ, but it is not necessarily one visible, all-absorbing organization upon earth. There is no schism where there is no breach of charity. Churches may be perfectly at one in every principle of faith and order, and yet geographically distinct, and mutually independent. As the unity of the human race is not disturbed by its division into countries and nations, so the unity of the spiritual seed of Christ is neither broken nor impaired by separation and division into various church constitutions. Accordingly, in the Protestant countries church organizations have followed national lines. The Calvinistic churches of Switzerland are distinct from the Reformed Church of France. The Presbyterians of Ireland belong to a different church from the Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Presbyterians of this country constitute a church, in like manner, distinct from all other churches on the globe. That the division into national churches, that is, churches bounded by national lines, is, in the present condition of human nature, a benefit, seems to us too obvious for proof. It realizes to the Church catholic all the advantages of a division of labor. It makes a church organization homogeneous and compact; it stimulates holy rivalry and zeal; it removes all grounds of suspicion and jealousy on the part of the State. What is lost in expansion is gained in energy. The Church Catholic, as thus divided, and yet spiritually one, divided, but not rent, is a beautiful illustration of the great philosophical principle which pervades all nature—the co-existence of the one with the many.

If it is desirable that each nation should contain a separate and an independent church, the Presbyteries of these Confederate States need no apology for bowing to the decree of Providence, which, in withdrawing their country from the government of the United States, has, at the same time, determined that they should withdraw from the Church of their fathers. It is not that they have ceased to love it—not that they have abjured its ancient principles, or forgotten its glorious history. It is to give these same principles a richer, freer, fuller development among ourselves than they possibly could receive under foreign culture. It is precisely because we love that Church as it was, and that Church as it should be, that we have resolved, as far as in us lies, to realize its grand idea in the country and under the government where

God has cast our lot. With the supreme control of ecclesiastical affairs in our own hands, we may be able, in some competent measure, to consummate this result. In subjection to a foreign power, we could no more accomplish it than the Church in the United States could have been developed in dependence upon the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The difficulty there would have been, not the distance of Edinburgh from New York, Philadelphia or Charleston, but the difference in the manners, habits, customs and ways of thinking, the social, civil and political institutions of the people. These same difficulties exist in relation to the Confederate and United States, and render it eminently proper that the Church in each should be as separate and independent as the governments.

In addition to this, there is one difference which so radically and fundamentally distinguishes the North and the South that it is becoming every day more and more apparent that the religious, as well as the secular, interests of both will be more effectually promoted by a complete and lasting separation. The antagonism of Northern and Southern sentiment on the subject of slavery lies at the root of all the difficulties which have resulted in the dismemberment of the Federal Union, and involved us in the horrors of an unnatural war. The Presbyterian Church in the United States has been enabled by the Divine grace to pursue, for the most part, an eminently conservative, because a thoroughly scriptural, policy in relation to this delicate question. It has planted itself upon the Word of God, and utterly refused to make slaveholding a sin, or non-slaveholding a term of communion. But though both sections are agreed as to this general principle, it is not to be disguised that the North exercises a deep and settled antipathy to slavery itself, while the South is equally zealous in its defense. Recent events can have no other effect than to confirm the antipathy on the one hand and strengthen the attachment on the other. The Northern section of the Church stands in the awkward predicament of maintaining in one breath that slavery is an evil which ought to be abolished, and of asserting in the next that it is not a sin to be visited by exclusion from the communion of the saints. The consequence is that it plays partly into the hands of abolitionists and partly into the hands of slaveholders, and weakens its influence with both. It occupies the position of a prevaricating witness whom neither party will trust. It would be better, therefore, for the moral power of the Northern section of the Church to get entirely quit of the subject. At the same time, it is intuitively obvious that the Southern section of the Church, while even partially under the control of those who are hostile to slavery, can never have free and unimpeded access to the slave population. Its ministers and elders will always be liable to some degree of suspicion. In the present circumstances, Northern alliance would be absolutely fatal. It would utterly preclude the Church from a wide and commanding field of usefulness. This is too dear a price to be paid for a nominal union. We cannot afford to give up these millions of souls, and consign them, so far as our efforts are concerned, to hopeless perdition, for the sake of preserving an outward unity which, after all, is an empty shadow. If we would gird ourselves heartily and in earnest for the work which God has set before us, we must have the control of our ecclesiastical affairs, and declare ourselves separate and independent.

And here we may venture to lay before the Christian world our views as a Church upon the subject of slavery. We beg a candid hearing.

In the first place, we would have it distinctly understood that, in our ecclesiastical capacity, we are neither the friends nor the foes of slavery, that is to say, we have no commission either to propogate or abolish it. The policy of its existence or non-existence is a question which exclusively belongs to the State. We have no right, as a Church, to enjoin it as a duty, or to condemn it as a sin. Our business is with the duties which spring from the relation; the duties of the masters on the one hand, and of their slaves on the other. These duties we are to proclaim and to enforce with

spiritual sanctions. The social, civil, political problems connected with this great subject transcend our sphere, as God has not entrusted to His Church the organization of society, the construction of governments, nor the allotment of individuals to their various stations. The Church has as much right to preach to the monarchies of Europe and the despotism of Asia, the doctrines of republican equality as to preach to the governments of the South the extirpation of slavery. This position is impregnable, unless it can be shown that slavery is a sin. Upon every other hypothesis, it is so clearly a question for the State that the proposition would never for a moment have been doubted, had there not been a foregone conclusion in relation to its moral character. Is slavery, then, a sin?

In answering this question as a Church, let it be distinctly borne in mind that the only rule of judgment is the written Word of God. The Church knows nothing of the intuitions of reason or the deductions of philosophy, except those reproduced in the sacred Canon. She has a positive constitution in the Holy Scriptures, and has no right to utter a single syllable upon any subject except as the Lord puts words in her mouth. She is founded, in other words, upon express *revelation*. Her creed is an authoritative testimony of God, and not a speculation, and what she proclaims she must proclaim with the infallible certitude of faith, and not with the hesitating assent of an opinion. The question, then, is brought within a narrow compass: Do the Scriptures directly or indirectly condemn slavery as a sin? If they do not, the dispute is ended, for the Church, without forfeiting her character, dares not go beyond them.

Now, we venture to assert that, if men had drawn their conclusions upon this subject only from the Bible, it would no more have entered into any human head to denounce slavery as a sin, than to denounce monarchy, aristocracy or poverty. The truth is, men have listened to what they falsely considered as primitive intuitions, or as necessary deductions from primitive cognitions, and then have gone to the Bible to confirm the crotchets of their vain philosophy. They have gone there determined to find a particular result, and the consequence is, that they leave with having made, instead of having interpreted, Scripture. Slavery is no new thing. It has not only existed for ages in the world, but it has existed, under ever dispensation of the covenant of grace, in the Church of God. Indeed, the first organization of the Church as a visible society, separate and distinct from the unbelieving world, was inaugurated in the family of a slaveholder. Among the very first persons to whom the seal of circumcision was affixed, were the slaves of the father of the faithful, some born in his house, and others bought with his money. Slavery again re-appears under the Law. God sanctions it in the first table of the Decalogue, and Moses treats it as an institution to be regulated, not abolished; legitimated, and not condemned. We come down to the age of the New Testament, and we find it again in the churches founded by the Apostles under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost. These facts are utterly amazing, if slavery is the enormous sin which its enemies represent it to be. It will not do to say that the Scriptures have treated it only in a general, incidental way, without any clear implication as to its moral character. Moses surely made it the subject of express and positive legislation, and the Apostles are equally explicit in inculcating the duties which spring from both sides of the relation. They treat slaves as bound to obey, and inculcate obedience as an office of religion—a thing wholly self-contradictory if the authority exercised over them were unlawful and iniquitous.

But what puts this subject in a still clearer light is the manner in which it is sought to extort from the Scriptures a contrary testimony. The notion of direct and explicit condemnation is given up. The attempt is to show that the genius and spirit of Christianity are opposed to it—that its great cardinal principles of virtue are utterly against it. Much stress is laid upon the Golden Rule and upon the general denunciations of tyranny and oppression. To all this we reply, that no principle is clearer than that

a case positively excepted cannot be included under a general rule. Let us concede, for a moment, that the laws of love and the condemnation of tyranny and oppression seem logically to involve, as a result, the condemnation of slavery; yet, if slavery is afterwards expressly mentioned and treated as a lawful relation, it obviously follows, unless Scripture is to be interpreted as inconsistent with itself, that slavery is, by necessary implication, excepted. The Jewish law forbade, as a general rule, the marriage of a man with his brother's wife. The same law expressly enjoined the same marriage in a given case. The given case was, therefore, an exception, and not to be treated as a violation of the general rule. The law of love has always been the law of God. It was enunciated by Moses almost as clearly as it was enunciated by Jesus Christ. Yet, notwithstanding this law, Moses and the Apostles alike sanctioned the relation of slavery. The conclusion is inevitable, either that the law is not opposed to it, or that slavery is an excepted case. To say that the prohibition of tyranny and oppression includes slavery, is to beg the whole question. Tyranny and oppression involve either the unjust usurpation or the unlawful exercise of power. It is the unlawfulness, either in its principle or measure, which constitutes the core of the sin. Slavery must, therefore, be proved to be unlawful before it can be referred to any such category. The master may, indeed, abuse his power, but he oppresses not simply as a master, but as a wicked master.

But, apart from all this, the law of love is simply the inculcation of universal equity; it implies nothing as to the existence of various ranks and gradations in society. The interpretation which makes it repudiate slavery would make it equally repudiate all social, civil and political inequalities. Its meaning is, not that we should conform ourselves to the arbitrary expectations of others, but that we should render unto them precisely the same measures which, if we were in their circumstances, it would be reasonable and just in us to demand at their hands. It condemns slavery, therefore, only upon the supposition that slavery is a sinful relation—that is, he who extracts the prohibition of slavery from the Golden Rule begs the very point in dispute.

We cannot prosecute the argument in detail, but we have said enough, we think, to vindicate the position of the Southern Church. We have assumed no new attitude. We stand exactly where the Church of God has always stood—from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to Christ, from Christ to the Reformers, and from the Reformers to ourselves. We stand upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Shall we be excluded from the fellowship of our brethren in other lands because we dare not depart from the charter of our faith? Shall we be branded with the stigma of reproach because we cannot consent to corrupt the Word of God to suit the intuitions of an infidel philosophy? Shall our names be cast out as evil, and the finger of scorn pointed at us, because we utterly refuse to break our communion with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with Moses, David and Isaiah, with apostles, prophets and martyrs, with all the noble army of confessors who have gone to glory from slave-holding countries, and from a slave-holding Church, without ever having dreamed that they were living in mortal sin by conniving at slavery in the midst of them? If so, we shall take consolation in the cheering consciousness that the Master has accepted us. We may be denounced, despised and cast out of the synagogues of our brethren; but while they are wrangling about the distinctions of men according to the flesh, we shall go forward in our divine work, and confidently anticipate that, in the great day, as the consequence of our humble labors, we shall meet millions of glorified spirits who have come up from the bondage of earth to a nobler freedom than human philosophy ever dreamed of. Others, if they please, may spend their time in declaiming on the tyranny of earthly masters; it will be our aim to resist the real tyrants which oppress the soul—sin and Satan. These are the foes against whom we shall find it employment enough to wage a successful war. And to this holy

war it is the purpose of our Church to devote itself with redoubled energy. We feel that the souls of our slaves are a solemn trust, and we shall strive to present them faultless and complete before the presence of God.

Indeed, as we contemplate their condition in the Southern States, and contrast it with that of their fathers before them, and that of their brethren in the present day in their native land, we cannot but accept it as a gracious providence that they have been brought in such numbers to our shores, and redeemed from the bondage of barbarism and sin. Slavery to them has certainly been overruled for the greatest good. It has been a link in the wondrous chain of Providence, through which many sons and daughters have been made heirs of the heavenly inheritance. The providential result is, of course, no justification if the thing is intrinsically wrong, but it is certainly a matter of devout thanksgiving, and no obscure intimation of the will and purpose of God, and of the consequent duty of the Church. We cannot forbear to say, however, that the general operation of the system is kindly and benevolent; it is a real and effective discipline, and without it we are profoundly persuaded that the African race in the midst of us can never be elevated in the scale of being. As long as that race, in its comparative degradation, coexists side by side with the white, bondage is its normal condition.

As to the endless declamation about human rights, we have only to say that human rights are not a fixed, but a fluctuating quantity. Their sum is not the same in any two nations on the globe. The rights of Englishmen are one thing, the rights of Frenchmen another. There is a minimum without which a man cannot be responsible; there is a maximum which expresses the highest degree of civilization and of Christian culture. The education of the species consists in its ascent along this line. As you go up, the number of rights increases, but the number of individuals who possess them diminishes. As you come down the line, rights are diminished, but the individuals are multiplied. It is just the opposite of the predicamental scale of the logicians. There comprehension diminishes as you ascend and extension increases, and comprehension increases as you descend and extension diminishes. Now, when it is said that slavery is inconsistent with human rights, we crave to understand what point in this line the slave is conceived to occupy. There are, no doubt, many rights which belong to other men—to Englishmen, to Frenchmen, to his master, for example—which are denied to him. But is he fit to possess them? Has God qualified him to meet the responsibilities which their possession necessarily implies? His place in the scale is determined by his competency to fulfil its duties. There are other rights which he certainly possesses, without which he could neither be human nor accountable. Before slavery can be charged with doing him injustice, it must be shown that the minimum which falls to his lot at the bottom of the line is out of proportion to his capacity and culture—a thing which can never be done by abstract speculation. The truth is, the education of the human race for liberty and virtue is a vast providential scheme, and God assigns to every man, by a wise and holy decree, the precise place he is to occupy in the great moral school of humanity. The scholars are distributed into classes, according to their competency and progress; for God is in history.

To avoid the suspicion of a conscious weakness of our cause, when contemplated from the side of pure speculation, we may advert for a moment to those pretended intuitions which stamp the reprobation of humanity upon this ancient and hoary institution. We admit that there are primitive principles in morals which lie at the root of human consciousness. But the question is, How are we to distinguish them? The subjective feeling of certainty is no adequate criterion, as that is equally felt in reference to crotchets and hereditary prejudices. The very point is to know when this certainty indicates a primitive cognition, and when it does not. There must, therefore, be some eternal test, and whatever cannot abide that test has no authority as a primary truth. That test is an inward necessity of thought, which, in all minds at the proper

stage of maturity, is absolutely universal. Whatever is universal is natural. We are willing that slavery should be tried by this standard. We are willing to abide by the testimony of the race, and if man, as man, has everywhere condemned it—if all human laws have prohibited it as crime—if it stands in the same category with malice, murder and theft, then we are willing, in the name of humanity, to renounce it forever. But what if the overwhelming majority of mankind have approved it? What if philosophers and statesmen have justified it, and the laws of all nations acknowledged it. What then becomes of these luminous intuitions? They are an *ignis fatuus* mistaken for a star.

We have now, brethren, in a brief compass, for the nature of this address admits only an outline, opened to you our whole hearts upon this delicate and vexed subject. We have concealed nothing. We have sought to conciliate no sympathy by appeals to your charity. We have tried our cause by the Word of God; and though protesting against its authority to judge in a question concerning the duty of the Church, we have not refused to appear at the tribunal of reason. Are we not right, in view of all the preceding considerations, in remitting the social, civil and political problems connected with slavery, to the State? Is it not a subject, save in the moral duties which spring from it, which lies beyond the province of the Church? Have we any right to make it an element in judging of Christian character? Are we not treading in the footsteps of the flock? Are we not acting as Christ and His apostles have acted before us? Is it not enough for us to pray and labor, in our lot, that all men may be saved, without meddling as a Church with the technical distinction of their civil life? We leave the matter with you. We offer you the right hand of fellowship. It is for you to accept it or reject it. We have done our duty. We can do no more. Truth is more precious than union, and if you cast us out as sinners, the breach of charity is not with us as long as we walk according to the light of the written Word.

The ends which we propose to accomplish as a Church are the same as those which are proposed by every other church. To proclaim God's truth as a witness to the nations; to gather His elect from the four corners of the earth, and, through the Word, ministers and ordinances, to train them for eternal life, is the great business of His people. The only thing that will be at all peculiar to us is the manner in which we shall attempt to discharge our duty. In almost every department of labor, except the pastoral care of congregations, it has been usual for the Church to resort to societies more or less closely connected with itself, and yet logically and really distinct. It is our purpose to rely upon the regular organs of our government, and executive agencies directly and immediately responsible to them. We wish to make the Church, not merely a superintendent, but an agent. We wish to develop the idea that the congregation of believers, as visibly organized, is the very society or corporation which is divinely called to do the work of the Lord. We shall, therefore, endeavor to do what has never yet been adequately done—bring out the energies of our Presbyterian system of government. From the Session to the Assembly, we shall strive to enlist all our courts, as courts, in every department of Christian effort. We are not ashamed to confess that we are intensely Presbyterian. We embrace all other denominations in the arms of Christian fellowship and love, but our own scheme of government we humbly believe to be according to the pattern shown in the Mount, and, by God's grace, we propose to put its efficiency to the test.

Brethren, we have done. We have told you who we are, and what we are. We greet you in the ties of Christian brotherhood. We desire to cultivate peace and charity with all our fellow Christians throughout the world. We invite to ecclesiastical communion all who maintain our principles of faith and order. And now we commend you to God and the word of His grace. We devoutly pray that the whole catholic Church may be

afresh baptized with the Holy Ghost, and that she may speedily be stirred up to give the Lord no rest until He establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

[Signed]

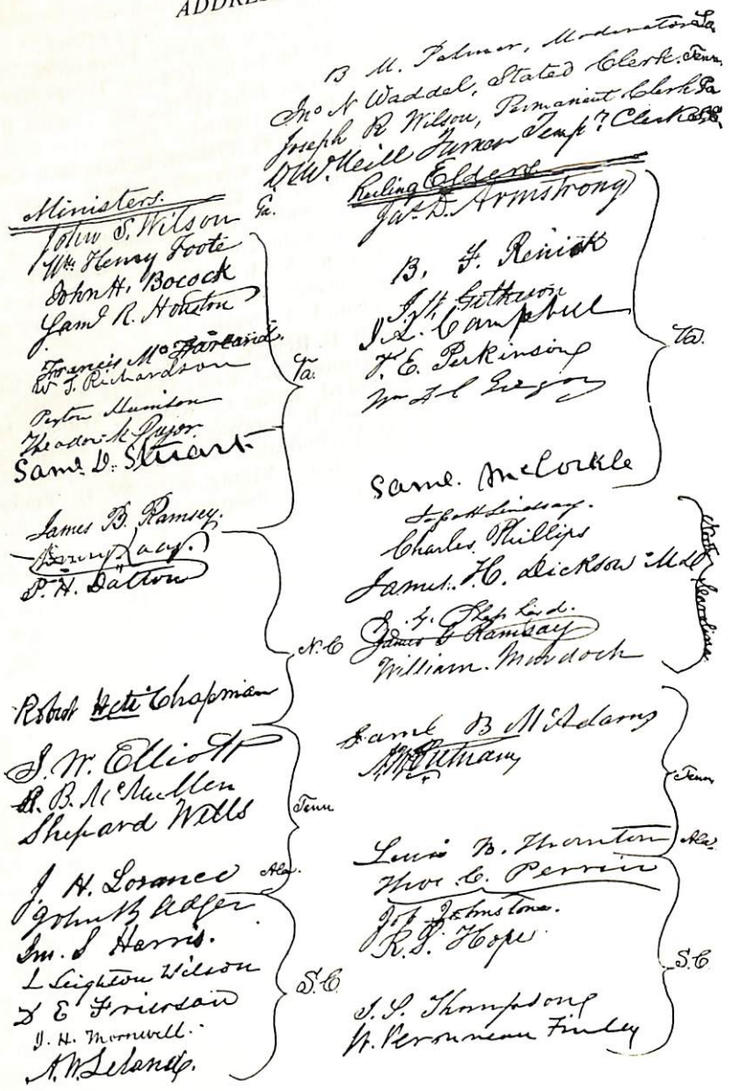
B. M. PALMER, *Moderator.*
JNO. N. WADDEL, *Stated Clerk,*
JOSEPH R. WILSON, *Permanent Clerk,*
D. MCNEILL TURNER, *Temporary Clerk.*

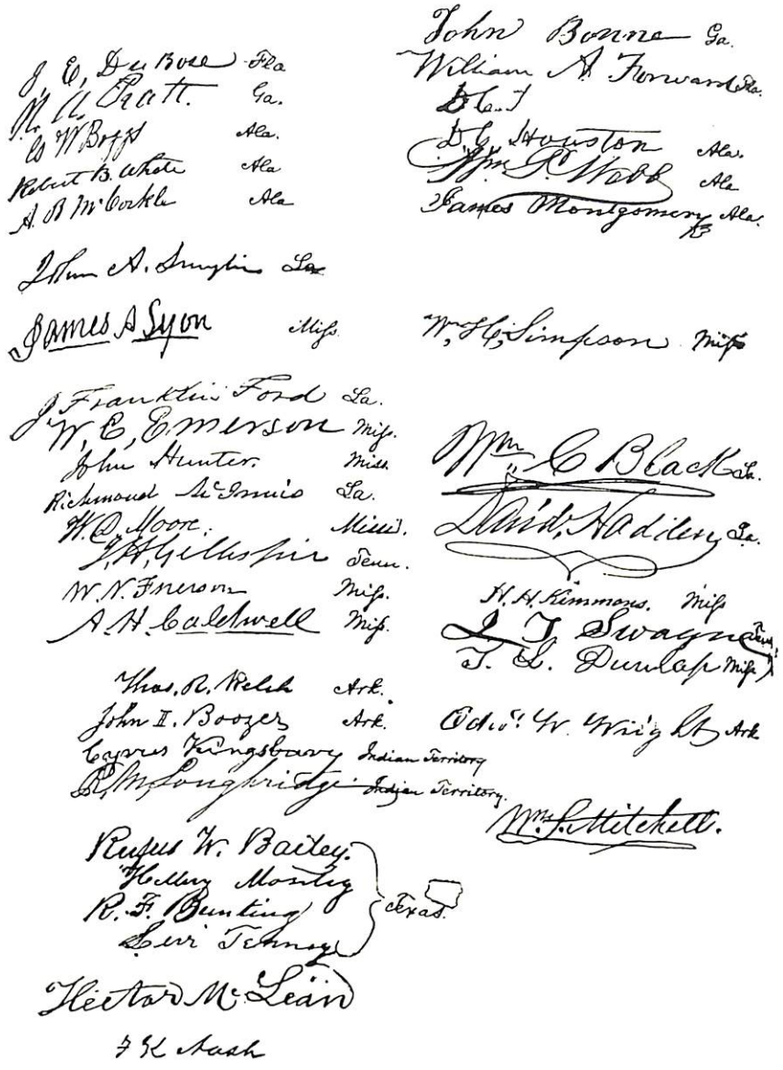
Ministers: John S. Wilson, Wm. Henry Foote, John H. Bocock, Samuel R. Houston, Francis McFarland, W. T. Richardson, Peyton Harrison, Theodorick Pryor, Samuel D. Stuart, James B. Ramsey, Drury Lacy, P. H. Dalton, Robert Hett Chapman, J. W. Elliott, R. B. McMullen, Shepard Wells, J. H. Lorance, John B. Adger, John S. Harris, J. Leighton Wilson, D. E. Frierson, J. H. Thornwell, A. W. Leland, J. E. DuBose, N. A. Pratt, G .W. Boggs, Robert B. White, A. B. McCorkle, John A. Smylie, James A. Lyon, J. Franklin Ford, W. C. Emerson, John Hunter, Richmond McInnis, W. D. Moore, J. H. Gillespie, W. N. Frierson, A. H. Caldwell, Thos. R. Welch, John I. Boozer, Cyrus Kingsbury, R. M. Loughridge, Rufus W Bailey, Hillery Moseley, R. F. Bunting, Levi Tenney, Hector McLean, F. K. Nash.

Ruling Elders: James D. Armstrong, B. F. Renick, J. W. Gilkeson, J. L. Campbell, T. E. Perkinson, Wm. F. C. Gregory, Samuel McCorkle, Jesse H. Lindsay, Charles Phillips, James H. Dickson, J. G. Shepherd, James G. Ramsey, William Murdock, Samuel B. McAdams, A. W. Putnam, Lewis B. Thornton, Thos. C. Perrin, Job Johnstone, R. S. Hope, J. S. Thompson, W. Veronneau Finley, John Bonner, William A. Forward, D. C. Houston, Wm. P. Webb, James Montgomery, W. H. Simpson, Wm. C. Black, David Hadden, H. H. Kimmons, J. T. Swayne, T. L. Dunlap, Edward W. Wright, Wm. L. Mitchell.

Facsimile signatures of Commissioners to First General Assembly of 1861 to the

ADDRESS TO THE CHURCHES





2. "Non-secular" position of the "Address" reaffirmed.

1866, p. 30. [Extract from report of Committee on Foreign Correspondence, which was adopted:]

This argument, of visibly realizing the spiritual unity of the Lord's people, is enforced by the peculiar circumstances of the times in which we live and by the nature of the controversies which now agitate the Church. The old conflict for the spirituality and independence of the Church is, to the amazement of many, renewed in our day and upon our own continent. The battle, fought generations ago by the Melvilles, Gillespies and Hendersons, of Scotland, is re-opened with singular violence, and the old banner is again floating over us with its historic inscription, "For Christ's Covenant and Crown." Upon no one subject is the mind of this Assembly more clearly ascertained, upon no one doctrine is there a more solid or perfect agreement amongst those whom this Assembly represents, than the non-secular and non-political character of the Church of Jesus Christ. Whatever ambiguous or indiscreet expressions may have been extorted under the pressure of extraordinary excitement, from individuals amongst us, the Assembly of this Church deliberately reaffirms the testimony given in the solemn Address to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the Earth, issued in 1861, during its first session in the city of Augusta, and which was pronounced in these words.

[Here follows an extract from that address, beginning with the words, "The provinces of the Church and State are perfectly distinct," and concluding with the words, "different spheres in the world of matter." For this extract, see preceding section.]

The early assertion of this radical distinction, at the very opening of our history, commits us to the maintenance and defence of the crown rights of the Redeemer, whether, on the one hand, they be usurped by the State, or whether, on the other, they be renounced by any portion of God's professing people. Summoned thus in the providence of God to contend for the same principles for which our martyr fathers of the Scottish Reformation testified even to the death, and which the fathers of the Southern Presbyterian Church labored so earnestly to secure and rejoiced in having obtained their full recognition by the civil government in America, it would be most happy if all those in the different branches of the Presbyterian family who are called to renew the protest could be united in one homogeneous body for the reassertion of Christ's royal supremacy in and over His spiritual kingdom, the Church. The scattered testimony of separate and individual witnesses would deepen in intensity if gathered into one volume, and rolled against those who would place the crown of Jesus uopn the head of Cæsar. In view of all which, this Assembly would tender the hand to all who are of like mind with us as to the doctrines of grace and as to the order and discipline of God's house; that as one compacted Church we may oppose a breakwater against the current which is sweeping from its moorings our common Protestantism, until the doctrine of the Church as a free spiritual commonwealth shall regain its ascendancy, not only over the Presbyterian, but over the whole American Protestant mind.

3. Official utterances of the Assembly on the independence of the Church published.

1870, p. 542. The Committee of Publication is instructed to publish, in tract form, the public official utterances of our Assemblies in relation to the spirituality and independence of the Church, including the Address of the Assembly of 1861 to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the World, and the Pastoral Letter now to be issued from this Assembly, and such other papers as the committee may deem needful to explain the references in said letter.

1871, p. 64. [The Executive Committee reported that it had so done, and that it had added extracts from proceedings of the Old School Assembly from 1861 to 1867.]

[A second edition contained, also, extracts from the proceedings of the New School Assembly of the same period.]

4. Committee to review the testimonies of the Assembly as to the non-political character of the Church.

1875, p. 45. Whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States did, at its first organization, in 1861, and also at various times since, formally and distinctly declare its conviction as to the nature and functions of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, especially as to its non-secular and non-political character; and whereas, notwithstanding this, it may be that certain expressions have been inadvertently admitted into some of the papers on our records which, as it is alleged, are not consistent with the well-considered and formal views aforesaid; therefore,

Resolved, That this subject be referred to a committee of three, whose duty it shall be to make a careful examination and report to the next General Assembly, to the end that no vestige of anything inconsistent with the clearly defined position of our General Assemblies may be left to impair the testimony of our Church upon this vital point.

1876, p. 232. [The report of this committee (p. 285 ff.) was received; the Summary thereof was adopted; the extended report, without being formally adopted, was given the "hearty approval" of the Assembly.]

[Ed. note: The Summary (p. 233) reaffirms the "Address to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the Earth" of 1861 (see this Digest, Sec. 50a), as declaring "our position concerning the character of the Church as a spiritual body, and therefore 'non-secular and non-political'." It deals specifically with our Church's position on slavery.

The full report (p. 285 ff.) cites actions of former Assemblies: The Address to all the Churches (1861, p. 51 ff.); the Pastoral Letter of 1865 (1865, p. 382 ff.); the report of the Committee of Foreign Correspondence of 1866 (1866, p. 30); and the Letter of the Synod of Kentucky to the General Assembly at the time of uniting with it (1867, p. 144, 178.) It extracts and comments upon expressions of the Minutes allegedly inconsistent with the above declarations, particularly regarding slavery.

For the Summary in full and for the second part of the full report, see 1945 Digest, Form of Govt., Miscel. Pastoral Letters and Deliverances, Sec. 6b.]

5. Restudy of the "Distinctive Principles" of Church.

1908, p. 19. (Report approved and recommendations adopted:)

1907, pp. 120, 121.

We have examined carefully a large mass of material and documents found in the Digest of the Assembly's Minutes and other sources of our history, and have selected the following papers which, we believe, contain the leading distinctive principles and positions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States:

I. PAPERS FORMALLY SETTING FORTH THE PRINCIPLES TO WHICH OUR CHURCH IS PLEDGED.

1. Address to All the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the Earth. [See 1861, pp. 51 ff., or this Digest, Sec. 1 above.]
2. Pastoral Letter of 1865. [See 1865, pp. 382 ff.]
3. Pastoral Letter of 1866. [Ed. note: There was no pastoral letter. 1866, p. 37, ordered preparation of a study of these principles, but the committee was excused, 1867, p. 139, for failure to comply with instructions and was discharged. This is

evidently a reference to the report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, 1866, pp. 30 ff.]

4. Letter from the Synod of Kentucky. [See 1867, pp. 178 ff.]
5. Our Response. [See 1867, pp. 133, 143 ff.]

II. PAPERS RELATING TO OUR UNION WITH OTHER BODIES.

1. Terms of union with the United Synod of the South. [See 1863, p. 137; 1864, pp. 253, 270 ff.]
2. Terms of union with Patapsco Presbytery. [See 1867, p. 131.]
3. Letter from the Synod of Kentucky. [See 1867, pp. 178 ff.]
4. Our Response. [See 1867, pp. 133, 143 ff.]
5. Letter from the Synod of Missouri. [Ed. note: The matter referred to is in the Minutes of 1867, but the *letter* is not included.]
6. Our Response. [See 1867, p. 149.]

III. PAPERS RELATING TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH OTHER CHURCHES.

1. With Cumberland Presbyterian Church. [See 1866, pp. 15, 30, 31, 33; 1867, pp. 133, 135, 172 ff.]
2. With the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.:
   (a) Action of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., in 1869. [See Minutes of the General Assembly, U.S.A., 1869, p. 1159.]
   (b) Action of the Re-united Assembly. [See 1870, p. 516.]
   (c) Action of our Assembly on the same, and Pastoral Letter of 1870. [See 1870, pp. 529, 537 ff.]
   (d) Action of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. in 1873. [See 1874, p. 500.]
   (e) Action of our Assembly on the same. [See 1874, pp. 501 ff.]
   (f) Minutes of the Baltimore Conference. [See 1875, pp. 75 ff.]
3. Subsequent papers touching upon Union or Co-operation.
   (a) Report of the Committee of Inquiry. [See 1888, pp. 382, 456 ff.]
   (b) Report of the Committee on Co-operation. [See 1889, pp. 650 ff.]

IV. PAPERS EMBODYING ACTIONS OF OUR ASSEMBLY THAT HAVE BEEN ANIMADVERTED UPON.

1. Pastoral Letter of 1862. [See 1862, pp. 35 ff.]
2. Minutes of 1863 on the death of Gen. Thomas J. Jackson. [See 1863, pp. 152 ff.]
3. Extracts from the Minutes of 1861—1864.
4. Answer of our Assembly to Animadversions on foregoing. [For these two above see 1876, pp. 232 ff.]

V. PAPERS EMBODYING ACTIONS OF THE O. S. AND N. S. BODIES, U. S. A., TO THE LANGUAGE OR PRINCIPLES TO WHICH WE TOOK EXCEPTION.

1. Extracts from the Proceedings of the O.S. Assembly of 1861-1867.
2. Extracts from the Proceedings of the N.S. Assembly of 1861-1866.

As we have studied these documents, we have become convinced that in order to make them of most value to the Church, at present, and intelligible for the generations to come, they ought to be carefully edited and each document prefaced by a statement of the historical circumstances under which it was written. This editorial work lies without the province of the present Committee, if it confines itself to the instructions given in the Assembly's resolution. The conviction has also grown on us that it would be an almost interminable task for the Assembly to reissue these documents under its direct auspices and supervision, as each document would have to be read and discussed in the open Assembly, if we would do our work intelligibly. We therefore recommend:

1. That the Assembly appoint a committee of five who shall now take charge of this work and edit these papers which we have selected, and any others which, in their judgment, ought to be included, in such way as they believe will make them of most value to our church at present, and most intelligible to future generations.
2. That the Assembly direct the Committee of Publication to issue and put on sale a thousand copies of this volume when the Committee has finished its editorial work.

1909, pp. 16, 125. The papers which were listed in five groups in the Minutes of the Assembly of 1907 were distributed, a group to each member, among the several members of the Committee. After a careful examination of all the papers, the Committee came to the unanimous conclusion that it was both unnecessary and unwise to republish all of them in the manner contemplated in the resolutions. We do not believe there is urgent need in our Church for such a volume; the expense attending its publication would be great and the sale small; and, moreover, the advertisement thus given to many of the documents mentioned would be productive of more harm than good. The object of the Assembly to promote among our people an intelligent study of our history and the principles for which we stand can, in the judgment of the Committee, be better secured by a new edition of the Digest.

6. Reaffirmation of principle.

1935, pp. 33, 109. [From the call to the Church in connection with the Diamond Jubilee, 1936:] First of all, the Assembly reaffirms unwavering faith in the Lordship of Christ, in the Spiritual Nature of the Church, and in its Worldwide Mission, cardinal principles emphasized by our first General Assembly.
1936, pp. 36, 94. [Reaffirmed.]

7. The Church should not seek the intervention of the civil powers.

1883, p. 24. [In reply to an overture touching the observance of the Sabbath, the following was adopted:]

While recognizing the right of members of the Church, as citizens, to bring the matter of the observance of the Sabbath to the notice of the civil government, by petition or otherwise, yet it is the judgment of the Assembly that it is not competent for the Church, in its organic capacity, to seek the intervention of the civil powers for the accomplishment of any of the ends before it, as a witness for the truth of God. The Assembly would furthermore deprecate all action which might be construed as committing the Church to any alliance with associations or societies outside of its pale for the accomplishment of this, or any other object, however worthy in itself.

8. Church courts free under "non-secular" principle in their choice of mode of dealing with moral questions.

1910, p. 45. Your Commission in voting "not to sustain" did not mean to recede from or compromise the principle of non-intrusion into civil affairs or affairs which concern the Commonwealth, but to leave our courts free as to the mode of dealing with a gigantic moral evil, which mode, in this case, was the urging upon our people in the State of Alabama to vote for constitutional prohibition.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of W. I. Sinnott.]

9. "Cases extraordinary" to be settled according to the nature of each case.

1911, p. 33. "Cases extraordinary" are to be decided according to the nature of each case, and when the General Assembly has determined that question in any concrete case it is not competent for any subsequent Assembly to question such decision by a re-hearing of the same case.

10. Actions typical of application of "non-secular" principle.

1861, p. 18. [Approved clause in Constitution of Confederate States which forbids Congress to enact any law respecting a religious establishment.]

1866, p. 13. [Does not enjoin observance of days of fasting, thanksgiving and prayer, when designated by the civil magistrate, but remitted determination of the question, in each case, to our church sessions.]

1884, p. 209. [Sustained the Synod of South Georgia and Florida in excepting the minutes of the Presbytery of St. Johns, p. 124, to wit: "Resolved, That all our sessions be requested to call the attention of the executors of the law and the grand juries of the courts to the statutes enacted by the Legislature touching the Sabbath; that they take such measures as wisdom and prudence suggest to have the offenders brought to justice, and the laws of God and the State vindicated."]

1892, p. 439. [No action on request concerning proposed additional amendment to the Constitution of the United States.]

1903, p. 500. [Refused to appoint a committee to take up the question of Sabbath observance with the executive departments of our government, with the Senate and the House of Representatives.]

1912, p. 70g. [Answered resolution proposed concerning political deliverances by church courts:] Inasmuch as the General Assembly is on record, having already made numerous deliverances on this subject, we would refer this Assembly to these deliverances.

1919, pp. 17, 39, 55; 1920, p. 61. [Refused request to petition government for an amendment to the Constitution of the United States recognizing the Lord Jesus Christ.]

1922, p. 33. [No action on communication from the International Reform Bureau concerning certain laws now before the Congress of the United States.]

1922, p. 77. [Exception to Minutes of the Synod of Mississippi, p. 39, appealing for vote on *mort main* statute:] Your Committee is of the opinion that the above appeal, made to the citizenship of the State to influence them in a civil matter, is contrary to the letter and spirit of our Constitution.

1925, p. 67. In response to the overture protesting against lobbying to influence legislation by organizations in which we as a church have representation, the Assembly replies that it hereby reaffirm its cordial belief in the spirituality of the Church and urges all who represent us in such organization to use all their wisdom and prudence in securing observance of this principle. When such principle is violated they should make prompt protest and then report to the subsequent General Assembly full specification and details of such violations by the body or organization concerned.

1939, p. 67. [Overture] asking the General Assembly to petition the President of the United States to guard against any diplomatic act that would violate the principle of the separation of Church and State, answered in the negative; since the time-honored principle of our church is absolute separation of Church and State.

p. 67. [Answered in negative overture to petition Congress regarding the "Social Security Act" including the Church.]

1940, p. 46. [To 15 overtures requesting protest against appointment of a personal representative of the President of the United States to the Vatican answered:] The General Assembly does not consider this a proper time or occasion for the exercise of its right of "humble petition in cases extraordinary."

1941, p. 42. [Answered in negative request for appeal to the Congress of the United States to so amend the Selective Service and Training Act as to place all clergymen in the same category of eligibility as all others.]

1942, p. 75. [Answered in affirmative overture asking the Assembly to petition the authorities of the Selective Service System to exempt candidates for the ministry.]

1943, p. 129. [Report of Ad Interim Committee indicated that the above petition had been granted by Selective Service System authorities.]

[See also this Digest under Miscel. Pastoral Letters and Deliverances by the General Assembly.]

THE CATECHISMS.

[Ed. note: Several amendments to both Larger and Shorter Catechisms were proposed during the period of revision of the Confession, 1937—1941. Only one was enacted, to Larger Catechism, Question 156. Punctuation changes were made 1944, pp. 52-5.]

1. The Shorter Catechism to be taught.

1875, p. 31. Sessions are urged to see that the Catechisms of our Church are taught in the Sabbath Schools under their care.

1884, p. 229. That presbyteries require sessions to give more general attention to the study of the Standards of our Church, especially of the Catechism.

1894, p. 225. The Executive Committee is requested, in the preparation of the questions and comments on the lessons, to indicate and enforce more clearly the doctrines of our Church, and to incorporate the questions in the Shorter Catechism which are germane to the lesson in hand.

1926, p. 60. [Overture] concerning the encouragement of teaching Catechisms in the church answered in the affirmative.

1930, p. 55. [Overture] that emphasis be laid on the teaching of the Catechism in the Sunday School, answered in the affirmative.

1955, p. 82. That the sessions of all the churches be urged to remind parents and church school teachers of the importance of preparing themselves for their responsibilities by making a careful study of the Shorter Catechism, and encourage its being taught in the home to children and young people.

1956, pp. 30, 64. We would record our sympathy with the purpose of this overture and our belief that the catechisms and standards of our church should be widely and continuously studied. Because our Board of Christian Education is continuously studying this matter and seeking to encourage the widest possible knowledge and use of the catechisms, and the Confession of Faith, and because the General Assembly of 1955 laid this responsibility specifically upon the sessions of individual churches, we deem it unnecessary to take further action at this time.

1958, pp. 34, 72. [Overture that] the General Assembly ask its Board of Christian Education to seek ways and means of more effectively teaching the catechisms. Answered in the affirmative.

[Ed. note: The above are but typical of many expressions of the Assembly. See also requirement of D.W.W. §§ 218-2.]

2. Bibles for children who repeat the Shorter Catechism.

1891, p. 251. We approve the action of the Executive Committee to induce the children to commit the Shorter Catechism, by promising as a reward a Bible to every child who will repeat perfectly, from memory, the whole Shorter Catechism.

1892, p. 444. [The Executive Committee was instructed] to give a Bible, or some suitable book on Presbyterian history, to every child who shall commit to memory and recite perfectly the Shorter Catechism, and a new Testament, or some suitable

book on Presbyterian history, to every child who shall commit to memory and recite perfectly the Introduction to the Shorter Catechism.

1908, p. 51. [Overture] concerning the supplying of those schools desiring the American Revision of the Bible and Testaments as rewards for memorizing the Catechism, we recommend that it be answered in the affirmative.

3. Restating Shorter Catechism refused.

1965, pp. 28, 77. That Overture 59 requesting an Ad Interim Committee to study the advisability of restating the Westminster Shorter Catechism be answered in the negative.

THE CREED.

[Ed. note: Although the fact is apparently not recognized, the "Apostles' Creed" is a *part* of the Standards of our Church. In the action of 1861, p. 7, the Assembly declared that: "the Confession of Faith, [etc.], which together make up the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, are the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, only substituting the term 'Confederate States' for 'United States'." The Creed was part of that Confession, having been adopted by the Westminster Assembly as part of the Shorter Catechism, and in America adopted by the General Synod in 1729 and in 1788 (See 'The Presbyterian Digest,' 1938, note on p. 69.).]

1. Action showing misconception of nature of the Creed.

1904, p. 20. [Overture asking] the Assembly to enjoin its Committee of Publication from printing in catechisms and other Sunday-school literature, what is commonly called "The Apostle's Creed."

Answered in the negative.

2. "Descended into Hell."

1878, p. 652. The Assembly does not regard it as necessary to omit in the future publications of our Church the phrase in the Creed, "He descended into hell," since the phrase objected to as liable to misinterpretation is satisfactorily explained, as published by us, in a foot-note, by a quotation from the answer to the 50th question of the Larger Catechism.

1910, p. 66; 1944, pp. 28, 52; 1952, pp. 27, 52; 1964, pp. 27, 80. [Similar action.]

3. "Catholic."

1944, pp. 28, 52. [Overture] to instruct that in all future printings of the Apostles' Creed in any literature of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, that the following changes be made:

1. That the word "again" be deleted so that it will read "the third day He arose from the dead."
2. That instead of "Holy Ghost," "Holy Spirit" be substituted.
3. That the phrase "the holy catholic church," be changed to read "the holy universal church."

Answered in the negative.

1953, pp. 25, 52. [Overture] that the words "Holy world-wide Church" be substituted for the words "Holy Catholic Church."

Answered in the negative.

1964, pp. 27, 80. [Refers a similar request to the] statements concerning the "Catholic" or "Universal," Church in Chapter XXVII of the Confession of Faith.

MISCELLANEOUS DELIVERANCES OF DOCTRINAL NATURE.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-1 ff.]

1. Pastoral letter against errors.

1898, p. 232. Whereas error in many subtle forms exists around us, and may invade the church, to the injury of her doctrine, polity, spirituality and morality; and Whereas the General Assembly is to "recommend measures for the promotion of charity, truth and holiness through all the churches under its care," therefore be it *Resolved*, 1. That a committee is hereby appointed to address a pastoral letter to our ministers and people, affectionately warning them against all errors, and urging them to steadfastness in "the faith once delivered to the saints."

2. That all the papers of our church are hereby requested to publish said letter, and all our pastors are requested to read it to their congregations as soon as practicable after its publication; and where churches are vacant, that the elders be requested to read it to them.

2. No general deliverance granted.

1924, p. 63. Overture asking the Assembly to make a declaration concerning certain paramount doctrines of the Christian Church.

Answer: Because of the clarity and fullness of the presentation of Christian truth in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and in the absence of any disposition to question the fundamental truths as set forth in these symbols of our faith, the General Assembly simply reaffirms its faith in the great fundamentals of our Church as set forth in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and declines to make additional declarations of doctrine.

[Ed. note: This was the year of the Auburn Affirmation.]

[Cf. This Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-1.]

3. Universalists denied use of our church buildings.

1891, p. 230. [Overture:] Is it lawful for a church session to grant the use of the church building to the Universalists for holding religious services:

Answered in the negative.

4. Recognition of "Assembly of God" and "Adventist Church" left to discretion of Sessions.

1932, p. 44. Overture asking the Assembly to make a deliverance on the matter of recognizing as an Evangelical denomination the churches generally known as the "Assembly of God" and others of similar name. [Answer:] It is felt that this matter can best be decided by pastors and sessions in local situations.

1933, p. 48. [Overture concerning the Adventist Church, answered by referring the Presbytery to the action of 1932 above.]

5. Dispensationalism and premillenarianism.

1937, pp. 26, 46. [Overtures:] Inasmuch as in some sections of our Church there is undue emphasis upon teachings, commonly known as dispensationalism and extreme premillenarianism, which are non-confessional, if not anti-confessional, and certainly not in keeping with the best traditions and peculiar genius of Calvinism and the Presbyterian Church, the Presbyteries of Lexington-Ebenezer and Mississippi overture the General Assembly to recommend to the presbyteries that they continue to use extreme care and caution with regard to accepting candidates and licentiates coming from institutions definitely known to be tainted with these erroneous and subversive teachings; and to exercise their prerogative in turning candidates for the ministry away from such institutions.

In answer to [these] overtures the General Assembly calls the attention of the Church to the solemn responsibility of raising up, qualifying and training the future ministry of the church.

1944, pp. 123-7. The question as to whether the type of Bible interpretation known as dispensationalism is in harmony with the Confession of Faith.

The Ad Interim Committee appointed by the Assembly to consider this question (Minutes, 1941, p. 60; 1943, p. 46) presents the following report.

Before calling attention to certain doctrines which we believe to be out of accord with the Standards of our Church, we desire to define the terms DISPENSATION and DISPENSATIONALISM.

The word "Dispensation" is used by both the Confession of Faith and by Dispensationalism. Both systems use it in the sense of "an administration" of some purpose or plan of God, but they differ on the question of *what is administered.*

That which is "administered" is made very plain in the Confession of Faith (Ch. VII, Sec. 5-6), where, speaking of the Covenant of Grace, we read, "This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel: under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, . . .

Under the gospel, when Christ the substance, was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed, are the preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper; . . . There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations."

Here it will be seen that the administration of God's purpose under the law (the O. T. dispensation) is stated to be different in *form,* as we know it was in organization and ceremony, from the administration under the gospel (our own dispensation), but the point which the Confession of Faith emphasizes is that these two dispensations do not *differ in substance,* but there is *only one and the same Covenant of Grace* to be administered under the various dispensations. Students of the Reformed Faith have differed as to the number of dispensations into which we may properly divide the dealing of God with man since the fall; but they have all agreed, in accordance with our Confession of Faith, that these various dispensations are all administrations of *one and the same Covenant of Grace.*

The opposing viewpoint, on the other hand, as presented by Dr. L. S. Chafer, is as follows: "Since there is so much in the Confession of Faith which is in no way related to this discussion and which is the common belief of all, the issue should yet be narrowed to the difference which obtains between Dispensationalism and Covenantism. The latter is that form of theological speculation which attempts to unify God's entire program from Genesis to Revelation under one supposed Covenant of Grace. That no such covenant is either named or exhibited in the Bible and that the covenants which are set forth in the Bible are so varied and diverse that they preclude a one-covenant idea, evidently does not deter many sincere men from adherence to the one-covenant theory." (Chafer, *Bibliotheca Sacra,* editorial on "Dispensational Distinctions Challenged," Vol. 100, No. 399, p. 338.)

Thus the "various and diverse" covenants are set over against the "one Covenant of Grace," i.e., one plan of salvation, which is central to our Church's view of the teaching of the Bible. All acquainted with dispensational thought know what Dispensationalists mean by their rejection of the Covenant of Grace; they do not hold that God has one plan of salvation for all men, but that He has had various and diverse plans for different groups. (Chafer, *Grace,* p. 135.) Some of the chief points of divergence will be pointed out below.

DISPENSATIONALISM, therefore, as shown above, rejects the doctrine that God has, since the fall, but one "plan of salvation" for all mankind and affirms that

God has been through the ages "administering" various and diverse plans of salvation for various groups.

Such dispensational teaching is expounded by many in our day, but we shall limit our quotations to the writings of two outstanding exponents of Dispensationalism: Dr. C. I. Scofield (especially as found in certain notes in the *Scofield Reference Bible*) and Dr. L. S. Chafer, who has written extensively on this subject. They both teach a dispensational view of God's various and divergent plans of salvation for various groups in different ages, although they do not agree on all inferences which may be drawn from this fundamental starting point.

I

This Fundamental Divergence of Dispensationalism From the Covenant Theology of the Presbyterian Church Manifests Itself in Many Ways, Some of Which Are the Following:

A. The Rejection of the Unity of God's people.

1. The Confession of Faith clearly teaches that God has one people who were brought into saving relations with Him, some under the law, others under the gospel dispensation. The Confession of Faith calls this one people of God "The Church." (*Confession of Faith,* Ch. XXV, Sec. 2.) Whatever may be the national destiny of the Jewish people, according to the Confession of Faith their becoming a spiritual blessing to the world and to the Church will be contingent upon their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah and thereby becoming a part of the Church.

2. Dispensationalism teaches that God has at least two distinct peoples, namely the Jewish Nation and the Christian Church. He has distinctly different purposes for them, and each of these two peoples is united to Him by various and diverse covenants quite different in character. (*Dispensationalism* reprinted from *Bibliotheca Sacra,* No. 372, Vol. 93, p. 396 ff., esp. p. 448.)

B. The Rejection of One Way of Salvation.

1. The Confession of Faith teaches that there is but one plan of salvation—that men are saved only in Christ, by grace through faith. (*Confession of Faith,* Ch. III, Sec. 5; VII, Sec. 3; VIII, Sec. 6; X, Sec. 1, 2, 4.)

2. Dispensationalism, magnifying the distinction which is made between law and grace (*which dispensationalists hold to be mutually exclusive*—Chafer, *Grace,* p. 231 ff.), agrees that men are NOW saved by grace through faith, but teaches that in other dispensations men have been saved by "legal obedience." The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation, but acceptance or rejection of Christ . . ." (*Scofield Reference Bible,* p. 1115; also see Chafer, *Dispensationalism,* pp. 415-16; *Grace,* pp. 123, 124-126.) It also holds that after the present age of grace, there will be a reversion in the kingdom age to an extreme system of meritorious obligation. (Chafer, *Dispensationalism,* pp. 416, 440, 441, 443; *Grace,* p. 223.)

C. The Rejection of One Destiny for All of God's People.

1. The Confession of Faith teaches that God's people, the righteous, go into "everlasting life" (*Confession of Faith,* Ch. XXXIII, Sec. 2) which is also spoken of as "an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven." (*Confession of Faith,* Ch. VII, Sec. 5.) The wicked shall be cast into everlasting torment. Such is the final destiny of the saved and the lost, and the Confession of Faith nowhere suggests that the saved are divided into different and distinct groups which will enjoy different blessings according to the purpose of God.

2. Dispensationalism teaches that the two groups of God's people, the Jewish Nation and the Christian Church, are entirely distinct bodies, and in the millennial kingdom will enjoy different blessings, the Jews enjoying earthly and material blessings, and the Church spiritual and heavenly blessings. Some Dispensationalists, like Dr.

Chafer, continue this distinction into destiny into eternity, holding that in eternity there are three groups: the lost in hell, the earthly people of God on earth forever, and the Church, the heavenly people of God in heaven forever. (*Dispensationalism*, p. 448.)

D. The Rejection of the Bible as God's one Revelation to His One People.

1. The writers of the Confession of Faith had not heard of the Dispensational method of "rightly dividing the word of truth" for it was not taught in their day. However, all acquainted with the view of the Reformed Church know that the Church has held that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." (Hebrews 1:12) The Confession of Faith states that God has given His people (which the Confession of Faith calls the Church) a unified and progressive revelation, culminating in the revelation in Christ, and most clearly expressed in the New Testament which was written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit who led the Apostles to see the purpose of God in Christ. (*Confession of Faith*, Ch. I, Sec. 1, 2; VII, Sec. 6.)

2. Dispensationalism rejects both the unity of God's revelation and the fact that God's purpose is "held forth with more fullness" (*Confession of Faith*, Ch. VII, Sec. 6) in the New Testament than it is in the Old. Dispensationalism holds that large portions even of the New Testament are for the Jewish Nation, not for the Church. In speaking of the Scriptures for the Church, Dr. Chafer says, "The Scriptures addressed specifically to this company are the Gospel by John—especially the upper room discourse,—the Acts and the Epistles." (*Dispensationalism*, pp. 406-07.) Dispensationalism declares that the Sermon on the Mount is for the Jews of the Kingdom period, and is "law not grace." (*Scofield Reference Bible*, pp. 989, 1230; *Dispensationalism*, p. 443.) The Lord's Prayer and the Great Commission are assigned by some to the Jews of the "tribulation" period, and not to the Church. (*Grace*, pp. 174, 176, 179, 181.)

II

THERE ARE ALSO DISPENSATIONAL DIVERGENCIES FROM THE CONFESSIONAL INTERPRETATION OF THE WORK OF THE EXALTED CHRIST

A. The Confession of Faith speaks of the kingly work of Christ and what is included in the exaltation of Christ. A study, for example, of answers 26 and 28 of the *Shorter Catechism* will show that Christ, "sitting on the right hand of God the Father," is now exercising His kingly function, "in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies." (It should be noted that the *Larger Catechism*, in answer to question 45, devotes twice as much space to His kingly as to the prophetic and priestly work.)

The second function of the Exalted Christ taught by our Confession of Faith is His coming to judge the world at the last day. This "judgment" naturally is the climax of his victorious activity in "subduing all his and our enemies." All that then remains will be the pronouncement of the final verdict.

B. Dispensationalism rejects or minimizes the present kingly office of Christ, and deviates from the conception of the Resurrection and Judgment, as set forth in our Standards.

1. Dispensationalism teaches that Christ is not now exercising His kingly power, but is only Head of the Church. It reserves the kingly work of "subduing his and our enemies" exclusively to the kingdom dispensation which will follow his second advent. (*Scofield Reference Bible*, note on p. 990.)

2. The Confession of Faith speaks of the Resurrection as follows: "At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed; and all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies, . . ." (*Confession of Faith*, Ch. XXXII, paragraph

II.) The *Larger Catechism*, in answer to question 88, states that "Immediately after the resurrection shall follow the general and final judgment of angels and men, . . ." In dealing with the Judgment, the Confession of Faith says, "God hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged: but likewise all persons, that have lived upon the earth, shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil." (*Confession of Faith*, Ch. XXXIII, paragraph I. See answers to questions 85, 86, 87, 88 of *Larger Catechism*.)

Dispensationalism teaches a series of resurrections and judgments, spaced over more than a thousand years. It is the opinion of your Committee that the above statement of the Confession of Faith does not admit of a multiplicity of resurrections and judgments as taught by many Dispensationalists.

CONCLUSION:

It is the unanimous opinion of your Committee that Dispensationalism as defined and set forth above is out of accord with the system of the doctrine set forth in the Confession of Faith, not primarily or simply in the field of eschatology, but because it attacks the very heart of the Theology of our Church, which is unquestionably a Theology of one Covenant of Grace. As Dr. Chafer clearly recognizes, there are two schools of interpretation represented here, which he rightly designates as "Covenantism" as over against "Dispensationalism." (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 100, No. 399, p. 338.)

In fact, the divergence of Dispensationalism from the Covenant Theology of our Church is so obvious to Dr. Chafer that he suggests a revision of the Standards of the Church so as to make room for those who no longer hold to the Reformed tradition of a Covenant Theology. (*Ibid.*, p. 345.)

Inasmuch as there is some difference of opinion concerning the status and use of such a report, your Committee desires to state that it does not understand that the Assembly instructed it to provide a statement of doctrine which shall be a substitute for, or an amendment to, any doctrinal statements contained in the Constitution of the Church or any part thereof. Nor does it understand that this report, if approved by the Assembly, is to be regarded as an amendment to ordination vows of ministers, ruling elders, or deacons. It is simply an interpretative statement which may be used by the Presbyteries as they deem wise.

Your Committee wishes also to make the following statement of clarification: Most, if not all, adherents to the type of Dispensationalism dealt with in this report hold the Premillennial view of our Lord's return; but all Premillennialists do not accept this form of Dispensationalism. Therefore, the Committee wishes to make it clear that it has endeavored solely to consider the particular type of Biblical interpretation defined above, and known as Dispensationalism and that it understood the assignment of the Assembly to limit it to this task. In view of this fact, this report should not be considered as in any sense a criticism of Premillennialism as such.

1945, pp. 25, 65. Careful and prayerful consideration has been given to Dr. Chafer's protest against the statement found in the report of the Ad Interim Committee on "Dispensationalism and the Confession of Faith".

The Assembly is unable to see that Dr. Chafer's teachings have been misrepresented. It therefore is unwilling to rescind the statement or suppress the literature containing the same.

6. Positive teaching the best protection of our people against error.

1909, p. 47. [Being asked to make a deliverance in regard to Christian Science, warning the Church against the evil and subversive character of this doctrine to the Christian religion, the Assembly replied:]

Relying upon the positive teaching of the great principles of our faith as the best protection of our people against such vagaries, we do not think such a deliverance necessary.

Part II.

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

Enacted 1861.
Revised 1879.
Revised 1925.
Revised 1945.
Revised 1961.

OBSERVANCE OF THE ORDER OF THE CHURCH ENJOINED.

1941, p. 72. Be it resolved, that the Permanent Judicial Committee be asked to conduct and supervise the following:

1. A study of conditions and practices of a lack of regard for and adherence to the Book of Church Order and its rules.

2. An educational movement that will call upon our presbyters to both know and meticulously observe the Law of our Church.

1942, p. 51. Committee instructed to continue its study.

1943, p. 52. Report of Permanent Judicial Committee approved.

[Excerpt]: Our study convinces us that there is a widespread and growing disregard of the Book of Church Order on the part of individual members of the Church, and also of its courts.

We recommend that the General Assembly urge its officers and its courts to observe faithfully the Law of the Church; and that they commend this same faithful observance to others; that newly elected officers be carefully instructed in the provisions of the Book of Church Order; and that ministers lead their officers in the study of the Book of Church Order.

REVISION OF THE BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER.

[Ed. note: Alterations in our Book of Church Order, from 1861 to the present, are a mass of material too voluminous for inclusion in the Digest. Moreover the Digest is intended primarily as an aid in interpreting the Standards, not as an historical study.

The Revision of 1879.

One of the first actions of the Assembly of 1861 was the establishment of a committee to revise the Form of Government and Book of Discipline. In 1864 a first draft of these was referred to the next Assembly, and copies of this Form of Government were printed for distribution to the churches. The Directory for Worship was referred to this same committee in 1864. A still further revised version of this Form of Government, Rules of Discipline and Rules of Parliamentary Order was adopted by the Assembly of 1866 and sent down to the presbyteries for their adoption. The report from the presbyteries to the Assembly of 1867 recorded so great a diversity of opinion that the Committee on Revision was discontinued.

Again in 1869 a standing committee was appointed, which worked over the 1866 version in the light of the suggestions the presbyteries had made thereto in 1867. This reworked version was sent to the presbyteries for their assent to such portions as might meet their approval, and for their objection to portions of which they disapproved. Presbyteries were is such disagreement and suggested so many further amendments in 1870, that the Assembly referred the whole matter to the original Committee on Revision.

In 1872 the Book of Discipline alone was sent down to the presbyteries for either adoption as it stood or further criticism. The report to the Assembly of 1873 showed it impossible still to obtain agreement among the presbyteries. Consequently this version of the Book of Discipline and a version of the Form of Government which the Committee had reported to the Assembly of 1873 were placed in the hands of the

Stated Clerk for preservation in the archives of the Assembly, while the Committee was once more discharged.

So many overtures for amendments came before the Assembly of 1876 that the Assembly sent down once more the version of the Form of Government and Rules of Discipline which had been sent down in 1869. Apparently this version was chosen because it had already been approved, in part only, by a majority of the presbyteries. Only twenty-five of the sixty-three presbyteries reported to the Assembly of 1877 that they had adopted the Book as it stood.

This Assembly itself made some amendments to that version, and referred it to a committee to revise language and style. This version was sent to the presbyteries with request for their action thereupon (1) as a whole, and (2) regarding certain specified sections.

The presbyteries in their report to the Assembly of 1878 approved these specified amendments which were then made *part* of the revised version, and the whole of the revised version was sent down for an aye or no vote by the presbyteries on its adoption. Fifty-six of the presbyteries having voted to adopt, the Assembly of 1879 declared the Revised Book to be the law of the Church.

It will be noticed that this was *only* the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline. After dropping work on the Directory for Worship in 1878 the Assembly of 1879 recommitted that task to the Committee on Revision. A draft was in 1880 presented to the presbyteries for criticism, and another in 1885. In 1886 the revision was referred to a new committee. The presbyteries rejected other forms in 1890 and again in 1892. Finally a version adopted by the Assembly of 1893 received the requisite vote of the presbyteries and was enacted in 1894.

It might well be noted that the revision in 1879 dropped entirely the use of Scriptural footnotes in the Book of Church Order.

Amendments from 1879 to 1925.

In this period forty-seven (47) of the paragraphs of the Book of Church Order were amended.

The Revision of 1925

The movement to revise the Book of Church Order began in 1921 and culminated in a fairly thoroughgoing revision of the Form of Government and Rules of Discipline enacted in 1925.

The committee which had done the work of revision was continued in 1925 to bring the book as near perfection as possible in its mechanical form. Between the version sent down to the presbyteries in 1924 (enacted in 1925) and the edition published in 1925 a number of minor alterations were made. In none of these instances was any change of major significance made. At this date no records exist to indicate how these alterations took place; nor do those who were on the Committee of Revision recall how they came about. While the gist of the order was not changed, there is no evidence in the records of the General Assembly that the wording of these altered passages was ever properly enacted.

The Directory for Worship was, in 1925, referred to another committee; and in 1929 a new version was enacted by the Assembly. At the same time the Assembly authorized an imprint edition of the Book of Common Worship of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America with such alterations as may seem advisable, which might be used by our Church as a book of optional forms.

Amendments from 1925 to 1945.

Only fifteen (15) paragraphs underwent alteration.

The Revision of 1945.

Seventy-two (72) paragraphs of the Form of Government and twenty-six (26) of the Rules of Discipline were amended in an effort to improve the coherence of various parts of the Book.

The Revision of 1961.

Within ten years it was apparent that the 1945 revision had not been as thorough as the Church needed. In 1955, p. 53, the Assembly upon recommendation of the Permanent Judicial Committee named a committee "to make a thoroughgoing revision" of the Book of Church Order.

A process of sending drafts for study and suggestion by the Presbyteries extended the time of revision, but assured a Book to meet the need of the Church. The Form of Government and The Rules of Discipline were enacted in 1961, pp. 54, 65.

In connection with the revision of the old Directory for Worship it was determined to produce a document properly connecting the worship of the Church with its work. The new "Directory for the Worship and Work of the Church", enacted in 1963, pp. 38, 109, 113, became almost immediately a foundation for a fresh approach to the program of the Church.

The "Optional Forms", not a part of the Constitution but previously printed with it as a convenience, were dropped from the Book. Since 1932 usage of the "Book of Common Worship" had provided the forms most often desired by our ministers and people. Since a committee from the Board of Christian Education was engaged in revising this book of optional forms with the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the Revision of the Book of Church Order Committee maintained the closest liaison possible with the Board. A question raised by the Board as to the responsibility for revision of the Directory (1959, pp. 26, 68) was settled by reaffirming the Revision Committee's responsibility for the Directory, and the Board's task as "that of the preparation of a Book of Common Worship only."]

COPYRIGHT AND PRINTING.

1961, pp. 38, 119. We recommend that: the Assembly authorize

1. copyright to the newly revised Book of Church Order be vested in the office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly;
2. that the Board of Christian Education be requested to print the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline as soon as they are enacted, probably by the Assembly of 1961;
3. that the Board of Christian Education be requested to print in the future the full Book of Church Order in the format agreed upon between the Board and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, this printing to be annual, if necessary, and in an inexpensive paper-back edition.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, Pref. II.

Mandatory language in the Constitution.

1964, p. 112. Consistent with the entirety of the Book of Church Order, the word "shall" is normally to be construed in a mandatory sense, but this meaning shall always be considered in the entire context in which the word appears.

[Ed. note: In the present Book of Church Order, as in its predecessors, "may" is used when the intent is permissive, "should" is used when the intent is advisory, and "shall" is used when the intent is mandatory.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 1-3.

To and for whom does Church court speak?

1965, pp. 30, 95. That Overture 17 relative to the deliverance of Church Courts be answered with the following statement as recommended by the Permanent Judicial Commission:

The Book of Church Order does not limit the authority of a church court to speak on moral issues only to its constituency. A church court under the Presbyterian system of government is not necessarily bound to represent a majority of its constituency in its statements on moral issues. (See Sections 1-1, 1-3, 14-2, 14-3(2), and 15-16(13, B. C. O.)

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 1-4.

Congregations views known to representatives.

1954, pp. 37, 67. Overture 49 be answered in the negative, for the reason that instruction of representatives to church courts is not in accord with the Book of Church Order, and the right to inform representatives of the views of the congregation already exists.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 2-2.

The unity of the Church.

1961, p. 71. Specific answers to these overtures and specific proposals with reference to the report of the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations confront our Church with the constant necessity of reviewing its own expression of unity. Such matters constrain our Church to evaluate anew its life in comradeship with the whole Church Militant given by Christ the ministry of propagating and exhibiting, however imperfectly, His Blessed Gospel.

The quest for devices by which the unity of the Church may be exalted among her members and declared to the world as one of the benefits of God's gifts to His people, is a reverent, patient, laborious, and inescapable obligation of true churchmen in these times. The Presbyterian Church, in the United States, disciplined by its heritage and by its convictions, affirms again in this context that the unity which God has given to and decreed for the Church is based upon the doctrines of Christian Faith. Unity on theological terms and under the constraints of theological conviction is the only unity which the Church can expect or to which, in reliance upon the Holy Spirit's guidance, it should address itself.

While it may be affirmed that such a perspective of the matter is common to the several churches which, at any moment, may seek particular fashions of structural union, of comity, of conciliar affiliation, or of insularity to express their interpretations of and relations to the ecumenical movement which is so real in modern christendom, it is worthy of note that a distinctive word on this matter has been spoken by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council to which reference has already been made.

This affirmation properly calls the Church to submit itself constantly to the reforming principle which insists that in any age or in any form, the people of God, under the judgment of the Word of God as interpreted by the Holy Spirit, are not what they are meant to be and what by grace they can become. Certainly it is to such a fact as this that the very emphasis of our Church is made by our due concern with "Heritage and Mission" in this Centennial Year and in the future which God may grant us to serve Him.

The overtures before the Assembly and the very constitution of the Assembly itself testify that the Presbyterian Church, in the United States, is forever at the business of examining itself as to its fealty to its heritage, its obedience of its covenants, and is submission to its Lord.

1964, pp. 72, 85. That the following paper on "The Presbyterian Church in the United States and Church Unity" be adopted:

The General Assembly of 1961 (Minutes, p. 72) referred to the Permanent Theological Committee, when formed, the instruction that the Committee 'Study the nature and unity of the Church in the light of Scriptures and as interpreted in Reformed theology, and in the light of the practical implications thereof in relation to current discussions of unity.' Pursuant to these instructions of the 1961 Assembly, this paper on the Presbyterian Church in the United States and church unity is presented to the General Assembly of 1964 by the Permanent Theological Committee.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States and Church Unity

There is no doubt that the New Testament thinks of the Church of Jesus Christ as a unity. But in what sense is this unity to be understood? When Jesus prayed, "that they all may be one," how did He conceive that oneness? Obviously, Christians are to be united in love one to another. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). The factions and divisiveness repeatedly deplored by the Apostle Paul in the Churches he founded could obviously not be healed apart from the love whose greatness he hymns in the 13th chapter of I Corinthians. But Christians are also to love their neighbors as themselves, and their neighbors may be non-Christians. The parable of the Good Samaritan makes it clear that "our neighbor" is *anyone* in need. Hence, while Christian unity must include love, it must also be something more than the unity of love.

Is not Christian unity as the New Testament conceives it that oneness involved in sharing a common faith? Is it not the unity wherein we jointly acknowledge "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:6)? This is the conception of unity clearly implied by the *Westminster Confession of Faith* when it defines the one catholic (or universal) church as consisting of "all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children" (*The Confession of Faith,* XXVII: ii). Such an understanding of unity has also been repeatedly affirmed by ecumenical gatherings in this century. For instance, the Faith and Order Conference at Lund said:

> "We affirm that throughout Christendom there is, despite divisions, a unity already given by God in Christ, through whom 'the powers of the age to come' are already in our midst" (*The Third World Conference on Faith and Order,* p. 33).

This sentence suggests also another aspect of Christian unity as portrayed in the New Testament. It is a *dynamic* oneness leading to attitudes and modes of life which offer a visible expression of unity. For instance, in John 17:21 Jesus prays for a unity that will commend the Gospel, a unity "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." In Ephesians 4:13-16 the "unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" which Paul wants the Church to attain is one which builds up the body of Christ in love. In Philippians 2:1-7 the "one mind" for which he pleads is the mind of Christ which expressed itself in sacrificial and obedient acceptance of the will of God.

Unity in the Biblical sense of the term, the "unity already given by God in Christ," can clearly neither be created nor destroyed by particular church structures or orders or by ecclesiastical authority. Our discussions of church unity, therefore deal primarily, not with the *nature* of Christian unity itself but rather with the expressions or manifestations for which its dynamic nature calls. Since these are partly under our control and since they are of immeasurable consequence for the life and witness of the Church, consideration of them is of prime importance in the present situation.

We can distinguish at least four different ways by which the churches can give expression to their unity in Christ, namely, through cooperation, through councils of churches, through mutual recognition, and through unions or mergers.

1. *Cooperation*, ranging from such enterprises as united evangelistic, or social welfare work on the part of local congregations representing different denominations, to joint enterprises and concerted strategies on the regional, national, and international levels is a natural, fruitful, and impressive manifestation of Christian unity. Participation in cooperative ventures of this nature, where no compromise of her faith or polity is involved, belongs to the very genius of Presbyterianism.

2. Another expression of unity is to be seen in councils of churches where independent ecclesiastical bodies come into organized relation with one another. This confederal relationship may be established within denominational families, as seen, for instance, in the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World Holding the Presbyterian Order. Councils, in which many denominations participate, exist on local, regional, national and international levels. Presbyterians have been prominent in the formation of these associations and such action in concert with our brethren of other Christian denominations is a natural expression of the unity of the Church as conceived in our Presbyterian and Reformed tradition.

3. A third expression of our unity in Christ consists in mutual recognition or acknowledgment on the part of churches. More specifically, this involves the acknowledgment of the validity of each other's ministry, membership, and sacraments. It envisions a day when each denomination will accept the ministers of sister denominations as validly ordained to their high office; when, largely in consequence of this, each denomination will accept as authentic the sacraments administered by the ministers of other denominations and when members may move from one church to another by transfer of letter without having to be received in the same manner as those who were not previously Christians.

Presbyterians can enthusiastically endorse the expression of Christian unity in the form of mutual recognition, because such acknowledgment is implied in their doctrine of the church. In a great ecumenical declaration John Calvin said:

"Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church exists" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, I, ix).

In the Reformed tradition, following Calvin, the visible church is always thought of as one. Our *Confession of Faith* states that "this catholic church hath been sometimes more sometimes less visible," and adds that "particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them" (Ch. XXVII, Par. iv). This acknowledgment that there is only one church, not fragmented by denominational or confessional lines, is the strongest affirmation of the unity of the Church in Jesus Christ. The only "marks," or criteria, of a true church are those mentioned in the statement just quoted from the *Confession*, no reference being made to any particular church order or polity as essential. The call for mutual recognition can, therefore, be supported by Presbyterians with deep personal conviction and with absolute fidelity to our Reformed heritage.

Ever since the organization of the World Council of Churches in 1948, many leaders of the ecumenical movement have identified mutual recognition as the nature of the further unity we seek. The Conference on Faith and Order at Lund, in 1952, declared that

"the nature of the unity toward which we are striving is that of a visible fellowship in which all members, acknowledging Jesus Christ as living Lord and

Saviour, shall recognize each other as belonging fully to His Body, to the end that the world may believe" (*op. cit.*, p. 37).

While a footnote explains that this was far from being the unanimous mind of the Lund Conference, the importance of mutual recognition as an expression of our basic spiritual unity was increasingly recognized until 1960 when, on the recommendation of the Faith and Order Commission, the World Council of Churches adopted the following statement at New Delhi:

"We believe that the unity which is both God's will and His gift to His Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls His people." (*The New Delhi Report*, p. 116.)

These words in italics above make it perfectly clear that mutual recognition is here regarded as an expression of church unity.

We are convinced that no other expression of Christian unity should take precedence in our prayers and efforts over the concern for mutual recognition and acknowledgment and express our apprehension over evidences of waning emphasis upon this in ecumenical circles in the last several years. While respecting the integrity and never doubting the sincerity of those whose deep convictions lead them to withhold recognition of certain others, we can but deplore the degree to which denial of the validity of the ministry, membership, and sacraments of one Christian group by another obscures the unity of the Body of Christ. We resolve to promote the cause of mutual recognition in whatever ways possible, and to this end we repent of anything in our thought and life which impedes recognition and pray for greater love toward, and understanding of those who on this point are constrained to differ from us.

4. A further mode of expressing our oneness in Christ takes the form of the union, or merger, of two or more ecclesiastical organizations. Insofar as organization, or structure, can give expression to it this is manifestly the most impressive symbol of unity. On the basis of her acknowledgment of the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ, and of her consequent responsibility to show it forth, the Presbyterian Church in the United States affirms her readiness to consider possible unions and recognizes that there may be cases in which she herself should take the initiative.

On the other hand, we must warn against an emotional ecumenicism which tends to look with indiscriminate favor upon all unions. We do not subscribe to the view, which frequently contributes to this attitude, that *all* divisions in the organized church are sinful. We sincerely hold with the *Westminster Confession*, as quoted above, that the unity of the one universal Church is not fractured by the mere fact of divisions between the structural forms she assumes.

Moreover, there is impressive evidence that the variety in theology, worship, organization, and practice resulting from the existence of different confessional groups may be a contribution to Christendom greater than that to be offered by unions which might reduce or displace them and which inevitably would tend to lay the heavy hand of uniformity upon the Church. It can be forcibly argued that a pattern whereby differently organized churches recognize one another is a more appropriate visible expression of our underlying unity in Christ than would be a progressive obliteration of denominational distinctions through unions. Thus, while we are ready sincerely to consider unions, we are at the same time obligated to study each proposal on its merits.

In considering any proposed union the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. must assure herself on at least three points:

1. She must be sure that in forming a union she is faithful to the truly ecumenical doctrine of the Church which is our Reformed Heritage. It is this, as we have seen, which commits us to acknowledge other bodies as true churches and their ministry, membership and sacraments as valid. Any merger in which this commitment is abridged would be a step backward. Let us not be concerned about the non-recognition of us on the part of others, but let us be deeply concerned to preserve a doctrine of the Church which commits us to the expression of Christian unity by the recognition of others. If forced to choose between this and union, we should forego union in the interest of unity.

2. A second point on which we must assure ourselves is that the proposed union will preserve the essentials of the Christian Gospel as delcared in the Scriptures and interpreted in the Reformed Faith. The Presbyterian Church in the United States requires of every person being ordained that he affirm his belief in the Scripture as "the only infallible rule of faith and practice" and that he receive and adopt the Westminster Standards "as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures." The normative character of the Scripture and our understanding of the truly catholic interpretation of the faith as set forth in the essential doctrines of our evangelical standards are positions which we dare not compromise in order to effect a church union, however attractive it may be on other grounds.

Where union is contemplated within the Reformed and Presbyterian family and can be effected on the basis of one or more of the classic Reformed creeds, which are in basic agreement, no serious difficulty in the matter of doctrine should be encountered.

Where churches of other confessions are involved, the problem is more complicated. However, our readiness to recognize those bodies as true churches where "the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them" commits us to look with favor upon conversations with them envisioning the possibility of union and in some cases to take the lead in proposing discussions. In the spirit of the words, *reformata semper reformanda est,* we should be ready to engage in unity discussions with open minds and sincerely to reexamine our positions in the light of any deepened understanding of the Christian faith which may emerge in them under the guidance of the Spirit. Where a mutual confession is evolved out of such an actual situation wherein the essentials of the Biblical faith and the Reformed interpretations thereof are preserved and strengthened, there is basis for union. Moreover the fact that our church, in the ordination of officers, does not insist on the letter and details of our Standards but only on adherence to their "fundamentals" and that the Standards contain no definition of what the "fundamentals" are means that in any discussion of union she would have the same liberty of interpretation as that which is exercised by the presbyteries in ordaining and receiving ministers. We can thus sit down at a conference table in a sincere, ecumenical spirit, untrammelled by the necessity of rigid adherence to a multiplicity of doctrinal details.

On the other hand, the Presbyterian Church in the United States is a creedal church, committed to the Gospel recorded in the Scripture as interpreted in her Standards. We must therefore face the possibility that in certain cases we may not be able to reach the doctrinal agreement necessary to union, even though we are quite willing to recognize the other body as a true church. For example, it would be possible for a church to teach and embrace the Gospel, administer the ordinances and perform public worship with sufficient purity to justify recognition, but not to accept the Bible as the supreme norm of the faith or sufficiently to emphasize the sovereignty of God and

obedience to His will, or to hold a doctrine of the church and ministry which sufficiently conforms to our own. In such a case or in like cases we cannot in conscience compromise essentials to effect a merger. Truth comes before union.

3. In the third place, the Presbyterian Church in the United States must assure herself as far as possible that a contemplated union will deepen the spiritual life and promote the work of the Church of Christ in the world. She must ask what would be the effect of the union on the efficiency of church operation in general, on the Church's educational enterprise, her evangelistic and missionary witness, her institutions, etc. Such matters are primarily practical, but they may in certain instances be more important than those which are strictly theological. In any case we are obligated seriously to weigh them by our theological understanding of the nature and mission of the Church.

Church union is never to be entered into lightly, but only after the most serious consideration of the issues mentioned above. Let us not forget, however, that so long as we remain faithful to the truth as God gives us to see it and true to the mission Christ gives His Church, the search to express our unity in the form of union may become both an imperative and a blessing.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 3-1.

1. Who may belong to a church.

[See also this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 102-1, D.W.W. § 201-5.]

1904, p. 42. The Assembly records its hearty commendation of the brave stand taken by the majority in the Synod of Brazil in refusing to make membership in the Order of Free Masons a bar to communion in the Church.

1964, pp. 26, 79. Section 3-1 of the Form of Government, the judicial precedent in the Complaint of Joseph A. Enslow against the Synod of South Carolina (see Minutes of General Assembly 1896, pages 579, 606, 611, and 617; or Assembly's Digest), and the interpretative statement of the Assembly regarding "any new rules of church membership different from those contained in the Constitution" (see Minutes of General Assembly 1865, p. 361, or Assembly's Digest) preclude any exclusion of persons from communing membership in a congregation solely on the grounds of race or color.

Through established processes of review and control and of complaint a presbytery now has the means of ensuring the compliance of sessions and congregations with the Constitution of the Church.

2. A church organized without Elders may be enrolled.

1897, p. 40. [Overture:] In the event of the report to Presbytery of the organization of a church either by a Commission or by an evangelist, without the election of any ruling elders for the present, shall such an organization be enrolled?

The Assembly answers that a church without officers is entitled to be enrolled.

3. Colonization by churches.

1954, pp. 25, 55. Overture 4 requests the General Assembly to take action regarding colonization by large churches. We recommend that this be answered in the negative; but we call attention to the fact that the trend in our larger churches now is toward colonization. The General Assembly should continue to encourage that trend.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 3-6.

Duties of Ruling Elders in worship services.

1916, p. 71. In answer to the overture touching the propriety of approved ruling elders taking part in the exercises of public worship, etc.:

We recommend that the Assembly answer that in the Presbyterian System there is a fundamental distinction between a ruling elder and a teaching elder that is not to be lost sight of, and the Presbytery of Greenbrier is referred to paragraph 25 [§ 3-6] of the Book of Church Order, which defines the duties of a ruling elder in church services.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 11-4, 1866, p. 37.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 5-2.

1. Congregational meetings may be called for any proper purpose.

1876, p. 240. [Answer to an overture:] Is it competent to a church session to call a congregational meeting for any other objects than those specified in our Book?

Answer: As the purposes of congregational meetings in all cases must be presumed to relate, more or less directly, to the spiritual interests of the congregation; and as the power is vested in the session (Form of Government, Chap. IX, 6) "to concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the congregation," [pres. § 15-6] it seems to follow that it is competent for the session to call congregational meetings for any proper purpose.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 6-1.

1. Jurisdiction of trustees over church property.

1890, p. 28. [Answer to an overture:]

2. There is vested in each congregation organized as a church, or in a number of persons about to be organized as such, the right and power to appoint and remove at will trustees and their successors who may receive donations and purchase, take and hold property, real and personal, in trust for the congregation; and, if authorized by a majority of the church members at a congregational meeting constitutionally convened for that purpose, sell, mortgage, trust-deed, or exchange the property so held, to aid in the construction or repairing of their church edifices, or for other purposes. Care should, however, be had to make the action in each case conform to the law of the State wherein the property is located.

3. In the appointment of trustees a part or all of the deacons, if suitable, should be selected; and wherever property is now held by unincorporated churches it is advisable to have deeds made to the trustees in all cases where it can be done.

2. Trustees cannot compose a governing board in a church.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 13-1.]

3. Buildings should not be placed on land not owned in fee simple.

1933, p. 49. [An overture asking an amendment to the Book of Church Order, was answered in the negative, but the Assembly] would advise in general against placing buildings on land that is not owned in fee simple.

[Ed. note: In 1949 the Constitutional provision for incorporation of churches was made. See especially this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-4 and 5, re the congregation and its property.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 8-1.

1. Receiving nominal members.

1945, pp. 28, 54. Overture 6 requesting an interpretative deliverance on the reception of persons who have been nominal members of an evangelical church, but according to their testimony have had no vital Christian experience. The overture asks as to whether such persons now professing a vital Christian experience should be enrolled as coming by a reaffirmation or profession of faith.

We recommend the following answer: Such persons should be received by reaffirmation of faith, and the churches of which they were nominal members so notified.

2. Receiving Roman Catholics.

1949, pp. 27, 57. Overture 2 asking whether, in view of the recent changes in our Standards concerning reference to the Roman Catholic Church, it is invariably necessary to receive members from that Communion upon confession of faith and baptism.

The General Assembly feels that these changes have made little material difference in the attitude of our Church toward the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore recommends that candidates for membership in our Church from that organization be received upon confession of faith. If the candidate is satisfied with his baptism, at the discretion of the session his baptism may be deemed valid.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 8-3.

Members "in good and regular standing."

1861, pp. 11, 37. Every member of our Church is entitled to a dismission in good standing unless process be commenced against him.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, The Matter of W. S. Turner.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 8-7.

Who are on non-communing roll?

1962, pp. 23, 58. Although children of believing parents are non-communing members of the Church, only the baptized children of believers who are members of that particular congregation shall be placed on the non-communing roll.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 10-6.

Powers of an Evangelist.

1950, pp. 24, 48. Overture 3 concerning the relationship between a minister with the power of an evangelist working in a mission chapel which is under the care of an organized church, and the session in regard to the reception of members into the Presbyterian Church, be answered as follows: We interpret paragraph 38, Book of Church Order, to mean that an evangelist can receive members into a church only in the act of organizing such church, and during the period before ruling elders are ordained in such church. Where a mission chapel is being operated without having been organized into a church, members received must be received by the session of the parent church as members of the parent church.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 11-4.

1. Elders may be appointed by the Presbyteries to conduct services in neighboring congregations.

1866, p. 37. Resolved that every presbytery be enjoined to require the sessions of the vacant congregations to come up to the discharge of the duties devolved upon them in the twenty-first chapter of the Form of Government, in the assembling of their respective congregations for the worship of God, to which it may be proper to add exhortation. And in order that this duty may be performed to the greater acceptance of the worshippers, it is further required that the presbyteries do seek out those elders who have the best gifts, and do especially appoint them to the performance of these duties.

1867, p. 148. [In answer to an overture:] Resolved, that the action of the last Assembly, on pp. 36 and 37 of the Minutes, is hereby reaffirmed, and the parts relating to the services of elders explained to mean, substantially, that, in accordance with our Constitution, when a vacant congregation does not enjoy the services of any elder, who, for any proper reason, is competent to perform the duties contemplated, it shall be the duty of the presbytery to appoint an elder or elders from some neighboring congregation; provided nothing herein contained shall be regarded as justifying a presbytery in extending its jurisdiction within the bounds of another.

1919, p. 51. [Overture] asking that active steps be taken to use more fully capable ruling elders in conducting services in our vacant churches, in view of the absence of so many ministers engaged in war work.

Answer: The law of the Church already gives to churches and elders full opportunity in this matter. In view of the present need, the Assembly urges a fuller use of this opportunity.

1943, p. 76. That our ruling elders be called on to help look after pastorless churches in the absence of so many pastors now serving as chaplains in our Army and Navy, remembering their ordination vow, "to take oversight of the spiritual interests of the particular church committed to their charge".

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 3-6.]

2. An elder in one church cannot be an elder in another church at the same time.

1887, pp. 204, 210. [See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 15-1.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 12-1.

A paper on the "Doctrine of the Diaconate."

[Ed. note: A paper on The Doctrine of the Diaconate, prepared by Drs. J. L. Girardeau, R. L. Dabney and Thomas E. Peck, may be found 1884, pp. 204, 205, 283 ff. While never adopted or endorsed by the Assembly, this paper presents one aspect of the mind of the Church.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 12-3.

Congregational adoption of budget.

1953, pp. 212, 61. [Overture] to amend the Book of Church Order, to read:

In matters of special importance affecting the property of the Church, they cannot take final action without the consent of the congregation. In the discharge of their duties the Deacons are under the supervision and authority of the Session. *Before the beginning of each Church year the Deacons, if the way be clear, shall prepare a budget for the benevolence quota and current expenses of the church, which shall be presented to the Session for approval. A congregational meeting shall be called in order that the congregation may have opportunity to adopt the budget.*

Answered in the negative because the pattern of action suggested there would force upon the churches a pattern of action which may or may not be suitable to all our churches. There are many ways of handling a church budget and the method suggested here is only one of these.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 12-4.

A church does not have choice whether to have Deacons or Board.

1936, p. 40. [Overture asking the Assembly to grant individual churches the option of employing one Board of Officers as the governing body of the church,] answered in the negative. [See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 12-1.]

1965, pp. 29, 95. That Overture 14 concerning unicameral operation in the local church, be answered with the following statement as recommended by the Permanent Judicial Commission:

An unicameral system already exists in that the Session has supervision and authority over the Deacons (Sections 12-5 and 15-6, B. C. O.) and thereby has ultimate authority for the proper discharge of the functions of the Deacons. Nevertheless the Deacons must organize as a board with officers and regular meetings (Section 12-4) for the better discharge of the specific duties with which the board is charged (Section 12-3). It is only in a church in which Deacons cannot be secured that the duties of the office devolve upon its Ruling Elders (Section 15-6).

That Overture 15 relative to the office of Deacon, be answered with the following statement as recommended by the Permanent Judicial Commission:

The Commission recommends that the first proposition of the overture be answered in the affirmative for the reasons set out in the overture and in the provisions of Section 12-2, Book of Church Order, which specifies that the office of Deacon is spiritual in nature.

The Commission recommends that the second proposition of the overture be answered in the negative. The Deacons must organize as a board and elect officers including a Treasurer (Section 12-4) for the better discharge of the functions primarily committed to them by Section 12-3. This must not be construed as merely permissive. The Session has the authority in its discretion to employ or to permit the employment of a business administrator for the assistance of the Deacons, but thereby the Deacons are not relieved of any responsibility imposed by Section 12-3. The office of Deacon is spiritual in nature (Section 12-2), a quality which is to be exercised, rather than overlooked or suppressed, in the discharge of their duties. The office of Deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy and service after the example of Christ (Section 12-1), given for ordering the life of the church along with the office of the Minister of the Word and Sacraments and the office of the Ruling Elder, and to be continued perpetually in the church. (Section 9-2).

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 12-5.

1. Relation of Deacons to the Session.

1877, p. 410. [Answer to an overture:] The duties of the deacons, as servants (ministers) of the Church, are to execute the orders of the session (or parochial presbytery) as rulers of the Church. Therefore, it is the duty of the deacons to collect and appropriate all funds for church purposes, whether for local purposes, support of a pastor, aid to the poor, and expenses of the church, or for objects of Christian be-

nevolence recognized in the action of the courts of the church, under the direction of the church session.

1890, p. 28. [Reaffirmed.]
[Cf. Form of Govt., § 15-6.]

2. Deacons may not change pastor's salary without consent of congregation.

1914, p. 24. Overture asking whether the Board of Deacons of a church has authority to change the contract as to pastor's salary without consent of congregation.
Answer: The Assembly answers in the negative.

3. Deacons have no power to sell church property.

1927, p. 50. Overture: Have deacons the right to sell the church property without a formal vote of the congregation? [Answered in the negative.] This is in agreement with the opinion rendered by the Judicial Committee, which is as follows:

The deacons have the care and custody, but not the title to church property, real and personal, "but in matters of special importance, affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action without the consent of the congregation." (Book of Church Order, § 12-3). In minor matters incident to the care of the property such as disposing of articles of personal property no longer needed or to be disposed of for purposes of replacement, the Board of Deacons may sell without a vote of the congregation. The title to church real estate is vested either in trustees, or in a corporation, and the deacons have no power to authorize or require its sale without a favorable vote of the congregation.
[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 12-3, 14-5.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 12-6.

1. Deacons (and private members) may serve on committees of higher courts.

1886, p. 37. Overture asking whether it is unconstitutional for Presbytery to place deacons or private members on its Committee of Home Missions. Answer: It is not unconstitutional.

1917, p. 69. In answer to the overture asking if Presbytery may appoint deacons on committees, commissions, or boards of trustees of educational institutions:
We recommend that the Assembly answer that deacons may be appointed to perform any duty not required to be performed by a presbyter.

1923, p. 70f. Answer to protest [against putting women on the Executive Committees]:
The General Assembly is in entire harmony with the great principles which are expressed in the protest, but there is nothing in the Word of God nor in the government of our Church to prevent the Assembly appointing private members, male and female, upon its Executive Committees, and the action protested against was taken in order to recognize in this way the Woman's Auxiliary in its loyal and faithful work.

1929, p. 82. Overture asking the appointment of some deacons on the Executive Committees and to call attention of presbyteries and sessions to the importance of bringing deacons into closer relation to the beneficient work of the Church.
[Answer:] "We affirm that according to the Assembly's practice, any member of the Presbyterian Church may be appointed to serve on any of our Executive Committees, and we suggest that the appointment of Deacons to such committees be made whenever the way shall be clear."

2. Deacons may be called in for conference on local church affairs.

1932, p. 43. Overtures asking the Assembly to amend the Book of Church Order so as to permit every church to be represented in presbyteries and synods by deacons as well as ministers and ruling elders, answered in the negative, but suggest that sessions call the deacons into conference in local affairs as far as is practicable.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 12-7.

1. No office of "Deaconess."

1904, p. 53. In answer to the overture, asking the General Assembly to consider the advisability of taking such steps as they deem wise looking to the institution of the Order of Deaconesses in connection with our Church.
Your Committee recommends for answer to said overture that the attention of presbyteries be called to Paragraph 51, Book of Church Order [pres. § 12-7], as making ample provision for the appointment of Godly women to specific Christian work.

1907, p. 55. An overture asking the appointment of an ad interim committee to consider and report on the advisability of establishing the office of Deaconess in connection with our Church, [was answered] in the negative.

1916, pp. 47, 174. [Similar action.]
[Ed. note: In 1922 the statement "aid the deacons" was added here. In 1964 § 9-2 was amended so that women are eligible to hold Church offices.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 13-1.

Government of the Church entirely in the hands of its courts.

1928, p. 45. [Answer to questions] in overture:
1. Since Chap XII, par. 51 and 52 [pres. § 13-1] of the Book of Church Order declares the Church is governed by four courts—are there any other governing bodies in the Church? Answer: No.
2. Can any one of these four courts of the Church delegate, commit or transfer their governing authority save by the prescribed commissions in certain cases? Answer: No.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 13-2.

1. The moderator of higher courts must ordinarily be chosen at each stated meeting.

1928, p. 45. Overture asking "Can a presbytery at the close of a stated meeting elect a new moderator whose term of office shall extend from the moment of election to the close of the next stated meeting?" Answered in the negative.

1932, p. 43. Overture asking the Assembly whether a presbytery can lawfully elect a moderator at a preceding meeting to preside over adjourned, called and succeeding regular session of that presbytery, answered in the negative.

1936, p. 39. Overture asking the General Assembly to enact the necessary legislation to permit synods and presbyteries to elect a moderator at the close of regular sessions to serve at the next meeting of that body. The Assembly declares that a moderator may be nominated at one meeting to serve at the next but must be elected for the meeting over which he is to preside. This is deemed sufficient to remedy the situation for which action is requested.

1943, p. 94. The minutes of the Synod of Kentucky state that the moderator to preside over the 1943 sessions was elected at the 1942 meeting. The Book of Church Order indicates that a moderator is to be elected by the court over which he presides (Book of Church Order, [pres. § 13-2.]).

1944, p. 61. [1936 action reaffirmed.]
1955, pp. 26, 51. Overture requesting determination of the legality of electing as Moderator a ruling elder not sent officially to the court by his Session: we recommend that this overture be answered: "In accord with the normal rules of parliamentary bodies only a member of the body may be elected as Moderator."

2. Moderator "pro tem."

1955, pp. 26, 50. Overture 8, requesting a clarification of two points with regard to actions of the Synod of Mississippi:

We recommend that point "1" be answered: "Under the circumstances of this case, where there was a vacancy of the moderatorship of the Synod of Mississippi, the Synod was acting properly under the Book of Church Order in naming a Moderator *pro tem.*"

We recommend that point "2" be answered: Since the Book of Church Order was not violated, the actions taken were not invalidated by the election of a Moderator *pro tem.*"

[Ed. note: This is an odd action. The Constitution does not acknowledge a moderator *pro tempore*, but does in this section provide for election of "another Moderator." This appears what Synod actually did.]

3. Irregular to assign preaching of the opening sermon to a minister of another denomination.

1932, p. 72. [Exception to the Minutes of] the Synod of Texas: The stated meeting, September 22, 1931, was opened with a sermon by a minister of a denomination other than the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 13-4.

Moderator's change of meeting in "emergency which necessitates anticipation of time of meeting or the failure of the appointed meeting.

1899, p. 430. [Overture] asks whether "Paragraph 55, Chapter V, of the Book of Church Order [pres. § 13-4], taken with Paragraph 79 of the same chapter [pres. § 16-9], authorizes the moderator to call a meeting of presbytery (in case of the failure of the regular meeting, or because of an emergency that has arisen) without the concurrence or request of two ministers and two ruling elders?" The committee recommends an affirmative answer.

1900, p. 644. The Assembly declines to reverse [the above deliverance;] but interprets it as authorizing the moderator to convene the court at his own discretion, only in the cases provided for in Paragraph 55 [pres. § 13-4] (any extraordinary emergency which necessitates the anticipation of the ordinary time of meeting, and the failure of the appointed meeting,) and not on any other emergency.

1924, pp. 31, 71, 119. [Footnote in report of ad-interim committee on Revision of the Book of Church Order:]

The Committee does not understand that this paragraph refers to what are known as "called meetings," but to what are known as "stated meetings" of the court. Called meetings are dealt with in Par. 79 [pres. § 16-9].

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 13-5.

1. What are the official records of a court, and how errors therein may be corrected.

1890, p. 46. [Overture] asks what constitute the official records of a church court, and how should discovered errors in such records be corrected? recommended as answers:

1st. The minutes of a church court become its official record as soon as they are approved by that court, and the signature of its stated clerk is evidence that they have been thus approved.

2nd. Any errors subsequently discovered by the court in its approved records may be corrected at its subsequent meeting, the correction appearing only in the minutes of that meeting.

2. Alteration of the minutes of a court.

1913, p. 70-I. [Overture:]

1. When a court formally adopts the minutes of its proceedings as kept by the Temporary Clerk, are they then the official minutes of that court, or must they first be put in their final form by the Stated Clerk and adopted again in that form before they become official?

2. When a reference, or a complaint, or an appeal has been withdrawn from the court with which it has been placed, does it become a part of the minutes of that court or not?

3. Can a lower court amend or modify its official minutes after they have been examined and approved by the court of review without first gaining the consent of the court of review to so do?

We recommend the following answers:

1. They become final when adopted.
2. The court has power to determine.
3. No.

[Cf. Standing Rules of the General Assembly as to (1) above.]

3. A higher court has no power to amend the record of a lower court.

1877, p. 443. The records of the Synod of North Carolina were approved, with the exception that on page 489 it ordered a paragraph of the records of an inferior court to be stricken out.

4. Authenticated copy of the published minutes of a court may be sent up for review.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 17-6.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 13-7.

Presbytery urged, but not compelled, to comply with Assembly's mileage system.

1917, p. 69. In answer to the communication from Fayetteville Presbytery, giving reasons for not complying with the Assembly's plan of paying the expenses of Commissioners:

We recommend answer as follows:

"The Assembly would call the attention of Fayetteville Presbytery to the fact that the Assembly has thought it wise to adopt the mileage system as the best system to carry into effect Paragraph 58 of Book of Church Order [pres. § 13-7]. Therefore, the Assembly urges Fayetteville Presbytery to comply with this action of the Assembly."

1919, p. 52. From Pee Dee Presbytery, asking the General Assembly to compel one of our presbyteries, which still declines to conform to the rule as to the payment of the expenses of commissioners to the Assembly, to obey the law of the Church on this subject. Answer: Declined.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 14-1, 2, 3.

Nature and authority of "in thesi" deliverances of Church courts.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 18-1. Cf. this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XXXIII, 4.]

1. "In thesi" deliverances are didactic, advisory, monitory.

1879, p. 23. Overture asking the Assembly for definite instructions upon the following points, to-wit:

First, Are the deliverances of 1865, 1869 and 1877, on the subject of worldly amusements, to be accepted and enforced as law by judicial process?

Second, Are all the offenses named in them to be so dealt with, or are exceptions to be made?

Third, Are the deliverances of all our church courts of the same nature and authority, so far as the bounds of those respective courts extend?

In answer to these questions the Assembly unanimously adopted the following minute:

First, This Assembly would answer the first question in the negative, upon the following grounds:

1. That these deliverances do not require judicial prosecution expressly, and could not require it, without violating the spirit of our law.

2. That none of these deliverances were made by the Assembly in a strictly judicial capacity, but were all deliverances *in thesi* and therefore can be considered as only didactic, advisory and monitory.

3. That the Assembly has no power to issue orders to institute process, except according to the provisions of Book of Discipline, Chap. VII, in the old, and Chap. XIII, Sec. I, in the revised Book [pres. § 14-6, 113-1]; and all these provisions imply that the court of remote jurisdiction is dealing with a particular court of original jurisdiction, and not with such courts in general. The injunctions, therefore, upon the sessions to exercise discipline in the matter of worldly amusements are to be understood only as utterances of the solemn testimony of these Assemblies against a great and growing evil in the Church. The power to utter such a testimony will not be disputed, since it is so expressly given to the Assemblies in the Form of Government, Chap. XII, Sec. V, of the old, and in revised Book of Church Order, Form of Government, Chap. V, Sec. VI, Art. VI, [pres. § 18-6] and this testimony this Assembly does hereby most solemnly and affectionately reiterate.

In thus defining the meaning and intent of the action of former Assemblies, this General Assembly does not mean, in the slightest degree, to interfere with the power of discipline in any of its forms, which is given to the courts below by the Constitution of the Church; or to intimate that discipline in its sternest form may not be necessary, in some cases, in order to arrest the evils in question. The occasion, the mode, the degree and kind of discipline must be left to the courts of original jurisdiction, under the checks and restraints of the Constitution. All that is designed is to deny the power of the Assembly to make law for the Church in the matter of "offenses," or to give to its deliverances *in thesi* the force of judicial decisions.

Second, The second question, which is, "Are all the offenses named in the deliverances of 1865, 1869 and 1877 to be dealt with in the way of judicial process, or are exemptions to be made? needs no answer after what has been said in answer to the first.

Third, In answer to the third question, relative to the nature and authority of our different church courts, this Assembly would say that the nature and authority of all our church courts are the same, so far as the bounds of these respective courts extend, subject, of course, to the provisions for review and control of the lower courts by the

higher. The power of the whole is in every part, but the power of the whole is over the power of every part.

The perplexity about the nature of the deliverances in question has arisen from confounding two senses in which the word discipline is used in our Constitution. One is that of "judicial process," the other is that of inspection, inquest, remonstrance, rebuke and "private admonition." (Form of Government, Chap. IV, Sec. III, Art. IV) [pres. § 15-6]. The one is strictly judicial or forensic; the other is that general oversight of the flock which belongs to the officers of the Church, as charged by the Holy Ghost with the duty of watching for souls. The one cannot be administered at all except by a court of the Church; the other, while it is a function of that charity which all the members of the Church are bound to possess and cherish for each other, is yet the special and official function of the rulers, to be exercised with authority toward those who are committed to their care. In the judgment of this Assembly, great harm is done by the custom of identifying, in popular speech, these two forms of discipline, or, rather, by forgetting that there is some other discipline than that of judicial process. Many an erring sheep might be restored to a place of safety within the fold by kind and tender, yet firm and faithful efforts, in private, who might be driven farther away by the immediate resort to discipline in its sterner and more terrifying forms. The distinction here asserted is recognized in the Word of God, and in our Constitution, for substance at least, in the directions given for the conduct of church members in the case of personal and private injuries. (See Chap. II, Art. III, of the old Book of Discipline, and Chap. I, Art. IV, of the revised [pres. § 101-5]; also Matthew xviii, 15, 16.) If scandal can be removed or prevented in such cases, more effectually oftentimes by faithful dealing in private with offenders than by judicial process, it does not appear why similar good results may not follow from the like dealing in the matter of worldly amusements.

2. "In thesi" deliverances must be submitted to unless contrary to the Constitution and the Scriptures.

1880, pp. 201, 202. "The Synod of South Carolina hereby overtures the General Assembly, respectfully praying that it will consider and repeal, or at least seriously modify, so much of the deliverance of the last Assembly, in relation to worldly amusements as declares that all deliverances of the General Assembly, and by necessary implication, of the other courts of the Church, which are not made by them in a strictly judicial capacity, but are deliverances *in thesi,* can be considered as only didactic, advisory and monitory."

The Assembly, in virtue of its power to give authoritative interpretations of the Word, declares:

1. Nothing is law, to be enforced by judicial prosecution, but that which is contained in the Word as interpreted in our Standards.

2. The *judicial* decisions of our courts differ from *in thesi* deliverances, in that the former *determine,* and when proceeding from our highest court, *conclude* a particular case; but both these kinds of decisions are alike interpretations of the Word by a church court, and both not only deserve high consideration, but both must be submitted to, unless contrary to the Constitution and the Word, as to which there is a right of private judgment belonging to every church court, and also to every individual church member.

3. The right of private judgment.

1881, p. 383. Overture touching the right of private judgment [answered:]

The Form of Government (Chap. V, Sec. II, Atr. II,) [pres. § 14-3] declares that "church courts can make no laws binding the conscience, but may frame symbols of faith," etc. It follows that church courts are not infallible, but on the contrary, "all

may err, and many have erred; therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but to be used as a help in both." [Confession of Faith, XXIII, 3.] Thus the right of private judgment is asserted; this right, however, is not opposed to lawful authority, but to the assumption of power to bind the conscience.

[See also this Digest, preceding section.]

4. No deliverance "in thesi" can modify or set aside a judicial sentence.

1879, p. 57. Overture from the Synod of Kentucky asking the General Assembly to reconsider the action of the Assembly of 1878, approving the action of the Presbytery of Louisville "in restraining from the exercise of the functions of the ministry a minister deemed irresponsible for his words and acts by reason of unsoundness of mind, without the usual form of judicial process."

And the Synod furthermore asks the Assembly to "make such a deliverance on the subject as shall obviate any liability to misinterpretation, or danger of the introduction of principles or usages at variance with the regulation of our Standards, and threatening to the rights and liberties of our ministers and people."

[The Assembly made the following answer:]

While it might be competent for one General Assembly, under such rules as the Constitution provides, to grant a new hearing of a case which has been judicially decided by a previous General Assembly, yet, inasmuch as this memorial simply asks for a deliverance in a case adjudicated by the Assembly of 1878, this Assembly declines to grant the request of the memorial, for the reason that no deliverance *in thesi* can modify or set aside a judicial sentence."

5. Authority of deliverances of Church courts and force of logical inferences from the same.

1881, p. 390. To the overture the Assembly returns the answer: All just and necessary consequences from the law of the Church are a part of the same, in the logical sense of being implicitly contained therein. The authority of this law is, however, twofold: it binds all those who profess to live under it as a covenant by which they are united in one communion, so that there is no escape from its control except by renouncing its jurisdiction; and it binds because it has been accepted as a true expression of what is revealed in Holy Scripture as infallible truth. The consequences deduced from it cannot, therefore, be equal in authority with the law itself, unless they be necessarily contained within it, as shown by their agreement also with the Divine Word.

6. "In thesi" deliverance not binding on a judicial case before trial.

1936, p. 35. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly decline to give an *in thesi* deliverance prior to a judicial case as an *in thesi* deliverance is merely an opinion and not a judgment and would not be binding in a judicial case before trial.

[Ed. note: There are several similar refusals.]

7. Examples of "in thesi" deliverances refused.

[See this Digest: Conf. of Faith, Chap. I, Par. II; Miscel. Deliv. of Doctrinal Nature; Form of Govt., § 14-5, 15-6, 16-7; Pastoral Letters, etc.; D. W. W., § 201-1 ff.]

8. Examples of "in thesi" made.

[See this Digest: Conf. of Faith, Chap. IV, Par. II, Miscel. Deliv. of Doctrinal Nature; Form of Govt., § 15-6; Pastoral Letters, etc.; D. W. W., § 201-1 ff.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 14-3.

Courts are competent to exercise "sound discretion" in the propriety of considering judicial process.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of I. W. and W. Q. Canfield, 1878, p. 60.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 14-4 and 5.

1. Jurisdiction of the several courts is as specified in the Constitution.

1948, p. 53. As concerning the overture from the Presbytery of Louisville requesting the appointment of an ad interim committee to study the whole question of matters that may be referred by the Assembly to the presbyteries and matters that should be settled by the Assembly, the committee recommends that it be answered in the negative for the reason that our Book of Church Order is sufficiently clear.

[Ed. note: Especially see this Digest, Form of Govt., § 18-4 and items thereunder for Assembly acknowledgment in practice of this fact. § 14-4 and 14-5 express the core of Presbyterian order through courts.]

2. "The jurisdiction of these courts is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution."

1961, p. 79; 1962, pp. 24, 58. [See this Digest under § 18-6(4).]
1964, pp. 27, 28, 80, 81; 1965, pp. 23, 28, 32, 94, 97. [See this Digest under § 18-6(4).]

3. "Original Jurisdiction."

[See this Digest: Form of Govt., § 16-7, 21-1 ff., 17-5, 18-6, 19-2; Rules of Dis- § 104-1 and 2, 107-1; and cross references among them.]

1935, p. 43. Overture asking for an interpretation of the phrase, "Original Jurisdiction," and a ruling on related matters, be answered as follows:

That in view of the importance of the question, and the absence of direct provisions in the Book of Church Order touching the same, and the absence of immediate emergency, the overture be referred to the Permanent Judicial Committee for study and report to the next General Assembly.

1936, p. 35. Touching the overture [above]; as this is a purely academic question the [Standing] Committee recommends that the General Assembly decline to give an *in thesi* deliverance prior to a judicial case as an *in thesi* deliverance is merely an opinion and not a judgment and would not be binding in a judicial case before trial.

[An effort to have the report of the Permanent Judicial Committee on the question of "Original Jurisdiction" printed in the Minutes was defeated. See 1936, p. 36, 38.]

[Ed. note: § 16-7 alone gives a court power to "assume" original jurisdiction, in this case Presbytery in relation to Session.]

4. A church or minister may be under the jurisdiction of only one Presbytery.

1923, pp. 59, 70. [Overture touching the status of united churches that are under the jurisdiction of two presbyteries and two Assemblies:]

We find that the General Assembly of 1887, p. 230, decided that "no minister can constitutionally be at the same time a member of two presbyteries." Obviously the same principle applies to sessions and churches.

[The action of 1915, p. 28, is cited. (See especially this Digest, Form of Government, § 16-2.).]

1. That the Assembly reaffirm these past deliverances.
2. That this action of the Assembly is not to be retroactive, but is to serve for the future guidance of churches and presbyteries.

3. That an Ad-interim Committee be appointed to devise and present to the next Assembly a plan for adjusting the difficulties and working out the problems involved in the occupation of the same or adjacent territory by different branches of the Presbyterian Church.

1924, pp. 33, 155. [Report of the Ad-interim Committee adopted with the exception of the "Addendum" which was stricken out. Excerpt:] The Committee expresses the judgment that the best form of adjustment in the case of local churches occupying the same field is by consolidation and connection with a presbytery of one or the other of the Assemblies.

1957, pp. 37, 149. In view of the fact that the Joint Committee unanimously agreed that the preferable way to handle communities where our churches overlap in jurisdiction is neither as a federated church or a so-called "union" or "united" congregation, but rather as a comity arrangement between Presbyteries and Synods whereby one Presbytery takes responsibility with the agreement of the other, for a community or larger area, your Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it approve the following plan [for transfer of churches between our Assembly and the UPUSA Assembly.]

[Ed. note: See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 31-1, 2. The joint committee of our Assembly and the USA Assembly, working on the problem of "union" and "federated" churches produced this portion of the Form of Government which was adopted in the revision of 1961. Only in the case of a "union" church under this chapter may a minister belong to a presbytery in two denominations.]

5. Property of a congregation in relation to the denomination.

[Ed. note: The Church has refused to affirm that the property of a congregation (see § 6-1, 2 and 3) belongs to that congregation absolutely and without any relation to the Church as a whole. Amendments, proposing that "the power of control, management and disposal" of property rested in the congregation, and affirming that the right to property "is a civil right and cannot be involuntarily impaired or affected by an ecclesiastical action of any other church court," twice were rejected by the Presbyteries (1932, p. 142; 1938, p. 60).

The Church has likewise refused to affirm any original power of higher courts over the property of a congregation. See actions below.]

1949, pp. 28, 57. Overture 7, requesting that the General Assembly amend the Book of Church Order, Paragraphs 76 and 163 [pres. § 16-7 and 6-2] in such fashion as to limit the power of a congregation or its trustees to sell, mortgage, or in any wise alienate property to which it holds title.

The committee voted to recommend that this overture be answered in the negative: (1) because it is a violation of the liberties heretofore enjoyed at the congregational level of church courts; and (2) furthermore we feel that Paragraph 164 [pres. § 6-3] of the Book of Church Order grants to presbytery the powers necessary to protect the interests of the church at large when they are being violated.

1950, pp. 23, 60, 61. Communication to the General Assembly:

One of the churches within the bounds of Atlanta Presbytery has so amended its articles of incorporation as to delete the name of, and any indication of relationship to, the Presbyterian Church in the United States. It has also described the possession of its property as "for the absolute, sole and exclusive benefit of the members of the congregation" of said church "without any right, title, interest or estate, legal or equitable, existing in favor of any denomination, presbytery or other ecclesiastical body whatever."

Because similar actions are being taken in other parts of the Assembly, the Presbytery of Atlanta seeks the counsel and advice of the General Assembly:

1. When a particular church takes such action as is indicated above, has it withdrawn from the Presbyterian Church in the United States?

2. Does a particular church have absolute ownership of its property without reference to the denomination?

3. What advice shall the Presbytery give to the particular church or, what action should the Presbytery take in the light of the facts set forth?

Our committee gives the following reply:

1. In answer to question 1 of the communication from the Presbytery of Atlanta, we reply:

No, but such action is contrary to and in violation of the historic practice and policy of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and, if upheld by the civil courts, would make it possible for this and other churches adopting similar charters to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church in the United States with their property at their own discretion.

2. Does a particular church have absolute ownership of its property without reference to the denomination? The answer, no. The committee also requests the General Assembly to instruct the Assembly's Permanent Nominating Committee to appoint a committee on the study of church property composed of from seven to nine members including at least three lawyers to study the whole question of the ownership of church property as related to the Presbytery and other church courts.

3. That the Assembly advise the Presbytery of Atlanta to direct the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Atlanta, Ga., to take such action as may be required to have its charter altered so as to conform to the requirements of the Book of Church Order, in order that the authority of the Courts of the Presbyterian Church in the United States may be properly recognized and that the property rights of the Presbyterian Church in the United States may be adequately safeguarded.

1951, pp. 45, 141. [Report of Ad Interim Committee "To Study the Whole Question of Church Property As Related to the Presbytery and Other Church Courts" was received as information and ordered printed in the Minutes. It was *not adopted*. Its statement was:]

That as a result of our study and deliberation, we submit to the General Assembly, the following five statements as our answer to the Assembly.

1. The legal title to property of a particular church is in its trustees on the behalf of that congregation. Therefore, the property is actually controlled by that congregation. This is recognized by both Civil and Ecclesiastical courts. The right to hold and dispose of property is granted by the State.

2. A voluntary religious society which constitutes a part of a religious organization or denomination, having established tribunals authorized to decide questions of faith, discipline, rule, or ecclesiastical government, is bound by decisions of such tribunals in such questions.

3. In such cases where a right of property asserted in a civil court is dependent solely on a question of doctrinal discipline, ecclesiastical law, rule, or church government and that question has been decided by the highest tribunal within the organization, the civil courts will ordinarily accept that decision.

4. Where property is acquired by a particular church, by purchase or otherwise, for the use of such church, it will be a matter for the civil courts to determine who constitute such church or its legitimate successors.

5. If trustees or members of a particular church undertake to withdraw and attempt to take their church property with them, it may subject all questions of ownership and control to a decision by the civil courts.

1952, pp. 24, 49, 57. That the General Assembly notify Atlanta Presbytery that the Westminster Presbyterian Church has moved in a satisfactory direction in amending its charter, but that the charter will not be completely satisfactory until the following section, "the property described is for the absolute, sole and exclusive benefit of the members of the congregation (of said church) without any right, title, interest or estate, legal or equitable, existing in favor of any denomination, presbytery or other ecclesiastical body whatever," be removed.

1952, p. 51. The Assembly adopted the following motion by a vote of 179 to 144: That an Ad Interim Committee for the purpose of studying the whole question of church property, composed of 9 members with not more than one member from any one synod, be appointed to report to the 1954 General Assembly with a definite recommendation for amendment to the Book of Church Order, if found necessary.

1953, pp. 42, 143. Report of the Ad Interim Committee:

(Note: This report was adopted as a declaratory statement. It was not approved as a proposed amendment to the Book of Church Order. See page 43.—Stated Clerk.)

It is the opinion of the Ad Interim Committe that the following paragraphs are merely declaratory of the existing applicable principles found in or necessarily implied from the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church.

The Committee recommend that these paragraphs be adopted as a declaratory statement by the General Assembly. If the General Assembly feels that an additional explanatory section in the Book of Church Order is desirable, then it is recommended that the following paragraphs be adopted as the opening paragraph of paragraph number 163 [pres. § 6-1] of the Book of Church Order.

ITEM I

The beneficial ownership of the property of a particular church of the Presbyterian Church in the United States is in the congregation of such church and title may properly be held in any form, corporate or otherwise, consistent with the provisions of civil law in the jurisdiction in which such property is situated. The congregation, with respect to such property, may properly exercise any privilege of ownership possessed by property owners in such jurisdiction. In every instance nothing in the manner of tenure of such property or the use thereof shall be in violation of the obligation of such congregation to the body of the Presbyterian Church in the United States as established by the Constitution of such Church.

ITEM II

Disposition of the property of a particular church rests in the will of the congregation of that church. The congregation is that body of persons recognized as members of that particular church by the respective courts of the Church.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 15-1.

1. The Pastor of a church which has no Elder does not constitute the Session.

1896, p. 610. Overture: Does the pastor of a church, after death of the only ruling elder, constitute the session, and has he the right to call a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of electing elders, or must he refer the matter to the presbytery?

Reply.—A pastor does not constitute a session, and under the circumstances stated in the second inquiry, the orderly procedure would call for the interposition of the presbytery.

2. The Pastor is a member of the Session.

1927, p. 50. Overture: When a regularly ordained minister moderates the session of a church of which he is the regularly installed pastor, has he the right to have his vote recorded in the minutes of the session in opposition to any action taken by the session? [Answer:] In the affirmative. The pastor is not merely moderator but also a member of the session (Book of Church Order, par. 61) [pres. § 15-1] and has the right to have his vote recorded on all questions. (Id. 293.)

3. The Stated Supply is not a member of the Session.

1938, p. 59. Overture asking for a deliverance on the following question: Where a church has only one ruling elder and is served by a stated supply, do that elder and stated supply constitute a session?

We recommend that the Assembly reply as follows:

They do not. A Stated Supply is not a member of the session. Par. 61, Book of Church Order [pres. § 15-1] says, "The church session consists of the pastor or pastors, if there be any, and the ruling elders of a church."

One ruling elder does not constitute a session.

4. Assistant Pastor cannot be a member of Session.

1955, p. 27. [Overture for amendment of Form of Govt. to make an Assistant Pastor a member of the Session.] Answered as follows: "Because the congregation has had no part in the election of an assistant pastor, he cannot be an officer over the people nor a member of the Session."

5. No such thing as "provisional" or "special" Sessions.

1887, pp. 204, 210. Exception to the records of the Synod of Mississippi:

On page 208-211 an overture from Memorial Church touching the matter of "provisional" or "special" sessions, and their right to representation in presbytery, was answered incorrectly.

The Assembly declared: (1) That the Constitution knows nothing of "provisional" or "special" sessions, though it recognizes the power of commissions to transact such business as may be committed to them by the several courts. (2) That no church constituted as the Bethel Church has the right of representation in the presbytery. An elder in one church cannot be an elder in another church at the same time. Form of Government, Chap. V, Sec. III, Par. 1, [pres. § 15-1.]

6. Sessional powers may not be conferred on unordained male missionaries in the foreign field.

1896, p. 580. Overture from certain missionaries in Korea, asking whether in a foreign field, where as yet there is neither presbytery nor native session regularly organized, it is allowable and proper to confer temporarily sessional powers on regularly appointed but unordained male missionaries, said powers to be exercised in conjunction with one or more ordained missionaries. The Assembly replies that the procedure stated in the overture is not orderly.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 15-2, 3 and 4.

1. No meeting of session without sanction of pastor.

1919, p. 50. Overture asking "whether the session of a church having a pastor can hold a legal meeting without the pastor as moderator, some elder of that church acting as such without the sanction of said minister."

Answer: It cannot hold such a meeting

1956, pp. 27, 44. [Overture] to clarify Paragraph 62, [§ 15-3] of the Book of Church Order, in reference to the question of whether a Session may call and have a meeting of the Session without it being called by the pastor, where there is a pastor, and particularly defining what shall constitute an emergency.

We recommend that overture 12 relative to the convening of Sessions and requesting a definition of the word "emergency" in paragraph 62, be answered as follows:

By virtue of the provisions of paragraphs 61, 62 and 66 [§ 15-2, 3 and 5] of the Book of Church Order, a duly constituted meeting of the Session consists of the Minister of the church and the Ruling Elders. It shall only be called by the Minister or the Presbytery, unless the Minister is necessarily absent and an emergency arises requiring immediate action. Paragraph 62 of the Book of Church Order adequately covers the matter of an "emergency" by the qualifying phrase contained therein, namely "requiring immediate action."

In addition, we recommend that the General Assembly ask our churches in these times of tension to observe not only the letter of the law in this regard but also the spirit thereof.

2. A minister of another denomination may not moderate a Session.

1886, p. 51. Answer to overtures:

A minister not in connection with the Presbyterian Church in the United States cannot preside as moderator of any of our sessions.

1907, p. 56. [Overture:] Is it constitutional and regular for a minister not a member of the Southern Presbyterian Church, to act as the moderator of a session? It is not constitutional and regular.

3. A minister of another Presbytery may moderate the Session.

1886, p. 51. Answer to overtures: 1. It is competent, except in judicial cases, for a minister belonging to one presbytery to preside at a meeting of a session in another presbytery, when invited to do so, in accordance with the rules laid down in Chap. V, Sec. 3, Par. 3 [pres. § 15-4.]

2. It is the judgment of this Assembly that the minister so invited to preside is moderator by courtesy only, and in no sense a member of the court; that his authority is limited to the preservation of order and the convening and adjourning of the court, according to its own ruling; and that he should not vote on any question, even in case of a tie.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 15-6.

The powers of the Session.

General—The government of the local church is entirely in the hands of the Session.

1916, p. 73. Overture asking for a deliverance on the powers of the session, and the duties of an elder:

We recommend that the Assembly answer the powers of the session are twofold. First, a several power which can be exercised by one elder, as in visiting the sick, admonishing the erring, etc.; and, second, a joint power, which must be exercised by the session as a court of the Lord Jesus Christ, and neither of these powers can be delegated to committees consisting of members of the church who are not elders. Therefore, the power to receive members into the church, to appoint representatives to presbyteries, to ordain officers, is a joint power, and must be exercised by the session alone. All power involving ruling or judgment belongs to the session as a court alone. It cannot be delegated. However, the session has power to appoint committees consisting of non-members of the session to administer things already decided by the session.

Second: The Assembly answers that it is the duty of an elder to make known to the session current reports affecting the character of an officer or member of the church, and the session should receive such report, deliberate upon it, investigate such rumor to see whether charges should be made and discipline administered for the honor and purity of the Church of Christ.

1928, p. 45. 1. Has the organization known as "The Men of the Church" any authority whatsoever over any local church? Answer: No.

2. Has any other organization? Answer: No.

3. Is not the session of the local church the supreme authority in the local church? Answer: Yes.

4. Can any organization or brotherhood or similar body or association (though composed exclusively of members of our churches) exercise power or authority over any like organization in the local church? Answer: We hold that the session of the local church is the sole governing authority in the local church and that every organization in the local church is subject to the session of the local church. Any recognized organization or brotherhood or similar body or association, composed exclusively of members of our own churches, may exercise power or authority over any like organization in the local church, provided always that such power or authority is exercised within limits which do not conflict with or in any manner or degree impair, impugn or transcend the sole governing authority of the session. The session, however, while supreme in its sphere, is not an autocratic or irresponsible body, and any abuses of its power may be redressed in the higher courts.

5. Is not every organization in the local church wholly subject to the session of the local church? Answer: Yes.

6. Has the General Assembly any authority to direct that in the local churches the Sunday School shall be under the control of the deacons? Or in anywise deprive the session of its supreme authority in the local affairs of the local church? Answer: No.

(2.) "To (censure) those found delinquent."

Citation of members by the Session, and refusal to obey the same.

1881, p. 397. [Overture:] 1. Do the provisions of our Book (Rules of Discipline, Chap. VI, Sec. VI, [pres. § 105-6] and Chap. III, Sec. II, [pres. § 102-2] apply to the case of a member of the church who refuses to obey the citation of the session to appear for conference concerning matters affecting the Christian character, when no formal charge has been preferred?

2. If they do not, by what means must the session deal with resistance of its authority when it exercises the power conferred in Chap. V, Sec. III, Par. 5, Form of Government [pres. § 15-6], and endeavors to perform the duty therein devolved on it of inquiring into the knowledge, principles and Christian conduct of the church members under its care by directing the members to appear before the session?

The following answer was adopted: Chap. VI, Sec. VI, Rules of Discipline, refers only to formal judicial prosecution, and requires that charges be preferred and the offender formally cited to appear before the session for the purpose of answering the charges. Chap. III, Sec. II, Rules of Discipline, refers to offences which may call for judicial prosecution, or may not, according to the nature of the case; and of this the session is to be the judge. The authority of the session, as defined in Chap. V, Sec. III, Par. 5, Form of Government, allows the session to enquire into the "knowledge, principles and Christian conduct of the members under its care," without formal judicial process. If its authority is resisted when so exercised, the session may then proceed to cite the offender to appear, as provided in Chap. VI, Rules of Discipline. If, after two citations, its authority is still resisted, the session may proceed to deal with the of-

fender for contumacy, as provided in Chap. VII, Sec. II, Rules of Discipline (pres. § 105-6.)

4. "To receive members."

3a. The Session has no power to make new rules of membership.

1865, p. 361. [See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 102-1.]

4b. Presbytery may not invade prerogative of the Session to receive members.

[See this Digest, Form of Government, § 16-7.]

4c. Reception of soldiers.

1918, p. 54. There has been submitted to your Committee the matter of securing for our soldiers in service away from home the privilege of uniting with their home church. We recommend this course: That any soldier desiring to make profession of faith in Christ and unite with his home church, may do so in this way: He may make profession of faith in Christ, and be baptized, if not already baptized, by any chaplain or ordained minister of any Evangelical Church. Such minister shall certify to the session of his home church, the fact that he has so received the profession of faith and baptized the applicant. And our sessions are authorized to receive such soldiers on these certificates, just as now they receive them upon letters from other Evangelical Churches.

[Ed. note: The chaplain, if given all the powers of an evangelist under Form of Govt., § 10-6, may receive the soldier as a member "into the Church", but still must follow the above procedure for the soldier to become a member of a particular church.]

5. "Dismission."

5a. When a member is in good and regular standing.

1861, pp. 11, 37. Overture: Is a member of a church in good and regular standing and entitled to a dismission in due form, when about to remove to another church, who has, for some time prior to his application for such dismission, absented himself from the ministrations of the Word and the ordinances of the Church on account of personal prejudices?

[Answer:] In the judgment of this Assembly, every member of our church is entitled to a dismission in good standing, unless process be commenced against him, it being left to the sound discretion of the session to determine from the circumstances of each particular case as to the propriety of tabling charges against him or not.

[See also this Digest under Judicial Cases, First Appeal of W. S. Turner, 1881, p. 378.]

5b. Session may not decline to grant certificate to a member in good and regular standing.

1918, p. 54. We would recommend this answer to the overture asking whether "it is the prerogative of a church session to decline to grant a certificate upon request of a communicant of that church who is in good and regular standing, dismissing him to another church of our communion into whose bounds he has removed his residence." It is not the prerogative of a church session to decline to grant a certificate under the conditions mentioned.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 8-3, 26-2.]

5c. Letters of dismission can be granted by the Session alone.

1908, p. 34. Overture: Can a session empower a committee or commissioner to grant certificates of dismission? Answer: The Assembly regards the granting of certificates of dismission to members, under our Constitution, as a sessional act. (Par. 67.) [pres. § 15-6.]

5d. Names of baptized children.

1963, pp. 30, 107. That Overture 23 requesting the rewording of Section 15-6 (5) so as to eliminate the impression certificates of dismission are given to parents, be answered with the recommendation of the Permanent Judicial Commission that Section 15-6 (5) of the Book of Church Order must be interpreted in the light of Section 8-4.

5c. Dismissing a member in blank irregular.

1906, p. 24. Overture: Is it irregular or unconstitutional for a church session to issue a letter of dismission in the following form (to a member who has permanently removed beyond its bound):

"This is to certify that A. B. is a member in good and regular standing in the C. D. church and, at his own request, is hereby dismissed and affectionately commended to any Presbyterian church in our communion, where God, in his providence, may cast his lot, and when so received, and not before, his special relation to this church will cease."

[Answer:] In the judgment of this Assembly such a letter is irregular, and no provision is made for it in the Constitution.

1908, p. 34. Overture: Must the name of the church be given to which any member is dismissed?

[Answer:] The name of the church to which a member is dismissed should ordinarily be given in the certificate of dismission.

5f. Return of an unused letter of dismission reinstates member in a church.

1876, p. 239. The receiving of a letter of dismission, while it may suspend the full communion of a member, does not terminate his connection with the church. The General Assembly of 1875 decided (though by some oversight the decision is omitted in the printed Minutes) that the return of an unused letter of dismission reinstated the party to full communion in the church from which it was taken.

(10.) Over worship.

1920, p. 79. Overture deals with the propriety of displaying the national flags in the church, of advertising church services in moving picture theatres, of the use of moving pictures, stereopticon slides, etc., at the mid-week meeting.

Your Committee recommends the following reply:

The Assembly repeats its previous deliverances regarding the necessity of preserving the purity and spirituality of its forms of worship.

But, inasmuch as the Book of Church Order provides that the session has control of the services in the particular church, we recommend that these questions be referred to the session as the court having original jurisdiction. We refer to the action of previous Assemblies suggesting that overtures to the Assembly come through the regular church courts, recognizing the right of the individual to complain through these courts successively.

1921, p. 68. [The Assembly declined to make a deliverance on church music inasmuch as] the Book of Church Order puts the whole question of church music in the hands of the session.

(12.) "To order collections."

Raising and distribution of funds under control of Session.

1915, p. 77. Overture asking the Assembly to interpret Paragraph 67 [pres. § 15-6] of the Book of Church Order, we make the following answer:

According to the Form of Government, Paragraph 67, all organizations of the local church are under the jurisdiction and control of the session as to the object for which funds are raised, the method by which they are raised, and the channel through which they are distributed. Whether the said organizations shall be required to send their offerings through the local treasurer is a matter for the session to determine.

[Cf. this Digest, Form of Govt., § 12-5.]

(15.) "To select representatives to the Presbytery and the Synod . . ."

15a. Elders in Presbytery are representatives, not delegates.

1886, p. 54. [The Assembly approved the records of the Synod of Virginia,] excepting to the use of the word "delegate" instead of "representative" of a church at a meeting of presbytery.

15b. Sessions may not instruct their representatives how to vote.

1884, p. 242. [Answer to an overture:] When a matter has been sent down by the Assembly for the consideration of the presbyteries, is it in accordance with the principles of Presbyterianism, and the Constitution of the Church, for church sessions to instruct their representatives how they shall vote on the question to be considered by the presbyteries?

The General Assembly answers this question that the session cannot authoritatively instruct its delegates [representatives, see preceding section.]

[1884, p. 253. In reviewing the Minutes of the Synod of Missouri, exception was taken to Synod's action in the judicial case which came up by complaint of the Session of Grand Avenue Church, St. Louis, against the Presbytery of St. Louis.

This Session instructed its delegate (representative) how he should vote on a question sent down by the Assembly for the decision of the presbyteries. The Presbytery took exception to this act of the Session. The Session then took a complaint to the Synod against this action of the Presbytery. The Synod sustained the complaint. The Presbytery thereupon took the matter to the Assembly in the above overture. The Assembly, by its answer to the overture and its exception to the records, sustained the Presbytery.—A.]

15c. Only the Session may appoint its representatives to the higher courts.

1887, p. 203. [Overture asked] if a presbytery has power to enroll a well-known ruling elder from a church within its bounds which has made no appointment of an elder to represent the church in the presbytery.

The presbytery has no power to appoint representatives from any of the churches in its bounds, as this power belongs exclusively to the sessions.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 15-7.

1. Discretion as to what shall go into Sessional records.

1901, p. 21. [Answer to an overture:] While it is important that a record be made of all the proceedings, this does not necessarily require the copying at length on the record book of all papers adopted by it, unless so directed by the presbytery. It is largely in the discretion of the session to direct as to what papers shall be copied. It is important, however, that papers so adopted should be kept on file by the clerk of session as in that sense a part of the record.

2. Only Presbytery may require reports.

1953, pp. 26, 52. We answer that only presbytery may require reports from the session.

1956, pp. 27, 45. Overture requesting clarification of the answer of the 1953 General Assembly to overture 12, relative to whether presbytery may require a session to make a report directly to a Board or Agency, be answered as follows:

We reaffirm the action of the 1953 Assembly that a presbytery cannot require a session to report directly to any court or body other than presbytery. It may request that reports be sent directly to a Board or Agency, and if any church declines to comply with such request, presbytery can require that the report be made to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery and he can then forward it.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 13-5.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 15-8.

1. Definition of "non-communing members."

1892, p. 434. [Overture] to interpret the meaning of the words "baptized" "non-communicants," in the statistical tables.

1. Should a church under these words report all baptized children not yet come to the age of discretion only?

2. Should non-communicants of all ages, baptized in its folds and living in its bounds, be included?

3. Should those living in the bounds of a church, recognized as belonging to a congregation, known to have been baptized in other Presbyterian churches, be included?

The Assembly [made] answer to the first question, no. To second question, yes. To third question, yes.

[Ed. note: The term "non-communicating" was changed to "non-communing" throughout the B.C.O. in the revision of 1925.]

2. Specific instructions concerning the registry of non-communing members.

1874, p. 504. [Answer to an overture:] 1. Baptized children being, according to our discipline, "members of the church, and subject to church government and constitution," there should be kept by the sessions a register of the names of such persons. [See 1873, p. 312, for similar action.]

2. Whenever a parent or parents, in full communion with a church, remove from such church to another, the session, in giving the usual certificate of dismission to such parent or parents, shall also, on the face of such certificate, state the names of all their children resident in their families, being baptized members of the church; and such names shall then be removed from the register of that church; and on the presentation of the certificate by the dismissed communicants, shall be entered on the register of the church to which said communicants may be dismissed.

3. Whenever any baptized child, not a communicant, shall remove from the bounds of any church, to become, prospectively a resident within the bounds of another, such child, having reached the years of discretion, shall be furnished by the session, at his or her request, with a certificate of such relationship, to be transferred to the session of the church within whose bounds the proposed residence is to be made.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 16-1.

1. The original Presbyteries.

1861, p. 5. [The First Assembly at Augusta was composed of commissioners from the following 47 presbyteries: Arkansas, Bethel, Brazos, Central Mississippi, Central Texas, Charleston, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Concord, Creek Nation, East Alabama, East Hanover, East Mississippi, Eastern Texas, Fayetteville, Flint River, Florida, Georgia, Greenbrier, Harmony, Holston, Hopewell, Indian, Knoxville, Lexington, Louisiana, Maury, Memphis, Mississippi, Montgomery, Nashville, New Orleans,

North Mississippi, Orange, Ouachita, Potomac, Red River, Roanoke, South Alabama, South Carolina, Tombeckbee, Tuscaloosa, Tuscumbia, Western District, Western Texas, West Hanover, Winchester.]

[Ed. note: Tuscaloosa, from 1866 through 1900, appears under the name "Tuskaloosa" for no reason appearing in the Minutes.]

2. Changes of the Presbyteries.

[Ed. note: The term "appear" has reference to the roll of presbyteries in the minutes.

1861, pp, 9, 12. Winchester (formerly in the Synod of Baltimore), on its overture, transferred to the Synod of Virginia.

1861, pp. 12, 37. Tuscumbia, on its overture, transferred from the Synod of Nashville to the Synod of Memphis.

1865, pp. 348, 351. Maury disappears and North Alabama appears on the roll of the Synod of Nashville.

(In 1865, just after the reception of the New School brethren into the Assembly, and the union of our presbyteries with those of the United Synod, the Presbytery of North Alabama appears on the roll of the Assembly. As the Synod of Nashville held no meeting after the fall of 1861 until January, 1866, at which a Presbytery of this name could have been created, this Presbytery was evidently the Presbytery of that name previously in connection with the United Synod, with which our Presbytery of Maury had merged.—A.)

1866, p. 6. Potomac appears on roll of Synod of Virginia.

1866, p. 10. Creek Nation dissolved by Synod of Arkansas.

1867, p. 129. East Mississippi and Potomac disappear from the roll. The Synod of Georgia having re-organized its Presbyteries; Atlanta, Augusta, Cherokee, Florida, Macon, and Savannah appear instead of Cherokee, Flint River, Florida, Georgia, and Hopewell. Abingdon and Rappahannock appear under the Synod of Virginia.

1867, p. 131. Patapsco, in the State of Maryland, on its memorial was received and attached to the Synod of Virginia.

1869, p. 369. Wilmington appears, having been organized by the Synod of North Carolina.

Chesapeake appears, being the union of Rappahannock and Patapsco in the Synod of Virginia.

Central Ohio, Ebenezer, Louisville, Muhlenburg, Paducah, Transylvania, and West Lexington appear, being the Presbyteries of the Synod of Kentucky which now joined the Assembly.

Tuscumbia disappears, having been dissolved by the Synod of Memphis.

1870, p. 498. Mecklenburg appears in the Synod of North Carolina.

1872, p. 151. Sao Paulo (Brazil) appears under the Synod of Virginia having been constituted by the General Assembly.

1873, p. 302. Tuscumbia reappears, having been reconstituted by the Synod of Memphis.

1874, p. 478. Lafayette, Missouri, Palmyra, Potosi, St. Louis, and Upper Missouri appear, being the Presbyteries of the Old School Synod of Missouri which was re-united with our Church.

p. 480. Hanchow (China) appears, being constituted by the Assembly and attached to the Synod of Kentucky. (Evident misspelling for "Hangchow.")

1876, p. 202. Columbia appears under the Synod of Nashville as the new name for what was North Alabama.

North Alabama appears under the Synod of Memphis, as the new name for what was Tuscumbia. Tuscumbia thus disappears from the roll.

1877, p. 403. Hangchow disappears from the roll by the action of 1876, p. 237, which restated the Assembly's constitutional inability to establish presbyteries.

1878, p. 603. Central Ohio disappears under the Synod of Kentucky. St. Johns appears under the Synod of Georgia.

p. 604. Maryland appears under the Synod of Virginia.

1879, p. 5. Dallas appears, having been organized by the Synod of Texas. Enoree appears, having been organized by the Synod of South Carolina.

1880, p. 179. Upper Missouri disappears, having been united with Lafayette by the Synod of Missouri.

p. 180. Athens appears under the Synod of Georgia.

p. 181. Paris appears under the Synod of Texas.

1882, p. 520. Florida, Savannah and St. Johns appear under the Synod of South Georgia and Florida, having been constituted into this new Synod by the Assembly at the request of the Synod of Georgia.

p. 521. Sao Paulo disappears under the Synod of Virginia.

1883, p. 5. Upper Missouri appears, having been re-constituted by the Synod of Missouri.

p. 18. North Alabama transferred from the Synod of Memphis to the Synod of Alabama.

1884, p. 193. Pine Bluff appears, having been organized by the Synod of Arkansas.

1885, p. 389. Washburn appears, having been organized by the Synod of Arkansas. (From 1886 through 1905 this Presbytery is listed as Washbourne for no reason appearing in the Minutes.)

1888, p. 373. East Alabama disappears, presbyterial lines having been redrawn by the Synod of Alabama, and East Alabama having been divided between North Alabama and South Alabama.

1890, p. 5. Newly erected presbyteries appear: Pee Dee in the Synod of South Carolina, Albemarle in the Synod of North Carolina, and Suwannee in the Synod of South Georgia and Florida.

1891, p. 229. Indian Presbytery, by request of the Presbytery and of the Synod of Arkansas, transferred to the Synod of Texas.

p. 235. Savannah, by requests of the Synod of South Georgia and Florida and of the Synod of Georgia, transferred to the Synod of Georgia. Overture from Synod of South Georgia and Florida granted, changing name to Synod of Florida.

1892, p. 408. Ethel (colored) appears under the Synod of Mississippi, having been organized in January, 1891. (See p. 483.)

1894, p. 179. Norfolk appears, having been constituted by the Synod of Virginia.

1895, p. 375. Kanawha appears, having been constituted by the Synod of Virginia.

1896, p. 559. Central Alabama (colored) appears, having been organized by the Synod of Alabama. Fort Worth appears, having been organized by the Synod of Texas.

1897, p. 5. Asheville appears, having been organized by the Synod of North Carolina.

1899, p. 389. East Alabama (see 1900, p. 589, footnote) appears, having been erected in 1898 by the Synod of Alabama, composed of a part of the old Presbytery of South Alabama. The remainder of South Alabama had been, at the same time, annexed to the Presbytery of Tuskaloosa.

1900, p. 589. Meridian appears, having been erected by the Synod of Mississippi, (formerly part of Tombeckbee). Brownwood appears, having been erected by the Synod of Texas.

1902. Louisiana, New Orleans, and Red River appear under the newly organized Synod of Louisiana.

Chickasaw and North Mississippi appear under the Synod of Mississippi, having been transferred at the dissolution of the Synod of Memphis.

Memphis and Western District appear under the newly constituted Synod of Tennessee, having been transferred at the dissolution of the Synod of Memphis.

1903, p. 453. Kings Mountain appears, having been erected out of the territory of Mecklenburg, Synod of North Carolina.

Mobile appears, having been erected out of the territory of Tuscaloosa, Synod of Alabama.

Durant appears, having been erected out of the territory of Indian, Synod of Texas.

1906, p. 5. El Paso appears, having been organized by the Synod of Texas.

1907, p. 5. Mangum appears, having been organized by the Synod of Texas.

1908, p. 5. East Mississippi appears, being the consolidation of Chickasaw and Tombeckbee by the Synod of Mississippi.

1909, p. 5. Texas-Mexican appears, having been organized by the Synod of Texas. Durant, Indian and Mangum appear under the newly organized Synod of Oklahoma.

1910, p. 7. Piedmont appears, having been erected by the Synod of South Carolina. Panhandle and Sherman appear, having been erected by the Synod of Texas.

1911, p. 7. Cisco appears, having been organized by the Synod of Texas.

1912, p. 7. Sherman disappears, having been consolidated with Dallas under the name of Dallas by the Synod of Texas. Chesapeake and Maryland disappear, having been consolidated under the name of Potomac by the Synod of Virginia.

1913, p. 7. Western District disappears, having been consolidated with Memphis under the name of Memphis by the Synod of Tennessee.

Cisco disappears, having been consolidated with Fort Worth under the name of Fort Worth by the Synod of Texas.

Tygart's Valley appears, having been organized by the Synod of Virginia.

1914, p. 7. Panhandle disappears, having been consolidated with Dallas by the Synod of Texas. Congaree had been erected by the Synod of South Carolina, but sent no commissioners until the Assembly of 1915.

1915, p. 10. Greenbrier, Kanawha and Tygart's Valley appear, constituting the newly erected Synod of West Virginia.

1916, pp. 7, 12. Abingdon, Asheville, Holston and Knoxville appear under the newly organized Synod of Appalachia.

1917, p. 7. Central Louisiana and North and South Carolina appear, being parts of the newly organized Afro-American Synod.

Ethel appears under the Afro-American Synod, being transferred from the Synod of Mississippi.

Central Alabama appears under the Afro-American Synod, being transferred from the Synod of Alabama.

These four were colored presbyteries.

p. 29. The Assembly was notified that this Synod had taken the name of Snedecor Memorial Synod, under which name these presbyteries hereafter appear.

1921, p. 7. Southwest Georgia appears, having been created by division from Macon by the Synod of Georgia.

1924, p. 11. Paducah disappears, having been united with the Presbytery of Muhlenburg by the Synod of Kentucky.

Granville and Winston-Salem appear, having been erected by the Synod of North Carolina in the rearrangement of the boundaries of its presbyteries.

1925, p. 13. Birmingham appears, having been organized by the Synod of Alabama by division of North Alabama.

1926, p. 15. Guerrant appears, having been organized by the Synod of Kentucky.

1928, p. 15. Tygarts Valley disappears, and Bluestone appears, having been dissolved and organized respectively by the Synod of West Virginia in its readjustment of presbyterial boundaries.

1929, p. 15. Miami and Tampa appear, having been organized (with a new St. Johns) out of the territory formerly occupied by St. Johns, by the Synod of Florida.

1932, p. 16. Miami and Tampa disappear, having with St. Johns been reunited under the name of St. Johns by the Synod of Florida.

1935, p. 19. Communication from the Synod of West Virginia, advising the Assembly of a change in the boundaries of Bluestone and Greenbrier Presbyteries, transferring the Churches of Richwood and Summersville from Bluestone to Greenbrier Presbytery.

p. 44. Overture from the Synod of Kentucky, asking that the Assembly approve the action of the Synod in dissolving the Presbytery of Ebenezer and dividing it among the Presbyteries of Louisville, West Lexington and Guerrant, answered in the affirmative.

1936, p. 15. Official notice received from the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Kentucky that Ebenezer Presbytery had been dissolved, its ministers and churches transferred to Guerrant, Louisville and West Lexington Presbyteries, and further that the name of West Lexington Presbytery had been changed to Lexington-Ebenezer.

Official notice received from the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Texas that Brazos and Eastern Texas Presbyteries had been merged, the Presbytery thus formed receiving the name Brazos.

1945, p. 19. Official information received that the Presbyteries of Brownwood and Fort Worth had merged to form the Presbytery of Mid-Texas.

1949, p. 19. Official report that the Presbytery of Macon in the Synod of Georgia had been divided between the Presbyteries of Augusta and

Southwest Georgia. The name of the former has become Augusta-Macon while the name of the latter is unchanged.

1950, p. 17. Official report of the reorganization of the Synod of Arkansas, resulting in reduction of presbyteries from four to three: East Arkansas, Ouachita and Washburn.

1955, p. 17. Official information that the Synod of Texas has dissolved the Presbytery of Texas-Mexican. The churches which formerly constituted this Presbytery have been transferred to the presbyteries of Brazos, Central Texas and Western Texas.

Official information that the Synod of Florida has divided the Presbytery of St. Johns into three presbyteries bearing the following names: The Everglades, St. Johns and Westminster.

1957, p. 24. Official report that the Presbytery of Roanoke, Synod of Virginia, had been merged as of Jan. 1, 1957 with the Presbyteries of West Hanover and Montgomery. Further changes were made affecting the boundaries of the Presbyteries of Lexington and Montgomery.

1958, p. 17. 1. Synod of Oklahoma:

This Synod has altered the boundaries of the Presbyteries and the names have been changed to read as follows: Indian, Shawnee and Southwest Oklahoma.

2. Synod of Texas:

A general rearrangement of churches has resulted in the reduction of Presbyteries from seven to six, named as follows: Brazos, Central Texas, John Knox, Northeast Texas, South Texas and Southwest Texas.

3. Synod of Virginia:

East Hanover Presbytery has been renamed Hanover and West Hanover becomes Appomattox.

1960, pp. 23, 77. Communication describing the transfer of LaSalle and Webb Counties, with the churches and their pastors therein, from the Presbytery of South Texas to the Presbytery of John Knox, recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly.

1961, pp. 23, 68. Communication from the Synod of Kentucky, informing of changes in bounds between the Presbyteries within that Synod, resulting in the elimination of the Presbytery of Lexington-Ebenezer recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly.

Communication from the Synod of Mississippi, informing of changes in bounds between the Presbyteries of that synod, resulting in the elimination of the previous five Presbyteries and the erection of three Presbyteries: St. Andrew, Central Mississippi, and South Mississippi be recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly.

1962, pp. 23, 59. Communication from the Synod of Missouri:

(a). That changes in the boundaries of the Presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod of Missouri be noted, and that necessary adjustments in the records of the Office of General Assembly be made.

(b). That the names Lafayette and Upper Missouri be stricken from the roll of the Presbyteries, and the names of John Calvin and Northwest Missouri respectively, be added in their stead.]

3. Withdrawal of Charleston Union Presbytery.

1870, p. 507. [The Committee on Foreign Correspondence reported:]

That it has examined the printed document addressed to this Assembly,

which proves to be a statement of reasons by certain ministers residing in the city of Charleston, S. C., for withdrawing from the Presbytery of Charleston, and reconstituting the Old Charleston Union Presbytery as an independent body.

The grounds of disaffection appear to be the action taken by the last General Assembly, declaring it to be "contrary to our Standards for one of our ministers to remain the permanent supply of a church of another denomination"; and their opposition of the new Book of Church Order, which they assume as being endorsed by the Church, and certain to be adopted as her organic law. However ill-advised and premature this withdrawal may be, in view of the fact that the Book of Church Order is not yet accepted by the Church, and in view of the fact that this particular act of legislation expected against is still under consideration by this Assembly, through an overture from one of its own Presbyteries—still, as the paper referred to this committee is neither a complaint nor an appeal, but simply an official notification of the final withdrawal of those parties from our jurisdiction, no action is called for on the part of this Assembly; and the committee recommended that the subject be dismissed from further consideration.

4. A Minister's right as a presbyter cannot be denied.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of the Presbytery of Memphis, 1882, p. 530.]

5. Views of absentee presbyters.

1960, pp. 25, 57. [Overture] requesting the Assembly to encourage all presbyteries to give voice to the views of each member of presbytery, whether present or absent, on all matters concerning constitutional changes and church union, and that the stated clerk of each presbytery solicit such views, answered in the negative, for the following reasons:

The Book of Church Order already adequately provides for a voice for absent members through communications with the stated clerk; and

Presbyters who are absent from meetings and who are interested in particular matters coming to the attention of the court should not have to be solicited as to their views and opinions; and

It is out of harmony with our doctrine of church polity that solicited views of absentee presbyters should be given a status on a par with the views of members who are present and open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit there through the means of prayer and debate.

6. An elder's membership in Presbytery continues until the next stated meeting.

1872, p .164. [Answer to an overture:] When an elder is appointed to attend a stated meeting of presbytery, he may, without any new appointment, meet and act with the presbytery until its next stated meeting, unless the session shall appoint some other of its elders to attend in his place.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-9, 1893, p. 54.]

1888, p. 424. [Overture] asking the General Assembly to decide the question whether or not a ruling elder elected to represent a church at a regular meeting of presbytery is a member of presbytery until its next regular meting.

[Answer:] The term of a ruling elder's service continues from one regular meeting to the next regular meeting, unless the session otherwise direct.

7. What elders may be appointed on Presbytery's Committees?

1870, p. 508. [From the Judicial Committee:]

"Is it in accordance with the Standards of our Church for a presbytery to appoint on a committee a ruling elder who is not at the time a member of presbytery?"

The committee recommended the following answer:

As ruling elders are [representatives] from church sessions, and members of the presbytery by virtue of their commissions, the Assembly is of the opinion that it is not competent for the presbytery to appoint on a committee a ruling elder who is not a member of the presbytery, unless appointed on a committee to act *ad interim*.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 16-2.

1. A Minister cannot be a member of two Presbyteries at the same time.

1887, p. 230. [In answer to an overture:] It is the clear conviction of this committee that no minister can constitutionally be, at the same time, a member of two presbyteries. Hence, the transfer to a foreign presbytery involves the complete severance of previously existing presbyterial relations, precisely as at home.

1915, p. 28. Overture touching membership of a minister in two presbyteries:

Answer: The Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States makes it impossible that a minister, officer or church be under the jurisdiction of more than one ecclesiastical court of the same grade.

1923, p. 38. That in view of the difficulty of dealing with cases of doctrinal unsoundness in the case of those who have transferred their membership from the presbytery at home to one of the presbyteries on the field, the Executive Committee refer to the missions the matter of the advisability of having all of our missionaries retain membership in the home presbytery and report to the next Assembly.

That until action to the above effect is taken, all missionaries going to the field should sign a statement obligating themselves, in case their orthodoxy is called into question, to return to the home presbytery, in which they formerly held membership, for examination.

That the Executive Committee see that those going to the field without a seminary or training school course have some knowledge of the history and doctrines of our Church.

1925, p. 68. In response to the overture asking the Assembly to define the proper relation of foreign missionaries to the native presbyteries in mission fields, the Assembly would answer that no minister can be a full member of more than one presbytery, and providential circumstances must decide whether it would be wise for such membership to be held in home or foreign presbyteries in particular cases, but the relationship ought to be one of affectionate interest and concern for the foreign presbytery even if membership is to be retained in the home presbytery. Affiliate membership in a presbytery, however, is unknown to our Constitution.

1935, pp. 26, 45; 1936, p. 40. [Proposed amendment which would have permitted this was lost by vote of the Presbyteries.]

1952, pp. 29, 53. [Overture to provide for minister of U.S.A. Church serving a federated congregation could belong also to the U.S. Presbytery was] answered in the negative, in order to be consistent with the findings of the General Assembly of 1887 and 1923. (Leslie, *Presbyterian Law and Procedure, 1930, page 163.*)

1957, pp. 37, 149; 1961, pp. 54, 65. [Present § 31-1 and 31-2 were made part of the Constitution. Dual presbytery membership was *not* provided for the case of a federated church, but in a "union" church under § 31-2 the minister may be a member of both Presbyteries.]

2. Permission to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery.

1943, p. 28. [Overture] to cite and interpret the law of the Church upon which rests the practice of presbyteries in granting permission to ministers "to labor outside the bounds of the presbytery." Can such permission be given when the purpose

is for the minister to labor in some ecclesiastical field of work which is not under the jurisdiction of the presbytery and the position is to be a permanent field of labor?

p. 51. We recommend the following answer: The practice of the presbyteries in granting a minister permission to labor outside the bounds of presbytery is based on Paragraph 71 [pres. § 16-2] of the Book of Church Order. We believe that the authority of the presbytery to grant this permission should be made explicit, but that it should not be allowed to grant a minister permission to labor within the bounds of another presbytery in our Church without its consent. In the proposed revision of the Book of Church Order which the Permanent Judicial Committee is offering to the General Assembly an amendment is suggested along the lines indicated.

1950, pp. 24, 48. Overture concerning the relation of a minister who has retired and is now receiving a pension, and who has moved to another presbytery and is supplying churches in that presbytery as to whether it is necessary for such a minister to receive permission from his presbytery to labor within the bounds of another presbytery. This overture is answered in the affirmative since it is adequately defined and clarified in the Book of Church Order, paragraph 71 [§ 16-2].

3. Minister who cannot be located.

1947, pp. 29, 52. That overture concerning the time a presbytery is required to carry on its roll the name of a minister with whom it is unable to make contact, be answered thus: This is a matter to be determined at the discretion of the presbytery according to the circumstances of each individual case.

4. Retired Minister's membership.

1965, pp. 29, 95. That Overture concerning receiving retired ministers be answered with the following statement as recommended by the Permanent Judicial Commission:

The Presbytery is under no obligation to receive honorably retired ministers, but under the provisions of Section 16-2, Book of Church Order, a Presbytery may not deny membership by blanket ruling to such ministers who may move into its geographical borders.

5. Transfer of territory from one Presbytery to another, transfers the Ministers in the ceded territory without dismission and without examination.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-5.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 16-3.

Presbytery may not enroll a Ruling Elder from a church which has made no appointment of a representative.

1887, p. 203. [See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 15-6.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 16-5.

1. The examination mandatory for ministers applying for admission into a Presbytery.

[This rule is found in Baird's Digest, Book 4, Section 46. The Assembly of 1835 decided that every presbytery had the constitutional right to examine all seeking connection with it. The Assembly of 1837 made it imperative on presbyteries to examine such applicants, at least on experimental religion, theology and Church government. This requirement was reaffirmed by the Old School Assemblies of 1838, 1841, 1843 and 1848. The Assembly of 1849 was asked

to repeal that resolution, or change it from its imperative form to one of recommendation, or to take steps to have it added as a section to the Form of Government. The Assembly, claiming that it had power to enjoin upon presbyteries the performance of any duty which, under the provisions of the Constitution, they are competent to do and, inasmuch as the utility of the rule was not called in question by the memorialists, declined acceding to the request at present.

The New School Assembly of 1838 declared the above rule making examinations imperative upon the presbyteries *null and void,* because it was the inherent right of presbyteries to expound and apply constitutional rules touching the qualification of their own members.

(Minutes, New School, 1838, p. 660-A.)—A.]

1865, p. 359. [The Assembly was asked in overtures to amend this rule] so as to make it optional. [Answer:] As there is no evidence that the rule has not worked well, the Assembly declines to make the change requested.

1871, p. 14. [The Assembly refused to rescind the rule, quoting the action of 1849.]

[The Presbytery of West Hanover overtured the Assembly, in 1872, to reconsider the action of the Assembly of 1837 adopting the rule known as the examination rule, and refer it to the presbyteries for their action, with a recommendation for its adoption. The Presbytery declared its belief in the right of presbyteries to judge of the qualifications of its members, also its conviction that there was a necessity for some such provision as that contained in this rule. The object of this Presbytery was not the abolition of the rule, but to secure its perpetuity by regular incorporation into the Constitution. Among the reasons assigned for asking the Assembly to take this action was this, that many presbyteries hold that the rule in its present form, while virtually a constitutional rule, has never been adopted in a constitutional manner. See Minutes of West Hanover, Vol. V, pp. 350-352 (Alexander's Digest, 1922.]

1872, pp. 157, 158. As none deny the right of every presbytery to be satisfied of the doctrinal opinions of all persons seeking its care, or membership in it, as the injunction is highly promotive of peace and harmony and has wrought much good and no evil, and as no one claims that the rule is constitutional, but only of the nature of a strong and urgent recommendation, your committee advise that no change be made respecting it.

After discussion the whole subject was laid on the table.

[Ed. note: This rule was however incorporated in the Form of Government adopted in 1879, Chap. V, Sec. IV, Art. IV [now § 16-5], and thus continues a part of the organic law of the Church.]

1952, pp. 29, 54. [Overture from the Presbytery of Potomac to amend the Book of Church Order so as to eliminate the mandatory examination of ministers in good standing in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. seeking admission to another Presbytery] answered in the negative.

[Ed. note: The question whether a minister applying for admission into a Presbytery may demand examination as a matter of right has never been before the General Assembly.]

2. Presbytery alone may test theological beliefs.

1935, p. 65. Resolution: To safeguard the interests of all concerned, the General Assembly requests the faculties of the theological seminaries of our Church upon the graduation of a student to send down to his presbytery for its information only their estimation of his fitness and gifts, in the matter of soundness in the faith and qualification for usefulness in the ministry.

1936, p. 120. [From report of Ad-Interim Committee on Curricula of Theological Seminaries:] Since according to our Standards, it is the prerogative of the presbytery alone to test the theological beliefs of its members or those seeking admission thereunto, we recommend: That this Assembly hereby rescind that part of the action of the 1935 General Assembly which requests the faculties of the theological seminaries upon the graduation of a student to send down to his presbytery for its information an estimate of the student's soundness in the faith.

1940, p. 45. Overture seeking to require all candidates for licensure and ministers coming from other presbyteries and other churches to submit to Presbytery a brief and comprehensive statement of their Confession of Faith, answered in the negative, as the Book of Church Order provides for the examination of candidates for licensure, and ministers coming from presbyteries and other denominations in Form of Government, par. 74, as amended in 1939, and par. 136 [pres. § 16-5 and 27-6].

3. Presbytery may not delegate its responsibility to examine.

1951, pp. 27, 50. [Overture] as to whether a presbytery may legally, if it so desires, authorize its Commission on the Minister and His Work to examine a minister, coming from another presbytery of our Church, to receive him, and arrange for his installation. [Answered in the negative.]

1962, pp. 24, 58. That Overture 4 asking the General Assembly to rule on the constitutionality of the examination and reception of ministers into the presbytery by the Commission on the Minister and His Work be answered by the statement that this is unconstitutional, this being the function of the Presbytery.

1963, pp. 31, 108. That "reference," regarding the constitutionality of committee examination of candidates and/or ministers seeking admission to the Presbytery, be answered with the recommendation of the Permanent Judicial Commission that a Presbytery, to facilitate the discharge of its responsibility of examining a minister or a candidate, as required by Sections 16-5 or 27-5 of the Book of Church Order, may instruct a committee to conduct a preliminary examination and make a report which shall not take the place of an examination by the Presbytery itself. The length and detail of the Presbytery's examination may be affected by such committee report.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 27-5.]

4. Is Presbytery the final judge as to whether a minister possesses the qualifications which our Constitution demands for admission to Presbytery?

[See especially this Digest: (a) the items immediately above; (b) Form of Govt., § 17-6 with reference to Synod interposing authority with the right of Presbytery to judge its own ministers; and (c) decisions in the following Judicial Cases—Appeal of Rev. Stuart Robinson in the Canfield Case; The Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith; Appeal of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi in re Rev. A. M. Hart; Complaint of Frank J. Buchanan, et al.]

[Ed. note: This is not the question of *original* jurisdiction, which presbytery has under § 16-5, but rather the question of *final* jurisdiction.]

5. What is a "standard" seminary?

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 27-5.]

6. The reception of a minister from another denomination.

1907, p. 57. [To overtures] asking for a change in the Book of Church Order, Paragraph 75 [pres. § 16-5] so as to require a two-thirds or a three-fourths vote to receive into a presbytery a minister coming from another denomination, [the Assembly] answered in the negative.

1946, p. 68. We recommend that the General Assembly endorse the following resolution adopted by the Executive Committee of the Executive Council of the Federal Council and submitted by it to its constituent churches: "It is in the interest of orderly procedure and mutual advantage that an ecclesiastical body should not receive into its fellowship a minister ordained by another denomination without first seeking information from the church in which he was ordained."

7. The reception of ministers from foreign countries.

1871, p. 25. The Presbytery of Augusta is cordially encouraged to employ the Rev. Robert Irvine, D.D., in preaching and administering the sacraments within their bounds during the time of his probation.

1873, p. 307. The Presbytery of Roanoke is authorized to employ the Rev. Thomas Drew, in preaching and administering the sacraments within their bounds during the time of his probation.

[In each instance the following additional resolution was adopted:]

"That if the presbytery shall continue to be at their [next stated] meeting, well satisfied with the probation of . . ., they then be authorized to receive him to full membership and, if the way be clear, install him into the pastoral work; this being the earliest date for such action permitted by the ordinance of the Assembly."

[Ed. note: These two are particular cases and do not constitute a present general rule. The practice of probation of a minister being received from a foreign country was made a rule of the General Synod in colonial times (Minutes, 1735, p. 118) when there was some necessity for such a course. That rule, modified and amended in 1773, 1774, 1784, 1798 and 1800, was still effective at the time of the division in 1861. Our Church followed that rule in both the above instances, despite the fact that both of the Presbyteries requested the relaxing of the rule.

In the new Book of Church Order enacted in 1879 no mention was made of such a rule, and subsequent to that time there is no evidence of its existence.]

8. Transfer of territory from one Presbytery to another transfers the ministers in the ceded territory without dismission and without examination.

1894, p. 197. The Synod of North Carolina asks whether "when a synod transfers any part of the territory of one presbytery to that of another, with the churches included therein, the action of synod transfers the ministers in the ceded territory from one presbytery to the other without any dismission from the presbytery to which they belonged, and without any examination according to the Form of Goverment, Chapter V, Section IV, Paragraph 4, or any vote on the part of the Presbytery receiving them?"

Answer: Yes. The case is not the same as that contemplated in the Form of Government, Chapter V, Section IV, Paragraph 4 [pres. § 16-5].

9. Reception of ministers without letters of dismission.

1862, p. 9. [Answer to overture:] The presbyteries in connection with this Assembly are authorized to receive ministers coming from the Presbyterian Church in the United States (of America) on their giving satisfactory evidence of their good standing, and after the usual examination upon experimental religion, didactic and polemic theology, and Church government, without requiring a certificate of dismission.

[Ed. note: This was purely a war-time measure, and ceased its effect when it became possible again to receive letters from presbyteries in the north.]

10. Ministers of other denominations in Presbyterian pulpits.

1865, p. 359. [In answer to] an inquiry as to what is the duty and Christian course of a church session, when a minister or agent of the Old School General Assembly (north) presents himself among us, with a request to labor in our churches, or to occupy one of our vacant houses of worship.

Resolved: 1. [That the Presbyterian Church of the North (Old School) is to be looked upon simply as a distinct ecclesiastical body, whose ministers hold no further claim upon our courtesy than any other churches of the same section of the country which hold to the same symbols of faith and order with ourselves.]

Resolved: 2. [That the Assembly has no reason for recommending any usage than those long familiar, and will not attempt to define afresh what shall exclude men from our pulpits.]

Resolved: 3. [Owing to peculiar reasons for prudence which now exist, we enjoin special caution; and in case of doubt, judgment of presbytery should be sought.]

Resolved: 4. That the Assembly would remind sessions that in no case is it proper for them to invite ministers of other denominations statedly to occupy any of our pulpits without the consent of the presbyteries, and the known purpose of such ministers, at the earliest suitable opportunity, to unite with us in ecclesiastical relations.

11. Presbyteries cautioned in receiving ministers from certain types of institutions.

1943, p. 78. That overture asking the General Assembly to caution all the presbyteries in regard to receiving candidates for the ministry, or ministers coming from institutions that undermine loyalty to, or question the orthodoxy of, the Presbyterian Church, U.S., be answered in the affirmative.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 16-6.

The subscribing of ministers admitted to membership in a Presbytery required.

1880, p. 187. [Overture] to interpret the phrase, "which shall be subscribed by all admitted to membership." Does it mean all of *other denominations,* or ALL admitted to membership at their ordination, or all in the *widest sense,* including those coming from other presbyteries to our own Church, and those who are already members?

Answer: In the judgment of this Assembly, the provision of Chap. V, Sec. IV, Art. V. [pres. § 16-6], Form of Government, is intended as an additional safeguard to the purity and efficiency of the ministry, and the phrase "all admitted to membership," is to be interpreted in its most comprehensive sense as regards the ministry, and applied, not only to those admitted by ordination and those received from other denominations, but also to those received by letters of dismission from one presbytery to another of our own Church.

1882, p. 572. [An overture asked] for an amendment to the Form of Government so as to relieve ministers passing from one presbytery to another from signing the obligation required of ministers at their ordination. [Answer:] The end to be gained by such a change is not of sufficient importance to justify an amendment to the Constitution. **1883, p. 25; 1900, p. 604.** [Similar overtures were answered in the negative.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 16-7.

The powers of Presbytery.

§ 16-7 (2).

(2.) "To assume original jurisdiction" over churches in certain circumstances.

2a. Presbytery may dissolve relation between a Ruling Elder and a congregation without deposing.

1894, p. 196. [Overture: May a Presbytery,] without petition, set aside an elder without deposing him; that is, may the Presbytery dissolve the eldership relation, as they may the pastoral relation, without prejudice?

Answer: Presbytery may dissolve the relation between ruling elder and a particular congregation without prejudice and without petition. See Book of Church Order, Paragraph 205 [pres. § 107-4], which, *mutatis mutandis*, applies to elders and deacons; and also Paragraph 77 [pres. § 16-7], which provides that "Presbytery shall have power to assume original jurisdiction in cases in which the session cannot exercise its authority."

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of N. D. Thurmond.]

2b. Presbytery of Memphis sustained in its course with Big Creek Church.

1891, p. 261. Your committee recommend the approval of the records of the Synod of Memphis, with the following exception: On page 136, with reference to the action of the Synod touching the action of the Presbytery of Memphis toward the Session of Big Creek Church, it is the judgment of your committee that the Presbytery of Memphis in said action exercised its constitutional right. See Form of Government, Chap. V, Sec. X, Par. 5 [pres. § 17-5], also Rules of Discipline, Chap. V, Sec. I, Par. 1 [pres. § 104-1].

[Note: This action is unintelligible without an explanatory statement of facts which I have gleaned from the Minutes of the Synod and the Presbytery, and which are about as follows: The Presbytery, on appeal, had reversed the sentence of the Session of Big Creek Church against a certain member, on the ground that a full and impartial trial had not been accorded him, and without any reference to the merits of the cause. It did not, however, remand the cause, thus giving the appellant the benefit of a full and final acquittal. This feature of Presbytery's action was protested against. At the same time Presbytery appointed a Commission to inquire into and redress the disorders in Big Creek Church. It also ordered the Session to give this member a letter to another church. In compliance with this order, the Session gave the letter, but incorporated in it the statement that it was given by direction of Presbytery and under solemn protest of the Session.

Presbytery, at a meeting some months later, took exception to the action of the Session, and ordered it to give the member a clean and unqualified letter of dismissal, bearing date of that first given. At the same time, Presbytery, in view of rumors affecting his Christian character, cited this member to appear before it to give a statement as to said rumors.

Synod's exception to Presbytery's Minutes was to the effect that the orders of Presbytery in this matter disqualified the Session, and deprived it of any right to exercise its judgment in the matter, action which hardly seemed warrantable, in view of the fact that at this same meeting it felt constrained to institute process for certain offenses against this same member. The Assembly's minute declares that the Presbytery was acting within its constitutional rights. —A.]

2c. Only the Presbytery may so do.

1949, pp. 28, 58. Overture requesting that the General Assembly answer the questions relative to the authority of the Home Mission Committee, and the granting by presbytery of evangelistic powers in cases where the session is inactive.

[Answer:] To questions 1 and 2: The Home Missions committee does not have the authority to call a minister as stated supply to an organized church with or without a session. The amount of aid does not affect the issue.

To question 3: There is no authority in the Book of Church Order to give evangelistic powers to a minister for use in a church where there is an inactive session. In the Book of Church Order a proper method is provided in that the presbytery may appoint a Commission to give assistance.

§ 16-7 (3).

(3.) As to the "record of church Sessions."

3a. Presbytery may require Session to record its reports to Presbytery.

1914, p. 25. Overture from Presbytery of Enoree, asking whether the presbytery has the right to require the church session to record its reports to presbytery.

Answer: The Assembly replies—according to provisions of Par. 77 [pres. par. 76] of Form of Government, presbytery clearly has the right to exercise such authority.

3b. Presbytery only may require reports.

1953, pp. 26, 52. Overture requests the General Assembly to make clear what court or courts or other agencies may require reports from the session. We answer that only presbytery may require reports from the session.

1956, pp. 27, 45. We recommend that overture 15, requesting clarification of the answer of the 1953 General Assembly to overture 12, relative to whether presbytery may require a session to make a report directly to a Board or Agency, be answered as follows:

We reaffirm the action of the 1953 Assembly that a presbytery cannot require a session to report directly to any court or body other than presbytery. It may request that reports be sent directly to a Board or Agency, and if any church declines to comply with such request, presbytery can require that the report be made to the Stated Clerk of presbytery and he can then forward it.

§ 16-7 (4).

Presbytery may enjoin observance of judicial decisions of the Assembly.

[See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. IV, 2.]

§ 16-7 (5).

Visitorial powers of Presbytery sustained.

[See this Digest under Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. J. Cooke, 1875, p. 46. See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-5.]

§ 16-7 (6).

(6.) "To unite churches . . ."

[See especially this Digest, Form of Govt., § 31-2.]

6a. Special provision for "union" churches with the United Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

1924, pp. 33, 155. [The Assembly expressed] the judgment that the best form of adjustment in the case of local churches occupying the same field is by the consolidation and connection with a presbytery of one or the other of the Assemblies.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-3.]

1957, pp. 37, 149. [As reason for an agreement with the UPUSA Assembly on the property aspect of dismissing and receiving churches between the two, the Joint Committee report—adopted—said:] "In view of the fact that the Joint Committee unanimously agreed that the preferable way to handle communities where our churches overlap in jurisdiction is neither as a federated church or a so-called "union" or "united" congregation, but rather as a comity arrangement between Presbyteries and Synods whereby one Presbytery takes responsibility with the agreement of the other, for a community or larger area . . ."

[Ed. note: To allow for situations in which a "union" church is desirable, the two Assemblies reached the agreement now in § 31-2.]

6b. Presbytery has no power to group churches.

1896, p. 575; 1906, p. 22. [The Assembly refused Constitutional amendments to give power to group churches and require them to act together as one pastorate.]

§ 16-7 (7).

(7.) "To organize new churches."

7a. Presbytery has discretion in the manner of organizing new churches.

1882, p. 571. [Overture asks] if Presbytery has the right to delegate to its ministers severally authority to organize churches where the way is clear.

[Answer:] The Form of Government gives to presbyteries the power "to form and receive new churches," and the time and manner of the exercise of this power may be safely left to the sound discretion of each presbytery.

[Ed. note: By § 10-6 an evangelist may be given power to "organize" new churches, but by this paragraph presbytery must still "receive" them.]

7b. Government of missions conducted by local churches?

1921, p. 68. Overture asks the General Assembly to appoint a Committee to prepare regulations for the government of missions which are conducted by local churches. We recommend the following answer: The organization of new churches and the establishment of missions are matters which come under the original jurisdiction of the presbytery.

§ 16-7 (8).

(8.) "To receive and dismiss churches."

8a. Presbytery may dismiss one of its churches to another denomination.

1907, p. 64. Your Committee on the Records of the Synod of Texas, to whom was also referred a communication from the Session of the First Presbyterian Church, of Jacksonville, Texas, touching the action of the Synod of Texas, recorded on pages 44 and 45 of its printed Minutes, Vol. III, No. 1, reversing the action of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, in dismissing the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville, to the Presbytery of Trinity, U. S. A., beg leave to report, that the records of the Synod and also said communication have been carefully examined, and that we recommend the approval of the Minutes with the exception:

First, that, as recorded on p. 44, the Synod denies the constitutional right of the Presbytery to dismiss one of its churches to another denomination.

Second, that, as recorded on the same page, the Synod directs the Presbytery of Eastern Texas to restore the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville to its roll after said church having been dismissed by the Presbytery, had been received by another denomination.

Third, that similar action was taken in the case of the Port Arthur Church, as recorded on page 59

[See also this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. W. McLeod; Complaint of W. H. Sorey and J. B. Long.]

1915, p. 28. Overture from the Presbytery of Holston, concerning the proper procedure in the transfer of a church and its property to another denomination.

Answer: The presbytery should authorize its Stated Clerk to furnish a letter of transfer to the church as a congregation; the transfer of the church property should be in accordance with State laws.

1957, pp. 37, 149. [A ten-year agreement was made between our General Assembly and that of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. on procedure in dismissing and receiving churches.]

1962, pp. 72, 74. [Another agreement, without stated time limit, was made to replace that of 1957 to eliminate Assembly level responsibility for property in such transfers. The part re our Church leaves the act of transfer solely to the Presbytery; the part re the UPUSA Church requires that its Presbytery "has secured the approval of the General Assembly . . ."]

8b. Dismission of a church to another denomination should be preceded by a careful investigation of the wishes of the congregation.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. W. McLeod.]

§ 16-7 (9).

Presbytery has power to dissolve churches, but must give the church opportunity to be heard.

1936, p. 59. While the Book of Church Order does not prescribe the method by which a presbytery may exercise its original jurisdiction to dissolve a church [§ 16-7, Book of Church Order], yet it would be contrary to the spirit of our Presbyterian System for a presbytery to dissolve one of its functioning churches without its consent in the absence of an opportunity being afforded the church to be heard by notice to appear.

A church may waive the issuance of a citation from presbytery to appear at a hearing on the matter of its dissolution by voluntarily appearing at such hearing and submitting itself to the jurisdiction of the court.

While no citation was issued by Presbytery to the Church-by-the-Side-of-the-Road to appear at the called meeting of Presbytery at which the dissolution of the church was effected, the church was duly represented at such meeting and voluntarily submitted itself to the court's jurisdiction, and was thereby afforded due process of law in the premises.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 6-3.]

§ 16-7 (11).

Churches without pastors should be assigned to the care of some minister.

1889, p. 612. [The Assembly recommends] that its constituent presbyteries take steps to assign each vacant congregation within their respective bounds to the care of some minister, whose duty it shall be to take charge of such congregation, supply them with week-day preaching, moderate the session, and take spiritual oversight of the congregation until a minister can be regularly employed, due care being exercised with reference to expediency.

§ 16-7 (12).

(12.) Over "candidates."

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 24-1 ff.]

12a. Candidate of Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah.

1914, p. 25. Overture, [asking, whether a presbytery may license and ordain] a candidate for the ministry who is a member of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah, without the previous transfer of his membership to one of our churches.

Answer: Inasmuch as the relation between the Independent Presbyterian Church and this Assembly is of the cordial and intimate character indicated by Minutes of Assembly, 1909, p. 64 and 1910, p. 12, the Assembly answers the overture in the affirmative.

1958, pp. 28, 55. The Presbytery of Savannah overtures the General Assembly to suspend the change in the Book of Church Order (Par. 107, Book of Church Order) [§ 24-3], if it becomes the law of our Church, in regard to the Independent Pres-

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byterian Church of Savannah, Georgia, so that this church may be regarded as a church of the Presbyterian Church in the United States as far as its Candidates for the Ministry are concerned. (If this be done, young men of the Independent Presbyterian Church, Savannah, may be taken under the care of Savannah Presbytery without changing membership to one of our churches).

That overture 8 from the Presbytery of Savannah having to do with candidates for the ministry from the Independent Presbyterian Church be answered in the affirmative. Attention of the General Assembly is called to a similar action of the General Assembly in 1914—(See Minutes, page 25).

12b. Presbytery may not refuse to receive under its care a candidate solely on the ground of race.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Joseph A. Enslow.]

§ 16-7 (13).

(13.) Over "Ministers."

13a. Presbytery alone has power to judge its Ministers, until the cause is brought to an appellate court by the proper modes.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 17-5, 18-6; Rules of Dis., § 104-1, 2.]

13b. Presbytery may make its own rules for time of reception of Minister, etc.

1921, p. 68. Overture, asks the Assembly to state whether it is constitutional for a presbytery to make a rule that ministers shall be received into the presbytery and candidates licensed or ordained only at regular stated meetings of the presbytery except in emergencies. We recommend the following answer: It is competent for a presbytery to make its own rules as to when it will receive ministers and license or ordain candidates.

13c. Ministers who dissent from the doctrines of the Church, or who doubt their having a call to preach.

1870, p. 519. Overture, referring to the records of that Presbytery, and asking what should be done, first, in the case of a minister who declares his dissent from the doctrines of our Church, and yet does not desire to unite with another denomination: and what should be done in the case of a minister who regards himself as having been mistaken in supposing himself called of God to preach the Gospel. Answer: In view of the general inexpediency of making *in thesi* deliverances upon such questions, and of the fact that the records of the Presbytery of Cherokee are not before the house, the judgment of this Assembly is, that such cases as they arise should be left to the decision of the several presbyteries under the provisions of the Constitution, and the deliverances heretofore made by the supreme court of the Church, subject to the review of the higher courts under the forms provided in our Book.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 27-6, Rules of Dis., § 112-1.]

13d. Letters of dismission of Ministers are to be sent direct to the Presbytery to which the Minister is dismissed.

1940, p. 46. Overture which would require Stated Clerks of all presbyteries to mail the letters of dismissal of ministers directly to the Stated Clerk of the presbytery to which ministers have been granted letters of dismissal by the presbytery, answered in the affirmative, and that presbyteries be advised to require their Stated Clerks to send such letters of transfer direct to the Stated Clerk of the presbytery to which a minister is being dismissed.

13e. Rights and privileges of a Minister in transit.

1894, p. 234. The Presbytery of Augusta respectfully overtures the General Assembly for instruction in the following case:

The Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., being a member of this Presbytery but residing in the bounds of Charleston Presbytery, obtained a letter of dismission from the former to the latter; he presented this letter of dismission to Charleston Presbytery and his application for membership was rejected. He remains, of course, after Charleston Presbytery rejected his application for membership, under the jurisdiction of Augusta Presbytery: but, until he has formally returned the letter of dismission to this Presbytery, is he entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership? If it is necessary that he should return his letter of dismission to Augusta Presbytery in order to be entitled to all the rights and privileges of active membership, is he prevented from doing so by the law of our Church, Paragraph 277 [see pres. § 16-2], requiring that a minister shall be a member of the Presbytery in the bounds of which he resides?

[Answer:] Inasmuch as a minister who has a letter of dismission from his own Presbytery to another Presbytery remains under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery from which he was dismissed until he has been formally received by the Presbytery to which he was dismissed (Book of Church Order, Rules of Discipline, Chapter XV, Sec. 5, Par. 280) [see pres. § 16-11], he is entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership in the Presbytery from which he was dismissed; and it is the judgment of your committee that Paragraph 277 does not forbid him to return his letter.

13f. How a Minister may be dismissed to other ecclesiastical bodies.

1876, p. 238. [The Presbytery of Atlanta dismissed a minister at his own request to the M. E. Church, South. The Synod of Georgia pronounced this action irregular. The judgment of the General Assembly thereto was asked by the Presbytery.]

The General Assembly judges it to be sufficient and proper in all such cases to give a certificate of character and good standing; and in this there is no intention to reflect on the minister withdrawing, or on the body to which he goes.

§ 16-7 (14).

Over the "pastoral relation" of its Ministers.
Presbytery has absolute power to dissolve the pastoral relation.

1880, p. 196. Can a presbytery, by simple vote of the majority, displace a pastor against the will of both pastor and congregation?

See Form of Government, Chap. V, Sec. IV, Par. VI, "The presbytery has power * * * * to establish the pastoral relation, and to dissolve it at the request of one or both of the parties, or *where the interests of religion imperatively demand it.*

While the presbytery clearly has such power, the Assembly decides that a presbytery taking such action should be thoroughly convinced that "the interests of religion imperatively demand it."

1902, p. 259. On an overture touching the dissolution of the pastoral relation in order to convenient grouping of churches, the committee recommends that the Assembly declare such dissolution to be within the prerogative of presbytery.

§ 16-7 (16).

(16.) "To require Ministers to devote themselves diligently to their sacred calling, etc."

16a. Ministers not engaged in their sacred calling.

1866, p. 37. [With reference to ministers not now engaged in their sacred calling, the Assembly exhorts them,] if they do not find fields of labor in their present

localities, to seek other places of abode and fields of labor where they may be useful in their appropriate work. [It also enjoins] the presbyteries to examine their rolls, and require all ministers who are not thus employed to give an account of themselves and to proceed against those who are found to be habitual neglecters of their vows of ordination.

1907, p. 31. [In answer to an overture] asking that the Assembly recommend that presbyteries be more careful in releasing its ministers in their bounds from the obligations of pastoral and pulpit work for secular callings, your committee recommends that the overture be granted.

1908, p. 33. [Answer to overture:] We recommend: (1) That presbyteries exert their influence as far as possible to retain men in the active ministry and prevent their entrance into other lines of work as far as may be wise. (2) That as far as possible the men in other lines of work be urged to return to the active work of the ministry as God may open the way. (3) That the Assembly in the future try, as far as may be consistent with wisdom, to secure competent laymen for the various causes of the church, and use such pious men, officers and members of the church as may be available.

1914, p. 71. [Similar action.]

1920, p. 48. Mr. A. C. Todd, a commissioner to this Assembly, has presented to the Assembly a preamble and resolution, which has been referred to your standing Committee on Christian Education and Ministerial Relief.

This paper states that there is an increasing number of vacancies in our pastorates; that an increasing number of our ministers are being called by our Executive Committees to fill positions as secretaries, clerks, financial agents, teachers, superintendents, executives, and for other purposes; and requests the Assembly to instruct its Executive Committees "to make prompt and diligent effort to release the ministers so employed," and to instruct the presbyteries to "exercise their authority and best endeavor to recall the ministers so engaged, to the end that these vacant churches be supplied."

[In reply to this paper the Assembly adopted the following minute:]

The General Assembly believes that, owing to the nature of the work done by the Executive Committee and other agencies of the Church, it is essential that much of it be done by ministers. But in view of the serious lack of ministers in our pastorates, the Assembly urges upon its Executive Committees and other agencies the great importance of exhausting every means for the employment of competent elders, deacons, or laymen, when any of the work in any of these committees or agencies can be done efficiently by these; and thus stop as far as possible any unnecessary drain upon our pastorates.

[Ed. note: A proposed amendment (1906, p. 23), to empower presbytery to appoint ministers to specific ministerial work and to group churches, was refused by the Assembly. Such powers would be out of harmony with our system of government.]

16b. What relation a Minister may sustain to a church not in our connection.

1869, p. 376. Is it contrary to our Standards for one of our ministers to remain the permanent supply of a church of another denomination; for example, a Congregation church?

[Answered] in the affirmative.

1870, p. 514. [In answer to overtures concerning the above, the whole matter was left] to the judgment of the presbyteries to which such ministers belong.

1880, p. 196. Is it unlawful for a minister in our connection to be pastor of an Independent church?

Reply: There is nothing in our Book of Church Order to prevent a minister in our connection from preaching the Gospel at any Church where he has the consent of his own presbytery.

16c. A Minister may not hold ordination in two communions.

1960, pp. 24, 59. From a Presbytery relative to the ordination of one of its ministers to be also under Episcopal Orders, and to have a joint ministry to two congregations, one Episcopal, one Presbyterian.

That the request be answered in the negative for the reason that dual ordination is not provided for in our Form of Government and that it is contrary to the Presbyterian doctrine.

16d. Presbytery may not forbid a member to study in institution of which it does not approve.

1959, pp. 26, 59. From a Presbytery asking if a presbytery can forbid a member to take graduate work in a seminary which it does not approve.

The telegraphic communication requests the Assembly to give an *in thesi* deliverance in the following matter: "Does a Presbytery have the right to control its members to the extent that it can forbid a member from attending a Seminary not approved by that Presbytery?"

Your committee recommends that the Assembly answer this request by saying that a presbytery does not have the right so to restrict one of its members.

§ 16-7 (21).

Method of appointing commissioners to the Assembly is at the discretion of Presbytery.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of J. K. Dowman and others.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 16-9.

1. Presbytery must meet at least twice a year in stated meetings.

1935, p. 42. Overture asking that the Book of Church Order be so changed as to give presbyteries the privilege of holding but one stated meeting each year, and overture from the Presbytery of East Alabama, asking the Assembly to change the Book of Church Order so that a presbytery shall meet at least once a year on its own adjournment, answered in the negative, with the suggestion that the second stated meeting can be held during the sessions of synod.

2. What Ruling Elders may sit at called meetings of Presbytery.

1893, p. 54. 1. The Book of Church Order is silent as to the composition of the presbytery in called meetings; but it is the judgment of this Assembly that the elders elected to the stated meeting are the proper representatives of their church sessions in such meetings.

2. Evidently if newly appointed elders sit in the called meeting, the election of new officers is likewise necessary.

[Cf. this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-1, 1872, p. 164.]

3. How to determine the ten day notice required for called meetings of Presbytery.

1942, p. 71. To communication, asking for clarification of certain parts of the Book of Church Order, our answer is that, in our judgment, the proper date would be determined by adding ten to the numeral of the date of call and the result would be the date of meeting of the presbytery.

4. Presbytery may meet without its bounds.

1891, p. 258. [Overture] whether a presbytery has the right to meet, on its own motion, in regular session without its own bounds.

Answer: There is nothing in the Constitution of our Church affecting the right of a presbytery to meet, on its own motion, in regular session, beyond its bounds.

5. Proceedings of a Presbytery held away from the place appointed for it legalized by the General Assembly.

1876, p. 216. Overture from the Presbytery of East Alabama, which, for reasons assigned, held its spring session at Union Springs, Alabama, instead of Pensacola, Florida, the place appointed for the meeting, asking the Assembly to legalize the proceedings of that meeting. This prayer of Presbytery [was] granted.

1901, p. 22. On the overture of the Presbytery of Arkansas, asking the Assembly to legalize the proceedings of the Presbytery at Wynne, instead of at Augusta, which was the place appointed, the committee, recommended that the Assembly do, and hereby does, grant their prayer.

1917, p. 68. [Overture granted] from the Presbytery of Pine Bluff, asking that the proceedings of a session of that Presbytery at Monticello, Arkansas, instead of at Warren, Arkansas, as previously appointed, be legalized.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 17-1.

1. The Original Synods.

1861, p. 5. [The Assembly which met in Augusta in 1861 was composed of Presbyterial commissioners from the following Synods: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Memphis, Mississippi, Nashville, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia.]

2. Changes of the Synods.

[Ed. note: **1867, p. 143.** The Synod of Kentucky received.

1874, p. 479. The Synod of Missouri received.

1881, p. 391. The Synod of South Georgia and Florida erected.

1891, p. 235. The Synod of South Georgia and Florida renamed the Synod of Florida (upon the incorporation of the Presbytery of Savannah in the Synod of Georgia.)

1901, pp. 51, 58. The Synod of Louisiana erected out of the Synod of Mississippi.

1901, p. 51. The Synod of Memphis dissolved (two of its Presbyteries being transferred to the Synod of Mississippi, and two to the Synod of Nashville.)

1901, p. 51. The Synod of Nashville renamed the Synod of Tennessee.

1908, pp. 11, 33. The Synod of Oklahoma erected out of the Synod of Texas.

1914, p. 24. The Synod of West Virginia erected out of the Synod of Virginia.

1915, pp. 16, 22. The Synod of Appalachia erected out of territory from the Synods of Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky.

1916, p. 33. The Afro-American Synod erected to consist of the Presbyteries of Central Alabama, Ethel, North and South Carolina, and Central Louisiana.

1917, p. 29. The Afro-American Synod renamed Snedecor Memorial Synod. [In 1946, pp. 35, 76, the dissolving of Snedecor Synod was referred to its presbyteries and the overlapping and contiguous presbyteries. In 1947, pp. 104, 154, in deference to the sentiment of Snedecor Synod the Synod was continued. In 1950, pp. 31, 70, the matter was raised again and assigned to the Board of

Church Extension for study. In 1951, pp. 79 ff., a commission was appointed to dissolve the Synod.]

1952, pp. 17, 38. [Reported that] Snedecor Memorial Synod has been dissolved in accordance with the provisions which were fixed by the General Assembly in 1951.

[Ed. note: For changes in the bounds of Synods see this Digest under the "powers of the General Assembly, § 18-6.]

3. Only members of the Synod may vote.

1938, p. 73. The Minutes of the Synod of Oklahoma approved with the exception that a minister was given the privilege of voting when he was not a member of any presbytery in the Synod.

4. Study of bounds of Synods.

1963, pp. 26, 75. That Overture from the Synod of Georgia concerning a study of boundaries of Synods where expansion of a Metropolitan Area extends into two or more Synods be referred to the Permanent Committee on Assembly Operation for study and report to the 1964 meeting of the General Assembly.

1964, p. 70. [Recommendations adopted:]

2. That the General Assembly answer Overture No. 8 to the 1963 General Assembly by stating that insofar as can be determined, immediate problems caused by the expansion of metropolitan areas across Synod boundaries are being equitably resolved by committees of the Presbyteries and/or Synods involved.

3. That in the light of rapidly changing population patterns, a study be made by the Permanent Committee of the desirability of realigning our present Synodical structures, possibly combining existing Synods in some instances, to provide a more efficient organization for proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the areas served by our denomination.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 17-3.

1. Meetings of Synod held out of time or place appointed are to be legalized by the General Assembly.

[Ed. note: Instances are to be found: 1874, p. 484; 1879, p. 19; 1902, p. 257; 1914, p. 24; 1919, p. 69a; 1934, p. 32.]

2. Meetings of Synod to be held out of time appointed or outside the bounds of the Synod may be legalized in advance by the General Assembly.

[Ed. note: Instances are to be found: 1873, p. 318; 1927, p. 58; 1937, p. 39; 1942, p. 26; 1949, pp. 25, 105. See also this Digest, Judicial Cases, Sec. 56.]

3. Synods which have failed to meet on adjournment may be ordered to meet by the General Assembly.

[Ed. note: Instances are to be found: 1864, p. 281; 1865, p. 358.]

4. Proposed biennial meeting of Synod.

[Ed. note: The Assembly declined this change: 1875, p. 20; 1879, p. 36; 1894, p. 201; 1930, p. 82.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 17-5 (Cf. § 16-9).

Powers of Synod.

1. Synod may order a Presbytery to meet instanter, but privilege should not be abused.

1929, p. 82. Overture from the Synod of South Carolina, on the question of meetings of presbyteries during the meeting of Synod.

[Answer:] The Assembly disapproves the abuse of this privilege and calls attention to the objections arising from a practice of deciding important questions in called meetings of presbyteries, and suggests that such meetings be reduced by the presbyteries themselves to a minimum and confined to routine business.

2. Synod cannot interpose its authority to interfere with the rights of a Presbytery to judge its own ministers.

1878, p. 629. The Synod of Kentucky erred in rescinding the action of the Presbytery of Louisville so restraining a minister, by mere resolution, without a formal examination of the case, either as a question of appeal, complaint, or of general review and control, it being incompetent for the Synod to interpose its authority to interfere with the right of a presbytery to judge of the qualifications of its own ministers.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Rev. Stuart Robinson, in the Canfield Case.]

1933, p. 58. That the Synod of Arkansas exceeded its authority in demanding an examination of Dr. H. W. Smith in 1931 (see Book of Church Order, Chapter XVII, Paragraph 288 [pres. § 117-5], Chapter V, Paragraph 182 [pres. § 104-1], Chapter IX, Paragraph 227 [pres. § 106-1]), and so recognized this by approving the action of the Presbytery of Arkansas taken in 1931 by its action in 1932, and therefore is not to be censured for its action.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, The Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith.]

3. Power to erect, unite and divide Presbyteries belongs to Synod alone.

[Ed. note: The Assembly itself erected the first presbyteries in the foreign field, assigning them to connection with synods in this country (The Presbytery of Sao Paulo, in connection with the Synod of Virginia, 1871, p. 29; and the Presbytery of Hangchow, in connection with the Synod of Kentucky, 1874, p. 480.)

However, in 1874, p. 523, the Assembly acknowledged the right to erect a presbytery was vested in the synod; and in 1876, p. 237, declared that the members of the Presbytery of Hangchow had been *de jure* members of their home presbyteries all the time. As regarded the other Assembly-erected Presbytery, Sao Paulo, nothing was done by the Assembly, that Presbytery existing until dissolved by the Synod of Virginia in 1881.]

1867, p. 148. Overture from the commissioners from the Presbyteries of Arkansas and Ouachita, asking for the formation of a new presbytery, in view of the difficulty of now securing a meeting of Synod, owing to the small number and remote locality of one of the presbyteries (Indian) comprised in the Synod of Arkansas. Resolved, That this Assembly is constitutionally incompetent to grant this request.

1876, p. 237. In reference to the constitutional question, the Assembly adopts the following resolution:

Resolved, that the General Assembly has no constitutional power to establish or dissolve presbyteries.

1936, p. 39. Overture from the Presbytery of Granville, asking the change of name to the Presbytery of Raleigh, be answered in the negative, for the reason that par. 83, Chap. 16 of the Book of Church Order [pres. § 17-5.] puts this matter under the jurisdiction of synod.

4. Synod has absolute power to erect and divide Presbyteries, but should exercise power with discretion.

1927, p. 51. Overture: Has a synod the right or the authority to change the boundaries of a presbytery without giving the presbytery an opportunity to express its approval or disapproval?

Answer: However inexpedient the use of such autocratic authority may be, it is not forbidden but authorized in the powers of synod as defined in the Book of Church Order, Par. 86, namely: "To erect new presbyteries, and to unite or divide those which were before erected." [pres. § 17-5.] This *power* of synod is not circumscribed as it is with the presbytery, which has "power . . . to unite or divide churches at the request of the members thereof." (par. 76) [pres. § 16-7]. A Synod's power *should* be limited, and the Assembly would urge synods not to exercise this power to a dangerous extent, save in extraordinary cases.

5. Synod may appoint Evangelists, but Presbytery must ordain.

1892, p. 449. [Overture:]

1. Do the Scriptures or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church recognize the office of synodical evangelist?

2. Has the synod power to inaugurate and maintain evangelistic work in its bounds?

The Assembly answers both questions:

The Scriptures recognize the office of evangelist, and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church authorizes synod to use them. "The Synod has power . . . to appoint ministers to such work, proper to their office, as may fall under its own particular jurisdiction; to concert measures for promoting the prosperity and enlargement of the Church within its bounds. (Book of Church Order, Chap. V, Sec. V, Par. 4. [pres. § 17-5.]

3. Define the work, powers and prerogatives of said office in relation to the presbyteries.

These are clearly defined in our Book of Church Order. (Chap. V, Sec. V, Par. 4.)

Because the presbytery alone has power to ordain, this does not prevent synod using such ordained men.

6. Recourse from charges against individuals made by Boards of Synod-controlled institutions must be had before the Board rather than the Synod.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. P. Robertson.]

7. A Synod cannot conduct work within the bounds of another Synod.

1962, pp. 59, 60. That the minutes of the Synod of Appalachia be approved with the exception on pp. 57, where a communication from a sister Synod is recorded as an "overture," and implies the transfer of home mission activity across the bounds of another Synod without seeking approval of the General Assembly.

That the minutes of the Synod of West Virginia be approved with the exception that the conduct of home mission activity as reported on pp. 76 was carried across the bounds of another Synod without seeking the approval of the General Assembly.

8. Synod has no power to effect a Church union at level of Synod or Presbytery.

1962, p. 59. That the minutes of the Synod of Kentucky be approved with the exception of the report on pp. 17 of the Joint Study Committee on Merger. The attention of the Synod should be called to the fact that the Book of Church Order;

18-6 (17); 30-3, makes no provision for union or merger on Synod or Presbytery levels.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 17-6.

1. Names of churches represented by Elders should be given.

1887, p. 232. [Such action was taken in reviewing the Minutes of the Synod of South Georgia and Florida.]

2. A copy of the records of Synod may be sent up for review, if duly authenticated.

1864, p. 251. [A letter was read] from the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Virginia, setting forth the impracticability of his sending up to this Assembly the written records of said Synod, and asking permission to substitute for these an authenticated copy of the published Minutes. This permission was granted, and the published Minutes of this Synod were placed in the hands of the appropriate Standing Committee. **1884, p. 252; 1885, pp. 410, 421; 1899, p. 422.** [Similar actions.]

3. Minutes should have index, statistics, sermons.

1943, p. 94. The Synods of Appalachia and Snedecor Memorial failed to include an index, and are requested to correct this failing in minutes hereafter.

1946, p. 58. We would further call the attention of the Assembly to the fact that statistical reports of presbyteries are omitted from a few volumes of minutes, and so we recommend that the synods be directed always to include these statistical reports in their records.

1950, p. 45. [The Assembly directed that] the texts of sermons preached before synods, and the subject of sermons be included in the minutes.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 18-1.

1. The Assembly organized.

1861, p. 4. [The Assembly was organized at Augusta, Ga., Dec. 4, 1861. Rev. Francis McFarland, D.D., presided during the introductory exercises and afterward constituted the Assembly with prayer. Rev. B. M. Palmer, D.D., preached the opening sermon which was ordered printed in the appendix to the Minutes (p. 9; see p. 61).]

p. 7. [Dr. B. M. Palmer was unanimously chosen Moderator.]

[Ed. note: For list of original Presbyteries see this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-1. For list of commissioners see this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXXIII, 4.]

[Note: the causes which led to the withdrawal of a number of presbyteries situated in the Southern States from the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, are fully set forth in the "Address of the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the Earth," which was adopted by the first Augusta Assembly, and do not require to be here cited.

Almost immediately after the action of the Assembly in Philadelphia, in May, 1861, that wrought such hardship on Southern consciences, prominent ministers in the Synod of Virginia published a circular inviting ministers and elders in the Southern Synods to meet in convention in Richmond, Va., on the 24th of July, 1861, "to advise and recommend measures to ascertain the sense of the presbyteries in regard to the formation of a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America."

The first presbytery to take formal and decided action was that of Memphis, which convened in an adjourned meeting on the 13th of June, and, after recounting the unconstitutional action of the Philadelphia Assembly, formally renounced all further connection with said Assembly, and respectfully requested all presbyteries concurring with them to meet with them, by their commissioners, in Memphis, on the third Thursday in May, 1862, then and there to organize a General Assembly, etc. They further suggested to all the presbyteries to call special meetings and appoint delegates to a convention to meet in Atlanta on the 15th of August, "to consult upon various important matters, especially our benevolent operations."

Immediately upon the heel of this action, East Alabama Presbytery was called together to consider the matter, and, while not seceding from the Assembly, earnestly protested and declared their purpose not to acquiesce in said action, and then called for a convention of all the presbyteries to meet in Columbia, S. C., on Thursday before the second Sabbath in September, 1861, wishing thus to secure cooperative action.

On the 9th of July, New Orleans Presbytery formally renounced the jurisdiction of the old Assembly, and ordered that a copy of their action be sent to all the Southern presbyteries, requesting them, if they concur in this action, to appoint commissioners authorized to organize an Assembly, to commence its sessions on the 4th of December next, in Augusta, Ga. They further opposed the plan of a convention for sundry reasons, which they give.

But prior to and contemporaneously with this action of the Presbytery of New Orleans, numerous presbyteries called for an advisory convention, to be convened in July, in Atlanta, said convention to be composed of delegates chosen and authorized thereto by the presbyteries. It was felt that it was not only competent for the presbyteries to take such action, but in the emergency that was upon them that it was eminently wise.

With this widely-expressed demand before them, many of the presbyteries convened and appointed representatives to attend the proposed convention.

This convention met in Atlanta, August 15th, 1861, and was in session three days. There were present twenty delegates from eleven presbyteries, with fourteen corresponding members from six presbyteries.

Rev. John S. Wilson, D.D., was chosen president; Rev. H. R. Raymond and Rev. J. S. Harris, secretaries.

The convention assumed no ecclesiastical authority. All its actions, which were made with entire unity, were in the form of suggestion and recommendation. In view of the probable meeting of a General Assembly in the Confederate States of America before the close of the year, the convention made no suggestion as to the mode in which the work of Education, Publication, Domestic Missions, etc., should be carried on, leaving those interests to the presbyteries, synods and the Southwestern Advisory Committee at New Orleans; but as to Foreign Missions, the convention endorsed the temporary plan for conducting this work devised by certain brethren in Columbia, S. C., and pledged the support of the presbyteries represented in the convention to it.

The convention further urged such presbyteries in the Confederacy as had not yet renounced the jurisdiction of the General Assembly to do so at their fall meeting: that both those which have already thus withdrawn, and those that may do so in response to this appeal, declare their adherence and submission to the Standards as formerly held, with the single change of the phrase from "Presbyterian Church in the United States of America" to "Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America"; that these presbyteries send

commissioners to a General Assembly, to be held in Augusta, Ga., on the 4th day of December next, and that Rev. B. M. Palmer, D.D., as principal, and Rev. J. R. Wilson, as alternate, be requested to preach the opening sermon and preside until the Assembly be organized; that Rev. Dr. Waddel, Rev. Dr. Gray and Dr. Joseph H. Jones of Augusta, ruling elder, be a Committee on Commissions to examine the credentials of all who may be present; that the respective synods review the records of the presbyteries and confirm the action herein proposed.

On the subject of the war and the condition of the country, the convention, though not a Church court, yet disclaimed the right to determine the political relations of individuals, or to solve for them political questions.—A.]

2. Title of the Church.

1861, p. 7. Resolved, 1. That the style and title of this Church shall be THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA.

1865, p. 357. The Committee on Bills and Overtures made a report, recommending that the name of the Church shall be THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES; after which various other names were proposed by members of the Assembly. After considerable discussion on the merits of the names proposed, the vote was taken with the following result: For the name proposed by the Committee, 42; Presbyterian Church in the South, 7; American Presbyterian Church, 2; Protestant Presbyterian Church in the United States, 2. The vote was then made unanimous.

3. The function of the General Assembly is that of a court of the Church.

1876, p. 239. Overture asking the Assembly to provide that its Committee of Bills and Overtures and its Judicial Committee, be made permanent committees, whose duty it shall be to publish in the newspapers reports of matters submitted to them, and their decisions, for discussion in the newspapers, before they be submitted to the General Assembly.

[Answer:] The proposed arrangement seems not only impracticable, but appears to be grounded on an incorrect conception of the functions of the General Assembly as a supreme court of Christ, meeting, with the promise of the presence of Christ, to deliberate, and, under the leading of the Spirit, to decide upon matters pertaining to the general interest of the Church, and not merely to express the public opinion of the Church.

4. General Assembly as "the bond of union (and) peace . . ."

1948, pp. 27, 52. Overture 7 concerning "confining criticism to questions of fact and opinion and refraining from passing judgment on the motives of fellow members who express their own sincere convictions" the committee would reply that our church courts have always disapproved aspersions upon motives and hope that charity will prevail at all times.

1965, p. 84. That the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS members of our Church have become increasingly disturbed in recent years by widely divergent and strongly contending viewpoints concerning the faith of the Church, the proper witness of the Church and the unity we seek in Christ, and

WHEREAS these viewpoints, although devoutly and sincerely held, not infrequently develop because of a lack of understanding as to motives and a lack of communication as to objective, and

WHEREAS such sharp and fundamental differences unless constructively resolved will surely result in even deeper misunderstandings, and

WHEREAS in a forceful sermon this General Assembly was reminded that "The Lonely are in The Crowds", and

WHEREAS many of these members holding divergent views, both ministers and lay persons, at times feel lonely, rejected and forgotten by the Church,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of this General Assembly assure all who hold views divergent from their own of their Christian Love and that through this love and understanding the views will be reconciled in accordance with the will of Christ.

5. No geographical bounds to the General Assembly.

1959, p. 82. The same Assembly referred to this Board [of Church Extension] "for study and report" overture 6 relative to enlargement of the territorial boundaries of the Church. We recommend that the 1959 General Assembly give the following answer to this overture:

1. No geographical boundaries for our Church have been set by the General Assembly. As a matter of fact we have particular churches now in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New Mexico.
2. The only boundaries in existence are those set by synods and presbyteries themselves.
3. In view of these facts the General Assembly urges synods and presbyteries to extend their work to the limit of their ability wherever there are contiguous unchurched areas.

1961, pp. 38, 57; 1964, pp. 24, 78. Reaffirmed.

6. Proposals to compose the Assembly of representatives of Synods.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 17-1.]

7. "The Trustees" of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and "The Presbyterian Foundation, Inc., U.S."

[Ed. note:

The move toward obtaining a charter for the General Assembly was one of the first actions of our first Assembly (1861, p. 9). Part of their concern arose out of the fact stated in 1861, p. 33: "that there is a large amount of valuable property, both real and personal, within the Confederate States, which was originally donated to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or to the several Boards of that Church, all of which now, in the opinion of your committee, justly and equitably belongs to the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America." But the primary motivation lay in the necessity that the Church have some means by which the right of property might be held in trust for the purposes of the Assembly.

Under a charter obtained in North Carolina the Trustees organized in 1864 (1865, p. 364). This charter was accepted by the Assembly 1866, pp. 23, 25.

The present "Presbyterian Foundation" was created in 1924, pp. 33, 146, when the Assembly adopted amendments to the charter and by-laws. Under this new charter the Board reorganized in 1925 (1926, p. 98) as "The Trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Presbyterian Foundation, Inc."

In the reorganization of agencies of the Assembly in 1950, this became "The Presbyterian Foundation, Inc., U.S." with the function of holding endowment type funds for the Assembly and its agencies.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 18-2.

1. The General Assembly is a continuous court.

[Ed. note: In the Revision of 1925, the General Assembly became for the first time a permanent court. Prior to this action each Assembly was a separate entity, which did not adjourn but was dissolved. At the time of pronouncing this dissolving the Moderator required that *another* Assembly meet at a specified time and place.

The old conception still appears in the Minutes where the "meetings" are yet titled by the old form. For example the Minutes of the 1965 meeting are titled: "Minutes of the One-Hundred-Fifth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States." The same custom is followed in the common parlance of the Church.]

2. Ruling Elder need not be a member of Presbytery at the time of his election as commissioner to the Assembly.

1890, p. 46. [Answer to an overture:] An elder may be elected as a commissioner to the General Assembly when an acting elder within the bounds of the electing presbytery, though he may not be a member of the presbytery at the time of his election.

1896, p. 574. [Similar action.]

3. The court shall judge whether an alternate may take the place of a principal (or "vice versa") after one has ben enrolled.

1899, p. 430. To an overture asking whether alternates may take the place of principals, or *vice versa,* after the court has been organized, and one or the other has been enrolled as a member of it and taken part in its deliberations, [the following answer was given:]

There being nothing in the Constitution bearing specifically on the point, it is the judgment of this Assembly that the substitution of the alternate for the principal, or *vice versa,* is competent whenever, in the judgment of the court, such a change is deemed necessary or proper, in every case the change being made a matter of record [See Minutes, 1901, p. 31, for case.]

4. Commissioners may be chosen for two years.

1914, p. 25. Overture, concerning a change in the membership of the Assembly so that all commissioners shall be elected for two years, one-half of whom shall retire each year.

Answer: The Assembly replies that there is no constitutional hindrance to presbyteries sending their commissioners for two years when they so desire.

1923, p. 64; 1937, p. 39; 1941, p. 43; 1946, p. 82. [Similar actions.]

5. No meeting of the Assembly can bind absolutely another meeting.

1939, p. 67. Overture asking that the General Assembly make a ruling that would limit amending Church Standards to the years that are multiples of five, answered in the negative, for the reason that no Assembly can bind a future Assembly.

6. Proposed biennial meeting of the Assembly.

[Ed. note: The Assembly declined this change: 1875, p. 20; 1878, p. 651; 1879, p. 36; 1930, p. 82; 1932, pp. 53, 82; 1933, p. 48; 1942, pp. 29, 70.]

7. The Assembly has no authority to fix a permanent place of meeting.

1923, p. 35. In answer to an overture from the Presbytery of Asheville and a memorial from the Mountain Retreat Association: Resolved, That it is the judgment

of this Assembly, based on its experience, that Montreat offers a most desirable place for the meetings of the Assembly; and it should meet here as frequently as it can without discourtesy to churches which wish to entertain the Assembly.

p. 60. Answer to overture from the Presbytery of Asheville; asking the Assembly to make Montreat its regular place of meeting: While appreciating the warm welcome promised by Asheville Presbytery, and also the many attractions which make this desirable, the Assembly has no authority to fix a permanent place of meeting.

8. General Assembly sets conditions for its meeting.

1964, pp. 58, 77. That the General Assembly establish the policy of holding its annual meetings only in churches willing to accept all persons for worship and membership in the congregation, as set forth in the Book of Church Order [§ 7-1, 15-6 (4), 210-5] without further restrictions, and further, that this policy become effective with respect to the 1967 meeting of the Assembly.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 18-4.

Formal commission to the Assembly necessary.

1864, p. 241. [Declined to receive as commissioners two ministers,] on the ground that there was no evidence of their appointment by the presbyteries to which they belong.

1865, p. 351. [One commissioner without commission seated because of satisfactory reasons arising out of the peculiar circumstances of the case. Two commissioners having lost commissions seated, it appearing that they had been regularly chosen by their presbyteries.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 18-6.

POWERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

§ 18-6 (1).

(1.) "To decide all (cases) regularly brought . . ."

1a. The Assembly will not set aside judgment of lower court unless erroneous or clearly unconstitutional.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases: Complaint of Rev. I. W. Canfield, 1877; Complaint of C. H. Baker, 1884; Appeal of D. P. Robinson, 1891.]

1938, pp. 37, 70. [Complaint of Revs. W. H. Mills and G. G. Mayes, against the Synod of South Carolina.]

The vote of the commission was unanimous upon each count not to sustain the Complaint. The following explanatory minute was adopted: The Commission, having found nothing unconstitutional in the case, declines to sustain the Complaint.

1b. The Assembly will not re-open a case already adjudicated by it, except to correct a manifest error in its own proceedings.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of J. E. White, 1881, p. 354; Appeal of D. P. Robinson, 1890, p. 34; Appeal of Baxter D. D. Greer; Complaint of W. I. Sinnott, 1911, p. 33, 1912, p. 70a; The Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith, 1934, p. 42.]

1891, p. 256. Treating the overture as calling for an interpretation of the general rule of the law of the Church, we hold that where a concrete case is brought judicially before a higher court of the Church from a lower court by appeal or complaint, when such appeal or complaint is disposed of by final judgment entered therein and

sent down, that is an end of the constitutional authority of the higher court to deal with that particular case, unless it be again regularly brought before the higher court for adjudication in one of the recognized modes provided for by our Book of Church Order.

1920, p. 73. It is a principle of law, held in the highest courts of the States, and by the Supreme Court of the United States, that public policy requires that there shall be an end of litigation, and this is as true in the government of the Church as in the government of the State and Nation. We think that this is the correct position, and express the opinion that the conclusion of the case has been reached by the General Assembly of the Church, which your Committee regards as final.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. W. I. Sinnott.]

1939, p. 59. The question arises, can the Assembly legally re-open a case that was concluded by the previous Assembly? Hodge's "What is Presbyterian Law?" (page 271, par. 6) says (the Assembly's) "judicial decisions are final and obligatory in all similar cases. No later Assembly can reverse its judicial acts or revise its proceedings." However, in the same paragraph Hodge adds, "A manifest error may be corrected."

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Rev. W. S. Pippen, Jr.]

1c. The Assembly may not require the initiation of process against a Minister or member.

1879, p. 24. That the Assembly has no power to issue orders to institute process, except according to the provisions of the Book of Discipline, Chap. VII, in the old, and Chap. XIII, Sec. I, in the revised Book [pres. § 113-1]; and all these provisions imply that the court of remote jurisdiction is dealing with a particular court of original jurisdiction, and not with such courts in general.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-1 ff.]

§ 18-6 (2)

(2.) "To bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice . . ."

2a. May the power of the Assembly "to bear testimony against error in doctrine . . . injuriously affecting the Church" be exercised independently of the Assembly's powers as an appellate court?

[See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. V, Par. II and Ed. note thereupon; Form of Govt., § 14-1 ff., touching *in thesi* deliverances; Rules of Dis., § 104-1, 1929, p. 82 and 1941, p. 47; Judicial Cases, The Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith, 1934, p. 32.]

2b. The nature and authority of "in thesi" deliverance of the Assembly.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-1 ff.]

2c. Assembly's negative actions imply contrary interpretations.

1909, p. 51. [Citing 1884, p. 207, when the Assembly declined an overture to alter the method of amending the Book of Church Order.] Your Committee judge that in declining this overture, the General Assembly implied the contrary interpretation.

2d. No one may speak for the General Assembly.

1952, pp. 26, 52. The General Assembly is asked to make the following deliverance: The General Assembly is the only organization composed of representatives of the whole Presbyterian Church, U.S. and is the highest judicatory of the Church; Therefore, no other person, agency or organization is in a position to represent the whole membership of the Church and it not authorized to represent, or speak for, the whole Church, except as specifically instructed by the General Assembly.

Answered in the negative for the reason that the principle is adequately expressed in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., particularly in Paragraph 90, Book of Church Order [pres. § 18-6.]

1964, pp. 26, 79. Overture regarding the designation of individuals or groups authorized to speak for the General Assembly in emergency situations. We recommend a negative reply, in the light of our conviction that such declarations must be made by the General Assembly alone, and that power to speak for the General Assembly should not be committed to any individual or group.

2e. Such "testimony" need not be voted on by Presbyteries.

1960, pp. 26, 75. That Overture 29 requesting the General Assembly to refer to the Presbyteries for their vote the actions of previous Assemblies concerning desegregation be answered in the negative for the following reasons:

(1) This represents a departure from Presbyterian procedure which has historically referred to the Presbyteries only such matters as constitutionally required the advice and consent of the Presbyteries;

(2) Such a procedure would set a precedent for the referral of a wide variety of questions to the Presbyteries, undercutting the unique role of the General Assembly and limiting its function to referrals; and

(3) The Assembly, as a representative body, *does* represent the membership of the Church as it seeks the mind of Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It does not claim to reflect the "opinions" of its members, but the will of God as it is revealed to us in common assembly.

[Ed. note: The Assembly has, however, departed from (1) in the action above. As in the case of having Presbyteries vote on membership in the Federal Council of Churches.]

2f. Circularizing on pending subjects disapproved.

1880, p. 212. Pamphlets, bearing upon questions pending before the Assembly, having been put in circulation among the members, the Assembly expresses its disapproval of this method of attempting to influence its decisions as disrespectful to this body and an infringement upon its prerogatives.

1909, p. 22. The Assembly admitted to file a protest of complainants, B. H. Young and C. W. Sommerville, against the circulation among the members of the Assembly, during its sessions, of a printed document entitled "A Plea as to Jurisdiction."

[See also this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. F. Cannon and others (Protest).]

1932, p. 42. [An anonymous statement concerning the expenses of the office of Stated Clerk having been circulated among the commissioners, the following resolution was adopted:] Resolved, that the General Assembly condemns as discourteous, anonymous communications attacking the Assembly or its servants.

1934, p. 32. Overture, asking the Assembly to reiterate its pronouncement against the practice of circularizing ministers and presbyteries in the interest of favorite projects, answered in the affirmative. (Minutes General Assembly, 1932, p. 42.—Leslies "Presbyterian Law and Procedure," Alexander's Digest, 1922, p. 138; 1880, p. 212.)

1946, pp. 28, 83. Overture requests that the Assembly express its judgment touching both the wisdom and constitutional legality of any agency, organ or group to attempt to poll the sentiment of the church upon any question of vital concern by any

other method than that of legal procedure provided by our form of Presbyterian government.

We recommend a negative answer.

1949, pp. 33, 73. *Whereas,* our Executive Committees are answerable to the General Assembly and not to a group of our Church; and *Whereas,* the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions, under the statesmanlike leadership of Dr. C. Darby Fulton, has the confidence of our Church and the respect of missionary statesmen; *Therefore,* the Presbytery of Mangum respectfully overtures the General Assembly to discourage any group within the Church in any desire or effort to exert pressure upon any agency or agencies of our highest court, other than by direct, unpublicized communication with that agency or agencies.

Answered by calling the attention of the Assembly to an action of this body taken in 1934.

1953, pp. 30, 106. [Overture:] Due to the fact that the organization known as "The Association for the Preservation and Continuation of the Southern Presbyterian Church" is disturbing our churches by its un-Presbyterian practice of securing the names of members to send its literature, the Presbytery of Suwannee hereby overtures the General Assembly to inform this group that if it has any approach to make to the churches of this Assembly, to make its approach in the Presbyterian manner, through the session of the church, rather than the un-Presbyterian method it is now using.

Answered in the negative, but call the attention of the Assembly to the action of the 1934 General Assembly which adopted an overture from the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, as follows: ". . . asking the Assembly to reiterate its pronouncement against the practice of circularizing ministers and presbyteries in the interest of favorite projects. . . ." (see 1934 Minutes, p. 32)

1965, pp. 25, 77. That Overtures asking for action concerning circularizing Church Courts and individuals be answered by the following statement:

In the light of established policies outlined in the form of government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, it is therefore out of order for one court of the Church to communicate with another apart from the regular procedures stated. The General Assembly, therefore, calls upon Synods, Presbyteries, Sessions and individuals to follow scrupulously the procedures of good order in the Church. We recognize the right of individual conscience in many matters of common concern to members and courts of our Church. We recognize the right of individual and group "freedom of expression." Freedom, therefore, on the part of an individual, groups of individuals, and organizations of the Church to express convictions on matters pertaining to the well-being of the Church cannot be denied. The General Assembly urges and expects, however, that honest convictions be expressed in Christian love and with concern for the truth. In the light of our vows of church membership and ordination, there is no allowance for slander or vicious attacks against any member, agency, or court of the Church or any other persons or any other organization. When such violations occur they should be properly dealt with through the Constitutional procedures for discipline clearly outlined in the Standards of the Church.

[Ed. note: The "regular procedures" noted in this statement do not appear defined in the Form of Government.]

2g. Circularizing attacking Ministers or Church courts disapproved.

1934, p. 34. Overture answered in the affirmative as follows:

The General Assembly expresses its emphatic disapproval of the practice of

circulating pamphlets or letters or articles through the Church attacking the orthodoxy or Christian character of ministers or Courts of the Church;

And lays a solemn charge upon its ministers to bring charges against ministers or Courts of the Church only in the regular way set forth in the Book of Church Order.

1961, p. 68. "The General Assembly reaffirms its emphatic disapproval of the practice of circulating pamphlets, letters, or articles throughout the Church attacking the orthodoxy or Christian character of ministers or laymen or courts of the Church without due recourse to the laws and courts of the Church; and further, lays a solemn charge upon the total constituency of the Church to bring charges against such ministers, laymen or courts, only in the regular way set forth in the Book of Church Order."

2h. Commending public servants not usual policy.

1965, pp. 26, 77. [Overture asking commendation of] J. Edgar Hoover, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their faithful, impartial and excellent service in the cause of justice. [Answered:] We commend the brethren of Pee Dee Presbytery in their desire to express appreciation for public servants, but it is not the usual policy of the General Assembly to commend individuals or agencies for such service.

[Ed. note: The Assembly has, however, done so on a number of occasions, particularly addressing itself to various Presidents of the United States.]

2i. The Assembly warns the lower courts against excessive financial obligations.

1931, pp. 47, 143. [The General Assembly adopted the following resolution:] "That the several presbyteries and synods appoint a permanent Finance Committee, to which shall be referred all budgets for the expenditures of agencies and institutions of the respective presbyteries and synods, and that such budgets be reported by said Committees with recommendations to the Court appointing it for the Court's approval before obligations shall be contracted by said agencies or institutions; that all such agencies and institutions have a complete financial audit made annually and submit it to the permanent Finance Committee, which shall submit a digest of the audit to be printed in the minutes of the Court.

"That all the Courts of our Church be warned not to incur financial obligations unless there be reasonable provision made for the payment thereof."

§ 18-6 (4).

(4.) "To give its advice and instruction, in conformity with the Constitution, . . ."

4a. The Assembly cannot amend the Constitution by unconstitutional methods.

1898, p. 223. The General Assembly cannot set forth the "fundamentals of this system of doctrine" as required in the ordination vow. It can, of course, declare what it conceives to be the fundamentals of this system. But it cannot determine abstractly, apart from regular judicial process, how the presbytery, which under our Constitution is charged with the duty of ordaining candidates, is to interpret this requirement in the regular discharge of its own functions. To attempt to do so would be in effect to amend the Constitution by extra-constitutional methods.

4b. Example of such action refused.

1961, p. 79. A question of order, requesting that the Moderator rule whether the "Conclusion" of the Permanent Committee Report (affirming "that capital punishment should not be retained.") was not so at variance with the Constitution of the Church at Confession of Faith, chapter XXV, at Larger Catechism, Q. 136, and at

Shorter Catechism, Q. 68 that action to adopt the Permanent Committee's "Conclusion" would be null and void.

The Moderator ruled affirming the point of order, that the proposal of the Permanent Committee in its "III, Conclusion" was out of accord with our Constitution. Appeal was taken from the ruling of the Moderator. The Assembly sustained the Moderator's ruling by a vote of 322 to sustain, and 47 not to sustain.

On motion from the floor both the Minority and the Majority reports on Item I were laid on the table.

1962, pp. 24, 58. [Overture asking Assembly to decide whether action of 1961 Assembly above sustaining the ruling of the Moderator was in order. The Assembly declined to decide on the question on the ground that one Assembly could not review a parliamentary procedure of another.]

4c. Example of such action taken, then reversed.

1964, pp. 27, 28, 80, 81. We recommend that Overture 14 from the Presbytery of Potomac be answered in the affirmative through adoption of the following statement:

Whereas, The Book of Church Order defines a Presbytery as consisting "of all the Ministers and churches within a certain district." (16-1); and

Whereas, we still maintain in the Presbyterian Church in the United States certain Presbyteries which we designate as "Negro Presbyteries" and which occupy the same district as that of other Presbyteries of our denomination—i.e., The Presbytery of Central Alabama, The Presbytery of Georgia-Carolina, The Presbytery of Louisiana-Mississippi; and

Whereas, this is not only contrary to our constitution but also weakens our witness by the perpetuation of an institutional form of enforced segregation on the basis of race, which is out of keeping with the consistent stand of our denomination;

Therefore, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States instructs the Presbyteries which are concerned—i.e., The Presbyteries of Birmingham, East Alabama, Mobile, Tuscaloosa, Florida, Augusta-Macon, Savannah, Southwest Georgia, Louisiana, Red River, Central Mississippi, St. Andrew, South Mississippi, Fayetteville, Enoree, Harmony, Pee Dee, and any others to bring their procedures into line with the constitution of our church, and to take into their membership and under their care all of the Ministers and churches of our denomination within the district for which they bear particular responsibility.

Further, that the General Assembly instructs these Presbyteries to begin this process promptly and to present a report of its progress to the General Assembly at its next meeting.

Finally, that the General Assembly instructs the appropriate Synods—i.e., The Synod of Alabama, The Synod of Georgia, The Synod of Louisiana—to take steps to dissolve the three segregated Presbyteries as soon as this orderly transfer has been accomplished.

That Overture 12 from the Presbytery of Georgia-Carolina and Overture 13 from the Presbytery of Louisville regarding the dissolution of Negro Presbyteries be answered by reference to the action of the General Assmbly in reply to Overture 14.

1965, pp. 23, 97. That the replies of Presbyteries in response to action of the 1964 General Assembly regarding receiving churches and ministers from non-geographical presbyteries be received as information.

1965, pp. 28, 32, 94. IT IS RECOMMENDED: 1. That OVERTURES 10-11-12 and 60 from the Synod of South Carolina, the Presbyteries of Asheville, Tuscaloosa, and East Alabama, respectively, relative to the 1964 General Assembly action

to "instruct Presbyteries" be answered as follows in lieu of the statement by the Permanent Commission answering Overtures 10, 11, and 12. (Item C, page 127, Handbook):

Therefore be it resolved that the General Assembly, with all Christian Compassion and understanding, request all presbyteries that have Presbyterian US Negro churches within their bounds to take immediate action to receive said churches into their membership if this has not already been accomplished.

That the General Assembly instruct the aforementioned presbyteries to report this action, of progress toward it, to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly prior to the 1966 meeting of the General Assembly.

(**Note:** Item C of the report of the Permanent Judicial Commission referred to in the action immediately above was not adopted, but read:

"*Item C.* Overtures 10, 11, 12 from the Synod of South Carolina and the Presbyteries of Asheville and Tuscaloosa relative to the 1964 General Assembly action to "instruct presbyteries."

The Commission recommends that the General Assembly answer these overtures with the following statement:

It is the opinion of the Commission that in instruction Presbyteries to take into their membership and under their care all of the ministers and churches of our denomination within the district for which they bear particular responsibility, the General Assembly did not follow strictly the procedures provided in the Book of Church Order in that it failed to recognize the original jurisdiction of the Synod in such matters relating to Presbytery, and that for the General Assembly to request such action through the Synod is more properly consistent with Sections 17-5(3), 17-5(4) and 17-5(6), Book of Church Order. (See, for example, the procedure followed by the General Assembly in 1951 in dissolving a Synod and requesting the other Synods to take under their respective charge the Presbyteries and churches thereby affected.) The Commission points out that it is essential to the maintenance of constitutional procedures that church courts in their relations with each other have in mind that the jurisdiction of each "is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution." (Section 14-5, B. C. O.). The Commission would further point out that the end sought by the action of General Assembly is within its constitutional authority but that the Commission's opinion speaks only to the procedure for the attainment of such end."—*Stated Clerk.*)

§ 18-6 (8).

(8.) "To organize measures . . ."

8a. Prayer for the General Assembly.

1863, p. 133. Whereas, the General Assembly fully recognizes the efficacy of the prayers of God's people, and the necessity for divine guidance in its own deliberations; therefore,

Resolved, 1, That the General Assembly recommend to all the churches under its care, to offer special prayer during the devotions of the Sabbath preceding the meeting of the General Assembly in each year, that God would of great mercy so give the Assembly the wisdom that cometh from above, and so direct all its plans, discussions and decisions, as to promote His own glory, and advance the Kingdom of Jesus in the earth.

Resolved, 2, That the above Preamble and Resolution be printed annually in the Appendix to the Minutes of the Assembly.

8b. Overtures to the Assembly should come through Presbytery or Synod.

1876, p. 219. *Resolved,* That in view of the multiplication of overtures from the presbyteries to the General Assembly, and without intending to pronounce judg-

ment upon the question whether, under Sec. IV of Chap. XI of the Form of Government [pres. § 17-5], the presbyteries have the constitutional right to pass by the synods and overture the General Assembly directly on all proper questions, the General Assembly reminds the presbyteries that this growing practice is of doubtful expediency; that it consumes the time of the Assembly in many instances without any practical benefits; and that it would be better for the interests of the Church if all overtures shall be approved by the synods before they are sent to the General Assembly, except in extraordinary cases.

1878, p. 610. Overture asking the Assembly to decide that all overtures, appeals, complaints, etc., should proceed in regular gradation from the session to presbytery, from the presbytery to the synod, and from the synod to the General Assembly, and, *vice versa*, without omitting any of the intermediate courts.

Reply: 1. As to judicial cases, we refer to Chap. VI, Sec. III, Art. VI, Book of Discipline [pres. § 116-1].

2. That while the General Assembly may recommend that overtures should ordinarily be sent from the synod, it cannot deny the right of presbyteries, the constituent elements of the Assembly, nor of individuals, to overture the General Assembly whenever circumstances may require.

3. That the General Assembly has the right to send its deliverances directly to the presbyteries.

1879, p. 43; 1883, p. 59. [Similar actions.]

1894, p. 194. [On motion of Dr. Frank McCutchan:] Inasmuch as the number of overtures and memorials from the presbyteries, increasing from year to year, greatly burdens the Assembly with work, much of which can be as well performed by their respective synods, the Assembly recommends to the presbyteries that, in the matter of overtures, the synod be not passed over, except in cases clearly calling for the action of the Assembly.

1921, p. 70. Your Committee recommends that it be a rule of the General Assembly that no overture will be considered by the Assembly until it has first been presented to a presbytery or synod. If the overture is approved by a presbytery or synod, it will then come before the Assembly as an overture from that presbytery or synod. If the overture is rejected by the presbytery or synod, it may then be presented to the Assembly, but the fact that it has been presented to a presbytery or synod must be clearly stated on the overture.

We recommend that the Assembly request the editors of our religious papers to segregate the overtures which are reported by the various presbyteries and synods and print them in one place in their papers.

1922, p. 75. Overtures asking the Assembly to rescind the action of the last Assembly regarding the process of the presentation of overtures to the General Assembly.

We recommend that these overtures be answered in the negative.

1936, p. 40. An overture asking the Assembly concerning the status of a Stated Supply of a church. Inasmuch as this did not come from either a session, a presbytery or a synod, the Committee deems it unwise to take action on this matter.

1945, p. 71. [Action of 1921 reaffirmed.]

8c. How a committee of the Assembly is to handle overtures.

1928, p. 47. Resolution: that this Assembly ask the Permanent Judicial Committee to consider and recommend to the next General Assembly an answer to the following question: Has a Committee of the Assembly to which an overture has been referred the power to change or amend the said overture and to recommend the change or amendment to the Assembly as an answer to the overture?

1929, p. 121. [Answer in the report of the Permanent Judicial Committee:] "An overture is a request to the Assembly to state the law governing or to take some action relating to a given subject. This request cannot be changed by the committee, but should be reported and appear in the Minutes of the Assembly verbatim. The Assembly may reply by a simple yes or no to the question submitted, or in such language as will clearly state the applicable law. It may take the action proposed or decline to take it in whole or part, or it may take such modified action as it deems appropriate to the subject. And the committee can properly recommend the answer that should be made."

[Ed. note: In 1929, p. 32, this report was referred to the Standing Committee on Bills and Overtures which *made no mention* of the matter in its report, adopted p. 80. The above action, therefore, is not an official action of the Assembly.]

p. 121. [From the report of the Permanent Judicial Committee:]

The Stated Clerk asks for a deliverance that: "No committee has the right to consider or report on overtures or papers of any kind which were not placed in its hands by the Assembly."

Treating this as an overture, we recommend that the answer be: "Committees have no right to consider or report on overtures or papers not referred to them by a standing rule or order or by special order of the Assembly."

The Stated Clerk also requests a deliverance that: "It is the duty of every committee to report back to the Assembly on every paper placed in its hands." This is the law. See par. 92 of Book of Church Order [pres. § 19-1].

8d. How matters come properly before the Assembly.

1963, p. 110; 1965, p. 23. The Assembly reaffirmed the five (5) numbered items adopted by the 1963 Assembly as follows:

1. That the Assembly request the attention of the Presbyteries to the fact that the routes of Overture and Matters of Reference are proper.
2. That other methods employed to place business before the Assembly only after it is open make it difficult for the Commissioners to give adequate consideration to the issues involved.
3. That it is the opinion of the Assembly that matters rushed to the Assembly at the last moment seldom are of great and urgent concern to the whole Church.
4. That the Assembly, through the Presbyteries, notes to the individual Church member and groups of Church members that they have clear constitutional access to the higher courts through the lower courts and that this channel alone should be employed in seeking to place matters before the Assembly for consideration.
5. That the Assembly, through the Presbyteries, advise individual Church members and groups of Church members that miscellaneous letters and telegrams, usually requesting action on some matter before the Assembly, are not proper communications to the highest court of the Church and cannot properly be received nor acted upon.

8e. Assembly has no authority to direct the lower courts as to their receiving and expending offerings.

1922, p. 74. An overture from the Presbytery of Greenbrier, to which your Committee would recommend the following answer:

The Assembly of 1921 adopted plans for the raising of a fund of $5,000,000 for the equipment of the several departments of its beneficient work, refusing to send the proposition down to the presbyteries for their approval of its plans. It also "directed"

the lower courts to divide the beneficient funds according to the schedule of percentages designated by the Assembly. The Presbytery of Greenbrier complains of these acts of the Assembly of 1921, and overtures this Assembly to give a deliverance upon the subject. Your Committee recommends that the Assembly adopt the following reply: Without criticizing or construing the action of the Assembly of 1921, this Assembly declares that it is competent for the Assembly to devise plans for the carrying out of the work committed to it by the Constitution of the Church, and to recommend such plans to the lower courts and seek their co-operation; but has no authority from the Book of Church Order to control lower courts in their decisions as to what collections shall be taken up, or how these collections shall be expended.

[See also this Digest, D.W.W., § 220-1 et seq.]

§ 18-6 (9).

(9.) "To establish new Synods."

9a. The General Assembly has power to change the bounds of Synods.

[Ed. note: The following changes have been effected by the Assembly. In some of these actions a sizeable territory is involved, in others only a single church.

Change in boundary between the Synods of:

Alabama and Florida, 1902, p. 258; 1912, p. 37.
Alabama and Georgia, 1897, p. 43; 1913, p. 70l; 1917, p. 68.
Alabama and Memphis, 1883, p. 18.
Alabama and Mississippi, 1865, p. 360.
Alabama, and South Georgia and Florida, 1888, p. 387.
Appalachia and Georgia, 1942, p. 70.
Appalachia and Kentucky, 1925, p. 68.
Appalachia and Virginia, 1929, p. 80; 1932, p. 44.
Appalachia and West Virginia, 1927, pp. 58, 139; 1942, p. 70.
Appalachia and Kentucky, 1953, pp. 26, 52.
Appalachia and Virginia, 1959, pp. 26, 29, 59.
Appalachia and Tennessee, 1959, pp. 28, 59.
Appalachia and Kentucky, 1964, pp. 23, 110.
Arkansas and Tennessee, 1902, p. 259.
Arkansas and Texas, 1891, p. 229.
Georgia and Snedecor Memorial, 1920, p. 80; 1927, p. 50.
Georgia, and South Georgia and Florida, 1890, p. 24; 1891, p. 235.
Louisiana and Mississippi, 1902, pp. 259, 286; 1909, p. 46.
Memphis and Mississippi, 1865, p. 358; 1880, p. 185; 1897, p. 15.
Memphis and Nashville, 1866, p. 13.
Nashville and Virginia, 1870, p. 505; 1892, p. 434.
North Carolina and South Carolina, 1913, p. 20; 1919, p. 49.
North Carolina and Virginia, 1866, p. 12.
Texas to include part of New Mexico, 1952, p. 54.]

[For erection of Synods, see this Digest, Form of Govt., § 17-1.]

9b. Principle of the Assembly in changing the bounds of Synods: That both Synods involved concur.

[Ed. note: When requests came from only one presbytery or one synod for a change of boundary affecting another presbytery and synod the Assembly refused to make the change. (See 1875, p. 14; 1877, p. 421; 1879, p. 43; 1887, p. 206; 1896, p. 585; 1901, p. 16; 1935, p. 44.) The only exceptions to this practice were in 1929, p. 80; 1932, p. 44; and 1942, pp. 29, 70. In these exceptions there is no indication of the concurrence of the synod which was losing the territory, but in each instance the presbytery which was losing the territory joined in the overture.

In a single instance, 1903, p. 506, the Assembly gave permission for the erection of a church building across a state line and within the bounds of another synod. To rectify this error the Assembly 1904, p. 20, declared that it had no jurisdiction to do such a thing.]

9c. The Assembly will divide a Synod only upon request of the Synod.

1876, p. 241. Overture calling attention to the inconvenient size of synods.

Answer: As to the unwieldy size of synods, the Assembly, according to usage, can act only in response to a specific call for the division or reconstruction of synods.

1880, p. 185. Overture from the Synod of Texas, asking a division of said Synod.

Overtures from the Presbyteries of Eastern Texas and Dallas, asking a modification of said overture and overtures from the Presbyteries of Central Texas, Western Texas and Paris, in opposition to the overture.

In view of the conflicting overtures from presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod of Texas, and of the fact that delay in the division contemplated would work no injury to the Church, the subject was remanded to the said Synod for further action.

§ 18-6 (10).

(10.) "To institute and superintend the agencies necessary in the general work of the Church."

[Ed. note: No general history of the agencies of the Assembly appears in the Digest.]

10a. Outside organizations requested not to use the name of the Church.

1950, pp. 24, 49. Overture 5, concerning the use of the name "Presbyterian, U. S." in the organization known as "The Peace Fellowship of Presbyterians, U. S.," is answered in the affirmative with the request that said organization refrain from using the name "Presbyterian, U. S." in its title and publicity.

10b. Appointment of Assembly usually for one year.

1916, p. 72. In answer to overture from the Stated Clerk of the Assembly, asking for an interpretation of the law as to length of time of the appointments of the Assembly:

We recommend that the Assembly answer that all appointments are *ad interim* and expire at the next Assembly, unless a longer term of office is provided for by a standing rule or explicit statement.

10c. Executive Secretaries, Clerk of the Assembly, and Members of the Board of Trustees may be entitled to the privileges of the floor on matters concerning their work.

1869, p. 390. It was adopted as a standing rule of the General Assembly that its Secretaries and Clerks shall have the privilege of members of the body upon any matters before it in which the duties of their offices are specially involved.

1871, p. 18. [Having been requested to rescind this rule as a dangerous violation of the Constitution, the Assembly gave] the following answer: A reference to the rule will show that "the privileges of members on the floor" are not conferred by it on the above officers, but only the privilege of making statements and explanations touching trusts committed to their care. This the Assembly regards as both safe and convenient.

1886, p. 55. Any member or officer of the Board of Trustees of the General Assembly, chosen by said Board for that purpose, shall have the privilege of speaking upon the floor of the Assembly on any matter pertaining to the business of the Board which is under consideration by the Assembly.

10d. Assembly agencies use of laymen or women when possible.

1944, p. 60. Overture which "views with regret the practice of the General Assembly's agencies in this hour of shortage of ministers in calling from the active pastorate so many of our finest young ministers" for work which could be done by laymen or by women asks "that the General Assembly instruct its agencies drastically to curtail such practices." In reply this General Assembly asks the agencies of the Church to give earnest and prayerful consideration to the substance and spirit of this overture when seeking to fill the positions of their agencies.

1965, p. 61. That The Assembly's Committee on the Minister and His Work replies to the Resolution of the 1963 General Assembly referred to this Committee for study and report as follows:

(i) That the Boards and Agencies of our Church are best qualified to determine whether lay or ministerial personnel are needed to fill their executive positions. In many instances a theological outlook and pastoral background are essential to the proper discharge of the duties of denominational executives.

(ii) That as a purely practical consideration our Boards and Agencies find that it is frequently less expensive to secure the services of a qualified minister than the services of an equally qualified layman.

(iii) That ultimate responsibility for approving the work that a minister enters belongs to his Presbytery (see Book of Church Order, 26-8).

10e. Agencies not to bring suit in civil courts.

1949, p. 156. We recommend that no Assembly Agency bring suit in the civil courts of the several states or the Federal Government without first securing the counsel and advice of the Permanent Judicial Committee, except in cases of emergency where, in the opinion of the agency to delay would be expensive and would prejudice the case.

[Ed. note: This is cited by a judicial commission (1950, p. 131) which was reviewing the Lunsford Richardson matter in which several agencies had been in court. When the litigation was ended, action was required by the General Assembly every year from 1946 through 1952 before adequate explanation was given for the agencies having been so involved. See the Minutes of those years for further details.]

10f. "Independent papers."

[Ed. note: The Assembly refused to inaugurate or endorse any non-ecclesiastical periodical publications every time such a matter has been proposed. See Minutes: 1867, p. 148; 1895, p. 395; 1908, p. 50; 1919, p. 62; 1923, p. 57; 1929, p. 82; 1938, p. 54; 1942, p. 71.]

1946, pp. 27, 83. Overture requesting that the Assembly protest the circularization of her ministers and elders by the *Christian Beacon* which is felt to engender strife and discord within our Church. Answered in the negative.

1946, pp. 27, 83. Overture relating to personal animus attending the pursuit of editorial policies of organs reporting the church news. We recommend that a negative answer be given.

1948, pp. 27, 52. *Whereas,* our beloved church is torn by division and strife from within; and the energies of our people are being diverted into channels other than those of the Lord Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the major promoters of these differences and points of discords are the two publications, the *Southern Presbyterian Journal,* and the *Presbyterian Outlook,* whose titles are misleading to our people, and whose policies are undermining the spirit of unity in our church;

Therefore, The Presbytery of Harmony respectfully overtures the General Assembly to request these above mentioned publications to delete the word "Presbyterian" from their titles, in the interest of clarity; and to alleviate the misunderstanding that these publications represent the official position of our church.

Overture 6, concerning the request that use of the word "Presbyterian" in publications not officially connected with the church should cease, is answered in the negative.

1951, pp. 30, 91. That overtures 22-25 be answered as follows: As to the Church papers namely *The Christian Observer, The Presbyterian Outlook* and *The Presbyterian Journal,* these are privately owned publications and as such do not come under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. Individuals may or may not subscribe to any, all or none of these according to private choice.

1956, p. 58. (A) The General Council believes and here affirms that the reading of independent "church papers" by members of the Church is important and desirable. For that reason the Council has recommended that particular notice be given to the fact that these three papers, *The Christian Observer, The Presbyterian Outlook* and *The Southern Presbyterian Journal,* are named in the Plan Book as worthy of notice and response by church leaders in every local church of the Assembly. This emphasis is given in the course of the year at that time which appears, according to the Council's judgment, most suitable to the total program of the Church.

(B) The Council believes that the "Independent Church Papers" are just that, and that their independence should be maintained for the sake of the papers and for the sake of the Church. It would be most unfortunate and foreboding if the only avenues of information and opinion open to the Church were avenues over which the Church maintained control and of which the Church exercised that custodianship which is always given to ownership. The independent church press has a large, significant and continuing service to perform to our Church and to the whole religious community.

(C) The Council is mindful of and grateful for the meaningful and constructive contribution which these three independent papers have made to the life of the Church in supporting its endeavors, communicating news of its affairs, encouraging the enhancement of the devotional life of churchmen and giving a forum for the frank expression of opinion and ambition in matters of the Church's contemporary or prospective engagements.

10g. Official Church paper to give both sides of controversial matters.

1964, pp. 43, 69. In regard to Overture #45 the Committee voted that it be answered in the negative. However, the Standing Committee on PRESBYTERIAN SURVEY respectfully requests of the General Assembly that the Board of Directors of PRESBYTERIAN SURVEY be requested, in case of controversial subjects, to give opportunity for the presentation of both sides, as is done in our church courts.

10h. Brief history of the Theological Seminaries.

[Ed. note: Union Seminary was founded in 1812. In 1861, p. 37, the controlling Synods of Virginia and North Carolina asked the Assembly to assume the right of review and control over the Seminary.

Columbia Seminary was established in 1828 by the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia. The Synod of Alabama began in 1857 to aid in supporting the Seminary and we find that its control in 1861 was in the hands of the Syn-

ods of Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. In 1863, pp. 125, 142, it was transferred to the control of the Assembly, where it remained until 1881, p. 362, when it was restored to the three Synods, the Assembly retaining the right of review and control. The Synod of South Georgia and Florida the same year began to cooperate in the management of the Seminary. Originally located at Columbia, S. C., the Seminary was moved to Decatur, Ga., with the opening of the 1927 session. Because of financial conditions Columbia was closed during 1880 and 1881.

The Divinity School of the Southwestern Presbyterian University was organized in 1885. Its reports to the Assembly may be found from 1893. In 1923, p. 34, it was reported in a "state of suspended animation," it having been closed in June, 1917. This school was located at Clarksville, Tenn.

Louisville Seminary was opened in 1893 (1893, p. 53) under the Synods of Kentucky and Missouri with the right of general supervision assigned to the Assembly. Consolidation of this Seminary with the seminary at Danville, Ky., was approved in 1901, p. 38, the resulting "The Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Kentucky" being under joint control of Synods of the U. S. Church and of the U. S. A. Church. The name became "The Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 1927, p. 114.

Austin Seminary had its origin in the election in 1899 of trustees by the Synod of Texas. In 1902, p. 268, a constitution was adopted, placing the Seminary under the general supervision of the Assembly. The Seminary opened that year. Because of the war and financial conditions Austin was closed from 1918—1920.]

10i. Standards of theological education in the Seminaries.

[Cf. this Digest, Form of Govt., § 24-1, 27-1.]

[Ed note: This matter was thoroughly studied several times.

(1) 1869, p. 373 through 1872, p. 178. The matter was tabled.

(2) 1874, p. 484 through 1877, p. 416, with the following action:

1877, p. 416. This General Assembly, in view of the suggestions of the report on theological education referred to it by the Assembly of 1876, respecting the desirableness of sundry modifications in our methods of training candidates for the ministry, hereby solemnly recommends to the presbyteries, and to the theological seminaries under its care, to take order, in their respective spheres of service in such training, for carrying forward that training in the methods herein commended:

I. 1. The presbyteries shall observe, with increased strictness, the provisions of our Form of Government, Chap. XIV., Secs. III-VI [pres. § 27-1]; and, to avoid precipitate action in the licensing of candidates, they shall be required to pass through a probation of at least one year, involving an attendance on at least two meetings of presbytery, at each of which a portion of their examinations shall be held. The examination of candidates in the seminary shall in no case supersede the examination by presbytery.

2. Every candidate, except as regarded as an "extraordinary case," (Form of Government, Chap. XIV, Sec. VI) [pres. § 27-5] shall be required to prosecute satisfactorily the scholastic course prescribed in the Form of Government, and, at the discretion of presbytery, exhibit any other evidences of piety, literature and aptness to teach which may be required by presbytery.

3. To improve candidates in "aptness to teach," the presbyteries are advised to provide opoprtunities for such as need additional advantages for that purpose, by granting them permission, for a limited period and prescribed field

of labors, to conduct public religious services involving the exposition of the Scriptures, and provide for the adequate superintendence of such candidates, and for a reasonable compensation for their services, and no candidate shall assume such privileges except by leave of presbytery.

4. Candidates whose residences are at an inconvenient distance from a seminary for a properly frequent attendance on presbyteries may be temporarily placed under the care of some presbytery more convenient to the seminary; but ordinarily such candidates shall be required to pass their final examinations and receive licensure by the presbytery under whose care they had been first taken.

II. 1. The seminaries are advised so to arrange their program of study that candidates may abridge or extend the *time* of scholastic study, according to previous preparation and ability for its successful prosecution; but in no case shall such program lessen the requisitions of our Form of Government.

2. In no case, except under the authority of presbytery, shall a candidate be allowed to pass to a higher grade of study till he shall have sustained a satisfactory examination on the studies of the grade preceding.

3. The authorities of the seminaries shall annually report to the presbyteries with which candidates may be connected, by a formal relation, or by residence, their scholastic progress, and whetever else respecting their merit the presbyteries may request.

4. Thy shall also provide a course of "vacation study," of such a character that it can be successfully prosecuted in private and on which the student shall pass a satisfactory examination. This provision is designed to meet the wishes of candidates who, in the judgment of their presbyteries, ought to complete the prescribed course of study in a less period than three years, either to enter on the work of the ministry or to spend an additional year in prosecuting such a post-graduate course of study as the faculties of the seminaries may prescribe.

In adopting this report the General Assembly distinctly disclaims any purpose to exercise any right not clearly given by the Constitution, or to restrict in the slightest degree the rights of the presbyteries in the premises. The report is advisory only.

(3) 1880, p. 193, with the following action:

"With respect to the subjects presented in the foregoing overture, it is recommended that the General Assembly decline to express any opinion. The first, namely, the terms of study in our theological seminaries, it would seem most judicious to leave to the experience and sound discretion of the directors of those institutions. The second, namely, the employment of students of theology during their vacations 'in supplying vacant churches,' properly belongs to the presbyteries."

(4) 1882, p. 564, through 1883, p. 21. Change was deemed unnecessary.

(5) 1883, p. 44, through 1884, p. 232. Proposal to have one-half the time of theological training spent in active labor was rejected.

(6) 1885, pp. 414, 419. Proposal of an Ad Interim Committee to study the matter was refused on the ground of actions of 1883 and 1884 above.

(7) 1894, p. 242 through 1895, p. 399. Proposal of four year course with six month terms was not deemed expedient by the seminaries.]

10j. Proposed reduction in number of Seminaries.

1922, p. 28. The Assembly would look with favor on any movement among the synods looking toward a centralization of our seminaries.

1934, pp. 55, 109. [From report of the Ad Interim Committee on Training Men for the Ministry and Reducing the Number of Theological Seminaries: second section:]

The second question asked the seminaries was this: "What is the opinion of your Trustees, Faculty, or President, as to the wisdom and possibility of reducing the number of our seminaries, and as to any plans for reduction?"

The following replies were received:

Austin: "Our Seminary in the Southwest is essential . . ."

Columbia: "The Faculty of Columbia Seminary is not prepared to give an opinion as to the wisdom and feasibility of any suggestion looking to a reduction in the number of our theological seminaries at the present time . . ."

Louisville: "Our Directors seem to feel that a reduction in the number of seminaries would be desirable. That opinion seems to prevail generally among the ministers of the Church."

Union: "The Trustees and Faculty both feel that it would be wise to reduce the number of our seminaries . . ."

Recommendation: That in view of the fact that the seminaries are owned and controlled by the synods, boards of directors and trustees, the General Assembly hereby requests the seminaries to give the matter of reduction of the seminaries their most earnest and careful consideration, and that the seminaries confer jointly, if the way be clear, looking to a solution of this matter.

1937, p. 72. Union reports in obedience to the instructions of the 1934 Assembly: "As reported to the Assembly last year, the Board of Trustees of Union Theological Seminary in March, 1936, invited the Board of Directors of Columbia Theological Seminary to join with them in considering a merger. After careful consideration, the latter Board deemed it best not to proceed with such an effort."

1943, p. 93. That the Assembly look with favor upon a reduction in the number of seminaries and note with approval the movements being made in that direction.

10k. Students should attend our own Seminaries.

1881, p. 364. *Resolved,* That whilst the Assembly does not discourage that laudable aspiration which seeks the best culture, not only within our own pale, but in other parts of Protestant Christendom, no candidate for the ministry should resort to such exterior sources of learning until he shall have been grounded in that of his own denomination; and therefore the presbyteries are hereby exhorted to exert all their legitimate power to cause their students to go through the curriculum of our own seminaries before studying in learned institutions without our bounds.

1890, p. 35; 1891, p. 232; 1893, p. 44; 1898, p. 213; 1911, p. 27. [Similar actions.]

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 27-5.]

10l. The nature and extent of General Assembly control over Seminaries.

1884, p. 280. [From the report of the Directors of Columbia Seminary:] In May, 1883, the Board requested Professor James Woodrow to publish in the October (1883) number of the *Southern Presbyterian Review,* or as soon thereafter as possible, his teachings on Evolution, in regard to the world, the lower animals and man. In May, 1884, he sent a communication, stating that it had been impossible for him to prepare the article for the October (1883) number of the *Review,* but that he would deliver an address to the Alumni Association on that subject on May 7th, 1884. The statement was accepted as satisfactory, and he was again requested to publish his teachings on that subject in the *Southern Presbyterian Review.*

p. 231. *Resolved,* That this Assembly commends the action of the Board of Directors of Columbia Theological Seminary in requesting the Perkins Professor of Science in connection with Revelation to lay before the Church, for its information, his views as held and taught in that institution touching Evolution as it respects the earth, the lower animals and man.

1886, pp. 41, 44. *Resolved,* That whereas the General Assembly is convinced that Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., one of the Professors in Columbia Theological Seminary, holds views repugnant to the Word of God and to our Confession of Faith, as appears both by his address, published in the *Southern Presbyterian Review* for July, 1884, and in other publications, and by his statements made upon the floor of this Assembly, therefore this Assembly does hereby, in accordance with its action yesterday in regard to the oversight of Theological Seminaries, earnestly recommend to the Synods of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and of South Georgia and Florida, which direct and control the said Seminary, to dismiss the said Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., as professor in the said Seminary, and to appoint another in his place, and speedily to take such other steps as in their judgment will be best adapted to restore this Seminary to the confidence of the Church. [Adopted by recorded vote: Ayes, 65; nays, 27. Several who voted nay put an explanation of their votes on record.]

[Ed. note: A prior draft of the above (1886, p. 40) was phrased "direct the Synods . . . to dismiss", and had been adopted by recorded vote: Ayes, 54; nays, 36.]

[Cf. this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. James Woodrow.]

p. 43. Your Committee on Theological Seminaries would respectfully report as follows:

First, in reply to the injunction laid upon us to find and state the relation existing between this General Assembly and the Theological Seminaries organized within the pale of our Church, we report:

1. That this Assembly sustains very important relations to all such institutions; yet these relations differ somewhat according to the constitution and practice of each institution as ratified by the Assembly.

2. That by the very genius of Presbyterianism the Assembly is bound to maintain a supervisory jurisdiction over these and all other like corporations; and also over all schemes for religious work, so far as they affect the practice or doctrine of the Assembly's constituencies, and especially the office-bearers of the Church.

3. That this jurisdiction must in every case enable the Assembly, through the proper channels of authority, to keep all such institutions free from everything inconsistent with the spirit of our system; and of course free from all teaching inconsistent with the Word of God as expounded in our Standards.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. S. S. Laws.]

1887, p. 233. Overtures from the Presbyteries of Harmony and South Carolina respecting the jurisdiction of the General Assembly over all the affairs, institutions and procedings of the lower courts.

Answer: Touching the subject matter referred to in these overtures, this Assembly declines to formulate any detailed explanation of the acts of the last Assembly, as any such statement, however, expressed, could only be regarded as a new deliverance on the same subjects, which this Assembly does not feel called upon to make.

[Ed. note: A minority report was offered as a substitute for the above action by two members of the committee reporting. This minority report would have declared unconstitutional the action of the previous year, charging Dr. James Woodrow, a professor at Columbia Seminary, with holding views repugnant to the Word of God and our Confession of Faith and earnestly recommending that he be dismissed from office.

The minority position was that "as our Constitution limits expressly the jurisdiction of each and all our church courts, the General Assembly cannot

lawfully exercise supervisory jurisdiction over the affairs, institutions, or proceedings of the lower courts, nor over their office-bearers, except as these matters shall come before the highest court in some one of the four constitutional modes prescribed in our Rules of Discipline."

This minority report was indefinitely postponed. It was, however, exactly that interpretation of the Constitution made by the Assembly in 1941, pp. 47 ff., in regard to the charges made against Dr. E. T. Thompson, professor at Union Seminary.]

1919, p. 26. "The Faculty and Board of Directors of the Columbia Theological Seminary hereby respectfully overtures the General Assembly, in session at New Orleans, La., May 15th, 1919, requesting that the Assembly be pleased to appoint an Ad-Interim Committee, consisting of one professor and one director from each of our Theological Seminaries, to consider and report to the succeeding General Assembly, meeting in May, 1920:

"First—As to the propriety of inserting a new chapter in the Book of Church Order defining the ecclesiastical status of the Theological Seminaries, with the full statement of the power of control possessed by the General Assembly, the curriculum which ought to be taught, the degree of control possessed by the Seminary over the candidates, and all other questions which may seem to the Committee necessary in order to define clearly the relation of the Seminary to the General Assembly and to the life of the Church; and to prepare such chapter, if in its judgment there be sufficient need for it, reporting to the next succeeding Assembly.

"Second—To consider the question of appointing a Permanent Committee on Theological Education, whose duty it should be to supervise the interests of the Church in this great field, seeking to develop Theological Scholarship and to promote, in a wise and efficient way, the production of books of Theological and Biblical Scholarship, meeting the needs and issues of our own day in a satisfactory and conclusive way.

"Third—To consider and report to the next General Assembly upon any other questions relative to Theological Seminaries and Theological Education, and the interest of the Church therein, which it may seem wise to this Ad-Interim Committee to incorporate in its report."

We recommend that this overture be placed on the docket for consideration by the General Assembly of 1920, and that copies of said overture be sent by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to the Faculty and Board of Trustees of each of our Theological Seminaries, to wit: Austin, Columbia, Louisville and Union, for their information.

1920, p. 50. As to the matter docketed for consideration by this Assembly, touching the control of the Seminaries and the standardization of theological education (Minutes, 1919, pp. 25 and 26,) your Committee reports that only one reply to same, transmitted to the several Seminaries, has been received, viz.: from Union Seminary, and this stating that its constitution makes it impracticable to comply with the proposals of the overture. Your Committee, therefore, recommends that the overture be replied to with the statement that the Assembly does not see its way clear to inaugurate the changes proposed.

1923, p. 34. Overtures from the Presbyteries of Greenbrier and Florida asking for the appointment of an Ad-Interim Committee on the whole question of Theological Seminaries and Theological Education. [Declined,] for two reasons:

First—That our Theological Seminaries are not under the control of the General Assembly, but of the synods, and such radical changes as these overtures propose would be an invasion of long constituted rights.

Second—That the appointment of a committee whose duty it is to be, practically, to tell the faculties of our Theological Seminaries what they are to teach is neither wise nor proper.

1929, p. 81. [Similar action.]

1934, pp. 55, 108. [From the Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Training Men for the Ministry and Reducing the Number of Theological Seminaries; second section:]

Your Committee addressed a communication to the Seminaries asking, "What authority, jurisdiction, or influence has the General Assembly over your Seminary?" The Administrative Officers of the Seminaries, quoting from their Charters and other official records, made the following replies:

Austin: "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States shall have the right of general supervision over the interests of the Seminary, and for this purpose the Trustees shall lay before the Assembly, at its annual meeting, a report setting forth the existing conditions of the institution; and the Assembly can advise or recommend measures for its welfare. Should the Assembly see reason, at any time, to object to any of the acts of the Trustees or other authorities of the institution, it shall send down, in writing, to the synods, its opinion in the premises, but shall have no controlling negative, nor the right to originate any measures for the management of the Seminary . . ." (Synods supporting Austin Seminary are Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas.)

Columbia: "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States shall have advisory jurisdiction over the Seminary but shall have no power of veto, nor the right to originate measures for its conduct." (Synods supporting Columbia Seminary are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina.)

Louisville: "The General Assemblies of the U. S. and U. S. A. Churches have the power of approval or veto in the election of any professor in the institution. Beyond that, our Seminary is controlled by a Board of Directors of 36 men, 24 of whom are U. S. Presbyterians, and 12 of whom are U.S.A. Presbyterians. More direct control is exercised by the five U. S. Synods, namely: Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Alabama, Appalachia, and by one U.S.A. Synod, namely: Kentucky. All the U.S.A. Directors are elected by the Synod of Kentucky, U.S.A., some from the Synod itself, and others from the U.S.A. Church at large; 15 U. S. Directors are elected by the five controlling synods, and the remaining nine directors are chosen from the Church at large by the U. S. members of the Board."

Union: "Union Theological Seminary is under the control of a Board of Trustees elected by the Synods of Virginia, North Carolina, West Virginia and Appalachia. We make a report each year to the General Assembly for its approval, but I understand that the General Assembly has no authority or jurisdiction over our Seminary. Its influence naturally is great but it is exerted without definite authority."

p. 109. Recommended: That the section of the Report of the Ad Interim Committee, touching the reduction of the number of Theological Seminaries, be received without recommendations.

That in view of the fact that the Seminaries are owned and controlled by the Synods, Boards of Directors and Trustees, the General Assembly hereby requests the Seminaries to give the matter of reduction of the Seminaries their most earnest and careful consideration, and that the Seminaries confer jointly, if the way be clear, looking to a solution of this matter.

1941, pp. 47 ff. [See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 104-1.]

1945, p. 97. That the seminaries are asked to make full report to the Assembly as to the lecturers and speakers invited to speak before their student bodies, and other matters of vital interest to the Assembly.

1947, pp. 37, 99. [Overture approved that] the General Assembly to instruct all the seminaries of our Church to arrange courses in evangelism, including personal and mass evangelism, in their curricula.

10m. "A Digest of the Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly."

[Ed. note: In 1888 the Executive Committee of Publication issued the first edition of the Digest prepared by Dr. W. A. Alexander and covering the years 1860-1887. No mention of this edition appears in the Minutes of the General Assembly.]

1898, p. 213. In view of the fact that Rev. W. A. Alexander, D.D., had, with great labor, prepared a Digest of Minutes of all the General Assemblies of the Church from 1861 to 1898, and in view of the fact that the aforesaid Digest was practically a free gift to the Church, the thanks of the General Assembly were extended to Dr. Alexander for the same. In view of the great importance of such a work to the proper conduct of the business of the courts of the Church, the synods and presbyteries were urged to purchase copies of the said Digest and place them in the hands of their Stated Clerks.

[Ed. note: 1898, p. 256. This revised Digest had already been published by the Publication Committee, apparently without any direct authorization of the General Assembly.]

1909, pp. 16, 125. [Dr. Alexander was requested] to revise and republish the Digest, and the Committee of Publication was instructed to issue an edition of 1,000 copies, which shall be put on sale at a price as near the cost of publication as possible.

1910, pp. 36-37. [A revised edition which shall be issued under the title of Alexander's Digest Revised. The Assembly did not favor incorporation, in the revised Digest, of the early records of synods and presbyteries as the Digest is not intended to be a history of synods and presbyteries.]

1920, p. 62. Overture from Rev. Thomas H. Law, D.D., Stated Clerk, asking that the Executive Committee of Publication be authorized and recommended to consider and arrange for, if the measure appear feasible, the preparation and publication of another revision of or supplement to Alexander's *Digest*. We recommend that the overture be answered in the affirmative.

[Ed. note: This was the work completed by and published over the name of G. F. Nicolassen in 1923, commonly known as "Alexander's Digest," Revised, 1922.]

1941, p. 45. Overture [from the Presbytery of Dallas,] relative to publishing a complete digest of the Assembly's laws and procedures, we recommend that the Moderator appoint a committee of three, to include the Stated Clerk, to study the matters referred to in this overture, and to report to the next Assembly.

1942, pp. 45, 124. Report of Ad Interim Committee on Revision of Assembly's Digest. It is the judgment of your Committee that revision of the Assembly's Digest is a task which belongs logically to the office of the Stated Clerk. At the same time, if material is available which can be utilized by him in the issuance of an official Digest, he should be permitted to make use of it.

We recommend: 1. That the Stated Clerk of the Assembly be authorized to prepare an Assembly's Digest, brought down to date, as soon as possible.

2. That the Assembly authorize its Treasurer to pay $500.00, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the typing of the material which has been assembled by Rev. James A. Millard. This material is to be used by the Stated Clerk as he may see fit in the preparation of the Digest.

1965, p. 64. That the General Assembly authorize the publishing of a revised Digest. [Ed. note: Revision had been recommended by the Permanent Judicial Commission in 1964. The authorization was to the Stated Clerk to revise and publish.]

10n. "The Ministerial Directory."

1933, p. 26. A communication, asking the Assembly to arrange for preparing a Ministerial Directory for our Church, was granted. Rev. E. C. Scott, Asst. Stated Clerk, was directed to assembly the material for this Directory, which is to include all our ministers since 1861.

1937, p. 66. Stated Clerk instructed to print the Ministerial Directory if and when a sufficient number of subscribers to the same to pay the expenses of printing shall have been secured.

1939, pp. 59, 79. We recommend the adoption of the Stated Clerk's recommendations for completion and publication of the Directory.

1941, p. 69. We recommend the adoption of the recommendation [from report of Stated Clerk] that $3,000 be advanced from the Treasury of the General Assembly in order to float the publication of a minimum edition of 1,000 copies of the Ministerial Directory.

1942, p. 49. Be it therefore Resolved:

1. That the General Assembly, by a rising vote, express its grateful recognition of him as a modest, faithful, efficient Stated Clerk, and its deep appreciation of the unique service he has rendered in giving to the Church, at so low a cost, this Ministerial Directory of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

2. That the Assembly hereby decrees that if there is any surplus or profit from this publication, after the Assembly has been reimbursed for the money which has been advanced, such surplus or profit shall go to the compiler of the Directory.

1943, p. 87. Regarding the Ministerial Directory, as acted on by the General Assembly of 1942 offering Dr. Scott, our Stated Clerk, all accrued profits from the sale of that book, we learn that Dr. Scott does not wish to receive these funds. Your Committee therefore recommends that our Moderator express to Dr. Scott for the Assembly appreciation for his splendid work and untiring efforts in compiling this book and further show our material appreciation by giving Dr. Scott $200 for additional services rendered not contemplated in his salary. We also recommend that the funds on hand from book sales become an item in the Treasurer's account for regular use.

1951. [A revision of the Ministerial Directory was published. Sales of this revision never entirely provided for the cost of publishing.

1964, p. 64. That the General Assembly authorize the publishing of a revised edition of The Ministerial Directory.

[Ed. note: The authorization was to the Stated Clerk to revise and publish. Cost was to be borne by the Assembly's Operating Expense Budget.]

10o. The Seal.

1956, pp. 25, 43. That the General Assembly officially adopt the seal used on publications by the Board of Christian Education as the official seal of the Church.

§ 18-6 (14).

The Assembly may authorize Synod and Presbytery to receive other ecclesiastical bodies lying within their bounds.

1942, pp. 29, 71. The Presbytery of Kanawha respectfully overtures the General Assembly that the Presbytery of Kanawha be granted permission to receive the

Presbyterian Church of Winfield, West Virginia, from the Presbytery of Parkersburg, Synod of West Virginia (U.S.A.), when the same has been dismissed by that Presbytery. Answered in the affirmative.

[Ed. note: Under an agreement of 1957, and a revision of that agreement, 1962, pp. 72 ff., the Assembly has given general permission to receive churches from the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Presumably receiving a church of any other denomination would require exercise by the Assembly of its power under § 18-6 (14) for the specific case.]

§ 18-6 (17).

(17.) "To unite with other ecclesiastical bodies whose organization is conformed to the doctrines and order of this Church . . ."

17a. Only the Assembly may effect Church union.

1962, p. 59. That the minutes of the Synod of Kentucky be approved with the exception of the report on pp. 17 of the Joint Study Committee on Merger. The attention of the Synod should be called to the fact that the Book of Church Order (18-6 (17), 30-3) makes no provision for union or merger on Synod or Presbytery levels.

17b. ". . . conformed to the doctrines and order of this Church . . ."

1961, p. 72. That since constitutional provisions governing the Presbyterian Church in the United States forbids its entrance into negotiations of any plan of organic union with denominations not conforming to the doctrine and order of our Presbyterian heritage, Overtures 16 and 17 be answered in the negative.

1962, pp. 30, 73. The Presbytery of Potomac, respectfully submitting that it is not the case that "constitutional provisions governing the Presbyterian Church in the United States forbid its entrance into negotiations of any plan of organic union with denominations not conforming to the doctrine and order of our Presbyterian heritage" (see recommendation 3 of the Standing Committee on Inter-Church Relations, p. 72, Minutes of the General Assembly, 1961): and submitting that this is not the sense of Section 18-6(17) of the Form of Government of our Church: therefore overtures the General Assembly to approve participation by the Presbyterian Church in the United States in discussions undertaken by the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ, with a view to "a plan of church union both catholic and reformed."

[Answered:] It is recommended that the General Assembly answer in the negative Overture 27 from the Presbytery of Potomac requesting participation by the Presbyterian Church in the United States in discussions undertaken by the UPUSA Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ.

This reaffirms the action of the 101st General Assembly (Minutes 1961, p. 72) declining to enter these negotiations. It is to be noticed that the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations is empowered to avail itself of opportunities to observe these negotiations.

1963, p. 37. [Resolution:] Whereas it is conceivable that in the course of time and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the Presbyterian Church, U. S., may be led to consider union with ecclesiastical bodies whose traditions are other than Presbyterian:

Therefore, be it resolved that the General Assembly approve the inclusion in the Form of Government, Chapter 18, paragraph 6, end of subparagraph 13, the words: "or those with which such a relationship is desired"; and the inclusion in the Form of Government, Chapter 18, paragraph 6, subparagraph 17, of the words: "or with other ecclesiastical bodies with which union is desired," this phrase to follow the clause "conformed to the doctrines and order of this Church."

[Referred to the Permanent Judicial Commission.]

1964, p. 85. That the resolution [1963, p. 36] concerning changes in the Book of Church Order so as to include other denominations outside the Reformed *Faith*, which resolution was referred to this committee by the Judicial Commission, be answered in the negative.

§ 18-6 (18).

"To recommend measures for the promotion of charity, truth, and holiness . . ."

[Ed. note: Numerous examples occur in the Minutes, especially in connection with the work of the agencies. A single example is here given because of its current importance.

It is to be noted that this is merely the power "to recommend," not the power "to direct," or "to enjoin." All actions of the Assembly in this area of concern conform to this distinction.]

1964, pp. 59, 119 ff, 131. L. That the Stated Clerk and Treasurer of the General Assembly be central treasurer of benevolences for Assembly benevolence agencies, effective January 1, 1966, under the following rules:

a. The central treasurer of benevolences shall receive and distribute contributions to all benevolence causes of the General Assembly.

b. The Permanent Committee on Assembly Operation shall be responsible for supervising the work of the central treasurer of benevolences, and shall amend its manual so to provide.

c. The central treasurer of benevolences shall use the following method for distributing monthly the benevolence contributions received:

(1) Contributions designated for the use of a specific benevolence agency shall be distributed to that agency.

(2) Contributions designated for the use of agencies according to a percentage schedule adopted by a presbytery shall be distributed by that schedule.

(3) Contributions sent directly to any agency shall be reported to the central treasurer of benevolences as of the twenty-fifth (25th) day of each month; and distributions shall not be made to any agency from which such report has not been received by the first day of the next month, except that such agency shall receive funds designated for it under 1 and 2 immediately above.

(4) Contributions designated for distribution by the central treasurer of benevolences in such a way that each agency will receive as nearly as possible its proportional accumulated share of total contributions in relation to the relative participation in the approved Benevolence Budget of the General Assembly shall be distributed on the principle that the agency receiving the lowest percentage of its budget at the time of distribution will be aided first until its percentage of receipts equals the next to lowest agency, then these two will receive funds until they have reached the lowest level of the next lowest agency and so on until all of the contributions of this type for the month have been exhausted.

(5) Each monthly distribution shall be based on total receipts by or for each agency to date for the year.

d. The expense of the central treasurer of benevolences shall be paid from the current Operating Expense Budget of the General Assembly.

N. That synods, presbyteries and sessions recognize both the responsibility of individual members to support the total benevolence program of the Church and the Christian liberty under which they may give and provide for the distribution of the gifts to the benevolence agencies under their control according to the three methods described in this paper.

[See also this Digest, D.W.W., § 220-1 ff. re Stewardship.]

MISCELLANEOUS PASTORAL LETTERS AND DELIVERANCES BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON TOPICS OF INTEREST.

1. Pastoral Letters.
2. Social Concern—General.
3. Alcohol and Drugs.
4. Communism.
5. Evangelism.
6. Freedom.
7. Health and Healing.
8. International (War, Peace, etc.)
9. Labor and Economics.
10. Law and Crime.
11. Poverty and Need.
12. Race.
13. Roman Catholicism.
14. Sex, Marriage, Family.
15. State and Church.
16. Worldly Conformity.

[Ed. note: Cf. Form of Govt., § 14-1, 2, 3 and 18-6 (2), in connection with the following deliverances.]

1. Pastoral Letters ordered by the General Assembly.

[Ed. note: Those marked * may be found in full in the Minutes. In the case of those marked *** the letter was ordered, but no one appointed to write it.]

(1) "To the ministers and members of our churches and the young men of our congregations in the Confederate Army." 1862, pp. 35 ff.*

(2) On "Our relation to the Civil Government of the Country, Our relation to the Church, Our relation to the negro population." 1865, pp. 382 ff.*

(3) On "frequent giving." 1867, p. 142.

(4) Explaining our Church's position regarding a possible union with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. 1870, pp. 537 ff.*

(5) On "parental Christian training." 1873, p. 336.*

(6) On "taking and reporting collections." 1874, p. 522.

(7) On the "Sabbath". 1882, pp. 552, 567.

[Ed. note: The committee was discharged without writing the letter.]

(8) On family worship and the need for candidates for the ministry, 1883, p. 21.***

(9) On the "Sabbath." 1885, p. 413.***

(10) On "Family Prayer." 1885, p. 459.*

(11) On Sabbath desecration. 1891, pp. 253, 257.

(12) On things lawful and unlawful on the Sabbath. 1894, p. 244; 1895, p. 428.

(13) On Family worship, the Bible and catechetical instruction in the home. 1895, p. 410.*

(14) A letter warning against doctrinal errors. 1898, p. 232.

(15) On "worldly amusements." 1900, pp. 626 ff.*

(16) On "increase of candidates for the ministry." 1901, pp. 42, 57; 1902, p. 255.

(17) On "the decline of religion in the home." 1902, p. 339.*

(18) "On Sabbath observance." 1909, p. 122.*

(19) "On Family Religion." 1909, p 122.*

(20) On "worldliness." 1911, pp. 44, 46; 1912, p 19.

(21) On unsound Sunday school literature. 1912, p. 41.*

(22) "Regarding our soldiers." 1918, pp. 58, 59.*

(23) Explanatory of certain acts of the Assembly which concern the spiritual interests of the Church. 1920, p. 80-d.

(24) On "The Country Church." 1924, pp. 153 ff.*

(25) On "Discipline." 1927, p. 50; 1928, p. 45.

(26) On repentance and evangelism. 1931, p. 41.

(27) On "Sabbath Observance." 1941, p. 82.

(28) On "Marriage with Roman Catholics." 1946, pp. 80, 165.

(29) On "Race." 1964, pp. 67, 153.

(30) "A Call to Repentance and Expectancy." 1965, pp. 48 ff.

[Concerning evangelism. Not a pastoral letter to the churches, but a message to the Church as a whole.]

2. The Social Concern of the Church—General.

[Ed. note: These general statements, and other statements on particular subjects must be compared with this Digest on *in thesi* deliverances (Form of Govt., § 14-1, 2, 3) and on the non-secular character of the Church (Conf. of Faith, XXXIII, 4.]

1913, p. 66. A communication from the Rev. Dr. R. H. Fleming, asking that this Assembly appoint a committee to meet similar committees, if appointed by the other Assemblies now in session in the city, in order that these committees may prepare a joint declaration on the relation of the Christian Faith and Social Service, to be adopted by their respective Assemblies. In response thereto your Committee recommend that this Assembly appoint an Ad Interim Committee of five to meet similar committees, if appointed by the other Presbyterian Assemblies, and that this Committee be charged with the duty of preparing in conjunction with these other committees, if they be appointed, or alone if these said committees be not appointed, a full statement upon this whole subject of the relation of the Christian Faith and of the Presbyterian Church to Social Reform and Social Service, and report the same to the General Assembly of 1914.

[Ed. note: This statement was in part designed for its effect upon the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. See, 1913, p. 67.]

1914, pp. 28, 161. The report of the Joint Committee appointed to prepare a United Declaration on Christian Faith and Social Service by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod of the South.

The Joint Committee would respectfully submit the following report:

We were appointed in response to a proposal that our four Presbyterian Churches should prepare and publish a united declaration of their common faith in the great truths of the Gospel in relation to what has come to be known as Social Service. We understand from the action taken by the respective bodies which appointed us that our Churches call for such a declaration as will make clear to the world the true place of Social Service in Christian life and work.

Our United Declaration

In preparing this United Declaration, we use the words:

"Christian Faith" to designate the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, the essential doctrines of which are held in common by all Evangelical Churches and are embodied in the ecumenical creeds of Christendom.

"Church" to designate an organized body instituted by Christ and exercising her corporate functions through her courts and officers.

"Social Service" to designate the practice of the principles set forth in God's holy law which regulate the relations by which men are bound together in the social order, this practice being a part of those good works of which our Confession of Faith teaches that they are only such as God hath commanded in His Holy Word, and are done in obedience to God's command, and are the fruits and evidence of a lively faith, and at best cannot merit pardon of sin or eternal life at the hand of God.

Accordingly, our Churches unite in saying:

I

We believe that man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever, and that the first duty of all men is to seek God, to repent of sin, to accept the offer of salvation through Jesus Christ, and to dedicate their lives unreservedly to His service.

II

We believe that, from the creation of man, God has ordained for us those social relationships which are to His glory and to the happiness and usefulness of mankind, and that in every age He has made known His will that he that loveth God must love his brother also.

III

We believe that the moral principles upon which all social relations are based were written in the heart of man when he was made in the image of God, that these principles have been obscured by sin and are revealed anew in the Holy Scriptures. Inasmuch as all evils, social and individual, have their source in human sin and selfishness, they can be remedied only by the divinely appointed plan for salvation from sin, and through the divinely given motive which is the love begotten in our hearts through God's love for us in the gift of His Son.

IV

We believe that the Church, holding the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is not only the appointed means to salvation from eternal death, but that, with the State and family, she has a distinctive work to do in bettering the social relations of men in this present world. The power given to the Church is spiritual, ministerial and declarative, and her function, through the Word and the Holy Spirit, is to inculcate and apply those principles and to quicken those motives which are essential to all true and lasting reform.

V

We believe that the social conditions of our day require emphasis upon the divine message for the following reasons:

1. The tremendous advance in our time of scientific discovery and invention and of commercial, industrial and civic enterprises by which men have been brought into closer relations of reciprocal dependence and service towards one another as individuals and toward society as an organized body.

2. The vast increase of wealth, its unequal and, often, unjust distribution, and the consequent increase of the power of the privileged few to exploit their fellowmen for private and selfish ends.

3. The development of great business corporations which discharge many of the functions once belonging to individuals, and as a result of this the weakening of the sense of individual responsibility for social wrongs.

4. The fostering or protection of vice as an instrument to private gain or to selfish ambition for place and power.

5. The submergence of large classes in ignorance and poverty, so that the difficulty of reaching them with the message of Christ is greatly increased.

These reasons require that the Church of Jesus Christ, which takes its stand as Christ did against the sins of social injustice and tyranny, as well as against other forms of sin, should emphasize:

1. The duty of man toward his fellowmen as individuals, and towards society, with reference to the life that now is as well as to the life which is to come.

2. The duty of men to put into practice the Christian principles of Love, Justice and Truth in all their social relations, economic, industrial or political; as officials or citizens of the State; as employers and employees; as capitalists and laborers; as stockholders or officers in corporations, and in all similar relationships.

3. The responsibility of men both for the manner in which they acquire positions, possessions and power in their social relations, and for the manner in which, as stewards of God, they use these, lest, in the great day of judgment, they be found unfaithful.

4. The responsibility of every individual, not only for those social wrongs to which he may be a contributing cause, but for those which, by his prayers and efforts, he could assist in abolishing.

5. The duty of Christian citizens to observe those principles of our religion which require that every man do his full share of the world's work; which oppose injustice and tyranny, even when these are entrenched in the usages of our civilization; which lead men to endeavor to maintain themselves in a self-respecting, God-fearing way, this self-maintenance being understood to include a fair return for labor, sufficient to support the man and his family against illness and old age, and relief from labor on one day in seven; which lead to movements to secure childhood against forced labor, and woman against conditions degrading womanhood.

6. The duty of every man to accept Jesus Christ and obey His teachings as the only cure for the injustice, tyranny and sins now looming so large upon the world's horizon.

VI

We believe that, inasmuch as many of these evils are rooted in the past and have grown with the development of civilization, they can be cured only by concerted and organized effort on the part of all good citizens. Our Churches, therefore, should always encourage voluntary organizations for the betterment of social conditions and urge their members to co-operate in them, leaving private judgment to decide what means or methods, or what organizations, are best adapted to the promotion of these desirable ends.

Your Joint Committee would respectfully recommend to the General Assemblies and to the Synod which appointed that:

1. This report be adopted.

2. This report be printed by the Boards of Publication of our Churches, or by one of these Boards acting for the others, in the number of at least ten thousand copies for distribution.

3. This report be transmitted to the supreme judicatories of our sister Churches in the Federal Council for their consideration by the Clerk of this Committee, Rev. D. F. McGill, Ben Avon, Pa.

4. Our Churches cordially recognize and encourage the Federal Council as affording a common ground where all who love and serve our Lord Jesus Christ may meet for conference and co-operation in the vast and holy enterprise of Christian Social Service, and, to the end that these conferences may continue to be truly Christian and this co-operation really effective, the representatives of our Churches in the Executive Committee of the Federal Council be dircted to endeavor at all times to have the Federal Council distinctly recognize the great truths of the Christian faith held in common by the Evangelical Churches, and thus avoid and allay misunderstandings. Further, that these representatives be directed to report to the subsequent Assemblies the result of their endeavors.

1934, p. 33. In view of these overtures the Assembly, we believe, should declare its recognition that our day is one of great and greater need for the application of Christian standards to these problems. The average Christian man and woman generally falls far short of the ideal citizen. There is among us a grievous lack of systematic endeavor for better understanding of current evils and hardships and of proposed remedies. In concerted effort toward effective militancy that our professed moral principles may be realized in public policies and measures we are lamentably deficient. Your committee are confident that the desire is widespread and increasing in our communion for the development of some program designed to grapple with that situation. Our tradition is the separation of church and state. Our people are resolved to preserve that principle. We feel sure that they are likewise determined upon guiding the churchman to a more effective citizenship. It seems to us evident that consideration of the subject has not yet reached the point where our future course can be defined and a program constructed. The Assembly of 1933 first authorized such a committee, later rescinding that action by a narrow vote.

Your committee therefore recommends that a permanent committee of five, to be known as the Committee on Social and Moral Welfare, be created, its work for the first year limited to reporting a program of scope and attitude for our Church to the next Assembly, and that the Virginia Synod report be referred to such committee.

1935, p. 29. The report of the Permanent Committee on Social and Moral Welfare was adopted as amended.

p. 93 ff. [Excerpts from the report:]

. . . We recommend I. That the General Assembly approve the following statement:

It is the historic position of the Presbyterian Church in the United States that the power of the Church is exclusively spiritual, that the provinces of Church and State are perfectly distinct, and the one has no right to usurp the jurisdiction of the other. To this historic position of our Church we give our unqualified assent.

We believe, however, that the Church in fulfillment of its spiritual function must interpret and present Christ's ideal for the individual and for society, must warn men of the presence of sin and of its effects in individual life and in the social life, must offer Christ to the individual and to society as the only Revealer of God and the only Redeemer of mankind, must seek with the spiritual weapons at its disposal to establish His Lordship in the hearts of all men, and over every area of human life.

. . . Other organizations deal with man's environment, both political and economic. The Church cannot remain indifferent to these areas of life, inasmuch as man cannot be separated from his environment, and there must always be mutual interaction between the two. Nonetheless the primary mission of the Church is to the individual. The greatest service that it can render to him, the greatest contribution that it can make to society is to bring men and women into saving relationship with God (through evangelism), and to maintain and develop the soul's fellowship with God (through worship).

. . . In accordance with Christ's command the Church must also teach men to love their neighbors as themselves, and to do so in every area of life, in the social sphere, as well as in the individual sphere, in the home, in the school and in the Church, in industry and in politics, in racial contacts, and in international affairs.

. . . It cannot discharge this part of its responsibility unless it deals with those actual evils in the individual life, and in the social order which threaten man's moral and spiritual development, which hinder the progress of God's Kingdom here on earth, and which produce needless suffering and distress among the children of men; unless in some definite and concrete fashion it encourages and stimulates its members to realize the ideals of Christ in their individual lives, in the life of each group of which they are participants and in the total life of the nation. . . .

In order that the Presbyterian Church in the United States may carry out more completely its full responsibility as revealed in the Scripture and outlined in the Great Commission, we recommend II: That the General Assembly instruct its Committee on Social and Moral Welfare:

1. To secure and present to the General Assembly data regarding moral and social problems that affect the progress of God's Kingdom, especially within the bounds of our own Church.

2. To recommend to the General Assembly resolutions or other appropriate actions in regard to such problems.

3. To arrange and recommend to the General Assembly programs and studies relating to such problems.

4. To make investigations, or to bring in reports, or to accomplish tasks within its special field, as ordered by the General Assembly.

5. In such cases of special need as arise during the interregnum of the General Assembly, to place in the hands of the Moderator material which he may use in messages intended to call the attention of the Church to pressing moral and social problems that affect the progress of God's Kingdom, especially within the bounds of our Church.

6. The Committee shall not be permitted at any time to issue independent pronouncements of its own, or to concern itself with the political means by which Christian ideals are to be realized. . . .

1947, p. 58. Being cognizant of the confusion in the minds and hearts of the world today and feeling the significance of this confusion this Assembly is keenly aware of the church's responsibility to lead mankind in truth and light with the knowledge that the "way of life," given to the world by Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, is part of the universal truth containing the solution of man's problems in all ages.

Being aware of the fact that it is difficult to reconcile the realities of today's secular life with complete Christian living and

Reaffirming the fact that the strength of our Church comes from the enlightened and consecrated layman; therefore

Be It Resolved, That this Assembly urge the entire membership of our Church in particular and all Christians in general to apply their intelligence, understanding, prayers and activities to seeking the true will of God in the knowledge THAT:

a. The confusion and fear of the world today is the result of man's inability to properly orientate himself in God's plan and his failure to realize that "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

b. All of man's physical posessions and his whole being are the product of God's providence and that each individual, thus also our nation, is responsible to God for the proper use and complete development of these gifts in our relations, man to man, and nation to nation.

c. There is no conflict between religion and science. Each new discovery demonstrates the infinite wisdom, logic and consistence of the omnipotent Creator. The precepts of Christ translated into our lives are the only catalyst that can bring all of our scientific knowledge into its proper focus so that man can maintain order in our times and thus preserve our civilization.

d. God in his wisdom created man in His own image with freedom to make his own decisions. In arriving at proper decisions our secular knowledge must be based on an understanding of our proper relationship to God.

e. The salvation of Jesus Christ is for the living present as well as for the hereafter. No life can reach its highest possibilities without the truths of God and love of Christ.

With the knowledge of these facts, it is the fervent hope of this Assembly that every layman and minister earnestly study the Word of God, seek the truth, study the program and policy of our Church in relation to problems of the individual, the nation and the world, rededicating their lives to the service of God, firm in the faith that God through us will provide the solution of these problems and in a spirit of love acting to counteract the forces that would overthrow all that we hold dear.

1953, p. 88. JOINT STATEMENT OF THE REFORMED FAITH IN RELATION TO SOCIAL CONCERN AND ACTION.

All human life should be lived in accordance with the principles established by God for the life of men and of nations. This is a tenet of Biblical religion. It is also a basic emphasis in our Presbyterian heritage of faith.

As individuals and as a group Christians are responsible for adjusting their thought and behavior to those everlasting principles of righetousness which God has revealed in Holy Scripture, especially in the Ten Commandments and in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. It is no less their responsibility as citizens of their nation to seek as far as their influence may extend to bring national life and all the institutions of society into conformity to the moral government of God, and into harmony with the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Believing in the importance and worth of every person as revealed in Scripture, the Church and each of its members should be concerned with the spiritual implications of this fact for all phases of our common life. Only those social practices are righteous and good which help men and women to fulfill God's desire for them.

If we as Presbyterians are loyal to that which is most distinctive in our own religious inheritance we shall earnestly assert the relevance of our Christian faith to social relations. We shall survey the life of man in the light of Christ's teaching and example. We shall seek to know and to do the will of God in the concrete situations of everyday life. We shall look to the Church for inspiration, guidance and support in this endeavor.

We recommend that the General Assembly approve this joint statement of the Reformed Faith in relation to Social Concern and Action prepared by direction of the Council on Christian Relations of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., and the Department of Social Education and Action of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

1958, pp. 88, 221. [A paper titled "Speaking for God—the Prophetic Role of the Church" was adopted.]

1955, pp. 77, 166. [A paper titled "Unity in the Church with Diversity," speaking largely to tensions rising from social applications of the gospel, was received as information.]

3. Alcohol, Drugs.

[Ed. note: Beverage alcohol has been a frequent concern of the General Assembly. Only the actions most clearly stating general principles will be quoted

below. Other actions may be found: 1862, p. 35; 1883, pp. 32, 45; 1888, pp. 387, 391; 1889, p. 592; 1890, pp. 20, 25, 39; 1891, pp. 228, 244; 1892, pp. 446, 462; 1893, p. 52; 1895, p. 408; 1897, pp. 17, 19; 1898, p. 201; 1899, p. 407; 1903, p. 470; 1907, p. 57; 1908, p. 22; 1910, p. 16; 1913, p. 70-i; 1914, p. 80-b; 1915, pp. 29, 41, 77; 1918, p. 33; 1926, p. 54; 1932, p. 37; 1933, p. 48; 1936, pp. 36, 102; 1941, p. 65; 1942, p. 85.]

1878, p. 635. Overture, asking the Assembly "to make a deliverance with reference to the duties of sessions in regard to members of the church under their care engaged in the retail of ardent spirits."

[The Assembly replied by referring to the action of the General Assembly in 1843, p. 282, viz.:]

Resolved, That the records (of the Synod of Pittsburg) be approved, except so far as they seem to establish a general rule in regard to the use and sale of ardent spirits as a beverage, which use and sale are generally to be decidedly disapproved, but each case must be decided in view of all the attendant circumstances that go to modify and give character to the same.

1886, p. 60. In response to a communication from the Woman's Christian Temperance Union on the subject of the present attitude of the temperance movement, [the following was adopted:]

As the traffic in, and use of, intoxicating liquors as a beverage are the prolific causes of so much crime, poverty and suffering in our land, and as it costs the people so much money in criminal prosecutions and the support of the victims of drink, and as it is one of the greatest enemies of the Church of Christ in destroying the sanctity of the Christian Sabbath in its right observance wherever its blighting influence is felt, and as we are warned against its effects in I Cor. vi. 10; therefore, in view of these terrible effects, this General Assembly bears its testimony against this evil, and recommends to all our people the use of all legitimate means for its banishment from the land.

1891, p. 244. [Answer to an overture:] Our Church, in accordance with her former deliverances on the subject of temperance, made in 1830, 1834, 1837 and 1848, bears her testimony against the traffic in intoxicating liquors as a fruitful source of abounding iniquity and misery. And the Assembly would urge our people to use all means, which may be approved by their Christian conscience and judgment, to remedy this evil throughout the land. Especially would we urge our members to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.

1897, p. 19. *Resolved,* That in the action by the Assembly in adopting the report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures in reply to a communication from the Executive Committee of the Prohibition Party of North Carolina, this Assembly is not to be construed as intending to commit the Church to the political theory of prohibition, either *pro* or *con.*

1913, p. 70-i. In conformity with these and other deliverances, we urge on all our membership the duty of using all legitimate means for the banishment of this traffic from the land, and for striving by voice and vote, in all ways which may be approved by their Christian conscience and judgment, for the enactment of such laws as shall most speedily and effectively bring this result to pass.

1914, p. 71. A communication relating to National Constitutional Prohibition from the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was read. The Assembly adopted the following as its answer to this resolution:

Resolved, That we are in hearty favor of National Constitutional Prohibition, and will do all properly within our power to secure the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution forever prohibiting the sale, manufacture for sale, transportation for sale,

importation for sale, and exportation for sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes in the United States.

1937, pp. 37, 109. We recommend: 1. That members of the church seek to provide through the agencies of the Church and State adequate and scientific instruction on the subject of alcoholism and narcotism.

2. That Christians continue to work for the most adequate legislative solution of this difficult and complex problem.

3. That total abstinence be again commended as the highest Christian ideal.

1943, pp. 75, 143. All attempts by those in authority as well as by those who profit from the manufacture of alcoholic liquors to minimize and dismiss the wave of intemperance which has spread over our land leaves the thoughtful and informed Christian unimpressed. He is not insulting the armed forces of our nation when he demands that our men and boys in the service of the nation be protected against the flood of liquor which has been loosed upon the land and has found its way into the camps as well. He has the right to demand that there be Federal authority "to deal with the problem of drunkenness and to control the distribution of beverage alcohol, whenever the local law enforcement agencies have failed in effectiveness in any community, area or premises, near military establishments or establishments engaged in war production." And he may also demand that both state and city authorities use all means at their disposal to combat this effective sabotaging of our war effort.

The Christian citizen should be interested in temperance education in the Church and schools to the end that an enlightened and sober electorate shall enact suitable laws to deal with this menace. It has been abundantly demonstrated since prohibition days that alcohol is the same untamed and unreformed demon of destruction to all that is fine in life that it has ever been.

1947, pp. 39, 101. In order to promote and maintain an accurate and clear conception of the nature and evils of alcoholic drink, and of the traffic in liquor, in face of the specious and misleading advertising and propaganda which is so extensively under way, the Presbytery of Louisiana overtures the General Assembly to prepare and publish a suitable pamphlet setting forth the evils connected with the use of strong drink, and also setting forth the principles and ideals which our Church teaches with regard to this subject, so that they may be clear to all of our people.

The Presbytery of Mid-Texas respectfully and earnestly overtures the General Assembly to condemn the unnecessary liquor drinking scenes in moving pictures, and to communicate this action to the Johnson Censorship Office of the Moving Picture Industry.

[Both answered in the affirmative.]

1951, p. 78. That the General Assembly request the *Christian Observer*, the *Presbyterian Outlook*, the *Southern Presbyterian Journal*, and *The Presbyterian Survey* to publish regularly in their columns brief summaries of bills which may be presented in both houses of Congress with a view to restricting the advertising program of the liquor interests, and brief summaries of all other significant bills likely to affect the moral standards and practices of our people which may be presented to the Congress of the United States, to the end that our members may make such matters a subject of prayer, and may take any further action which may be appropriate for Christian citizens.

That the General Assembly go on record as opposing and deploring the flagrant and glamorous advertising of the liquor interests in popular magazines, newspapers, billboards, radio and television.

That the General Assembly refer to the Council on Christian Relations for study and report the problem of alcoholic beverages as it affects the Christian home.

1953, p. 91. 1. That churches use every means to promote alcohol education, and to inform the people of the mounting menace of the use of alcoholic beverages.

2. That churches cooperate with Allied Youth, Inc., in providing adequate guidance for youth in confronting the liquor problem; and with Alcoholics Anonymous and other worthy organizations in their program of rehabilitating alcoholics.

3. That, realizing the importance of personal example, the General Assembly urge that church members abstain from all indulgence in intoxicating beverages.

1955, p. 78. That the General Assembly express its grave concern over the widespread indulgence in alcoholic beverages and the use being made of radio, television, magazines and newspapers for beer and liquor advertising and strongly urge

(a) that church members strive toward the ideal of total abstinence;

(b) that churches be active in their program of alcohol education and the rehabilitation of alcoholics, and that individual church members exert their rights as citizens to protect our homes from the invasion of liquor propaganda.

1956, p. 75. That overture reading as follows: "That the General Assembly go on record as opposing beer and liquor advertising on radio and television, and in newspapers and magazines," be answered as follows:

A. That the General Assembly go on record as deeply deploring the wide advertising of beer and liquor through the channel of radio, television, newspapers and magazines.

B. That church members be urged to use their influence in the local community to arouse sentiment against such advertisements, both through group and individual channels, and to protest to the agencies which promote such practices.

1958, pp. 88, 226. That the General Assembly reaffirm voluntary total abstinence as the Christian ideal toward which church members should strive.

4. Communism.

1954, p. 197 ff. THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND COMMUNISM.

As Christians we are committed to the propagation of the Christian faith and to Christian standards of conduct.

In the face of Communism, therefore, we must stand unalterably opposed to the anti-religious philosophy, the total regimentation, the deceitful propaganda, the violent and the other characteristic methods, and the aggressive aims of world Communism.

It has long been known that Communists have sought to permeate their converts with the idea that "religion is the opiate of the people." Their's is a materialistic interpretation of history.

Such a philosophy requires the complete allegiance of all members of the Communist state. The mind, heart and hands of the people must yield to the will of the totalitarian rule. This enslavement is won by the promise of peace and plenty—even freedom. Too late such promises are discovered to be false. Suspicion and fear take the place of peace; plenty is found to be short-lived and freedom succumbs to servitude. Obedience to the new order is maintained by the pressure of force. Evidence is abundant that any means to secure this subjection is considered by the leaders of World Communism to be justifiable.

It has become increasingly clear that the goal of Communism is world domination. No one of us should be so naive as to suppose that anything short of such a goal fits into the pattern of this atheistic philosophy.

At the same time we must distinguish between certain social ideals and hopes which both Communists and Christians profess to hold and the ideology, faith and methods in which they so radically differ.

Communists often attach their banner to popular and patriotic causes and make a strong appeal where inequalities, injustices and hunger prevail. But this does not mean

that we have to become communistic when we also speak out boldly for justice, equality and social welfare, for these are basic standards in our Faith. We must not yield to the subtle suggestion that in working for peace, brotherhood or a better life for all humanity, we are thereby unfaithful to the Gospel of Christ. We should keep before us as our goal, the Kingdom of God, and refuse to identify that kingdom with any political or economic system in our country or anywhere in the world. We shall continue to strive to bring our political and economic systems more fully into harmony with the basic principles of God's Kingdom.

We should be on our guard against totalitarian techniques of the right or left and set our faces against any such trends as these wherever they may be found. We should reject denunciation by hearsay and rumor, villification on the basis of unproved charges, hysterical spread of suspicion and distrust, and careless charges and defamation of character without the full investigation of facts.

Our Christian faith impels us to work harder than ever for an easing of the world tensions that may lead to war, believing that God can work miracles through men and women who are humble, penitent and dedicated to His will.

We should face the future unafraid in the sure confidence that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ will give grace, wisdom and courage to His Church during these days of testing and in these days of opportunity.

1961, pp. 40, 69. In view of the widespread and undocumented charges of Communism among the clergy reported in the public press in recent weeks, raising doubts in the minds of the uninformed and throwing suspicion on many, the time has come to name names and deliver evidence.

The General Assembly, therefore, grants specific authorization to the Moderator and the Stated Clerk, as officers of the Assembly, to request those making such charges against the ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to give names and the documented evidence, which in turn will be conveyed to the Presbyteries to which the ministers belong for appropriate action.

This should be done in order to call to account any who are guilty, clear the name and honor of the innocent, and silence those who are making wholesale and irresponsible charges.

5. Evangelism—Message to the Church.

1965, pp. 48 ff. That, as we face our mission as individuals and congregations seeking to lead this generation to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the General Assembly be requested to issue in its own name a message to the Church using for this purpose the document prepared by the Board of Church Extension entitled "A Call to Repentance and Expectancy."

6. Freedom and Religious Liberty.

[See also statements on Roman Catholicism and on State and Church.]

1934, p. 60. That the following letter be sent to the Free Synods of Germany through Dr. Adolph Keller in Geneva.

"The Presbyterian Church in the United States in session at Montreat, N. C., U. S. A., wishes to express its deep sympathy with the Protestants of Germany in their brave struggle for the spiritual freedom of Christ's Church in the Third Reich; to join with them in prayer for the ultimate success of the cause to which they have given such heroic testimony; and to voice the hope that through the inspiration of their example, Christians all over the world may realize anew their spiritual oneness and may stand together for the freedom and universality of the Church of Christ."

1943, p. 25. Communication from Rev. Fiore D'Isidoro, Secretary, Italian Evangelization, Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., Hazleton, Pa., presenting a resolution containing a petition to the President of the United States of America, seeking full

restoration of full religious liberty to all peoples of Italy through the peace conference at the close of the war.

P. 46. In reply to the communication from the 14th Biennial Conference on Italian Evangelization of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., we beg to submit we are in complete sympathy with the principles of religious liberty for all peoples everywhere and at all times.

1943, pp. 75, 144. America is a land where everyone is permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. It is both our Christian and our national duty to see that this fundamental right is maintained and that we shall never be found among those who are intolerant toward people.

1943, p. 70. In answer to Overture we offer the following which, if approved, is to be transmitted by this Assembly to the State Department of our Nation:

"The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States has viewed with concern the current effort of the Roman Hierarchy to deprive the Protestant Churches of their right to propagate their faith in Latin America on the alleged ground that such activities in predominantly Roman Catholic countries prove a hindrance to the 'good neighbor policy.'

"At a time when the nations of North and South America are uniting for the defense of their fundamental freedoms, it is deplorable that the leaders of Roman Catholicism should be so far out of step as to propose the abandoning of this principle of religious liberty for which men in both Americas are giving their lives.

"If the hierarchy is right in insisting that Protestant Missions should cease in Latin America because Protestants are in the minority in those countries, then, on the same principle, Roman Catholic propaganda should be excluded from the United States.

"In the highly delicate situation that faces us in the world, calling for the utmost of unity among the freedom-loving people of this hemisphere, the Roman Catholic Hierarchy has indeed taken upon itself a grave responsibility in thus introducing the divisive elements of sectarianism, bigotry and religious intolerance. Lovers of liberty everywhere will be shocked at this open-handed effort to gain ecclesiastical advantage at the expense of the very principles for which free men are fighting."

1956, pp. 79, 191. "Freedom—The Christian Concept."

[Ed. note: A paper treating Freedom of Worship, Freedom to Learn, Freedom of Speech, Fredom of Assembly, Freedom to Serve, Freedom of Fellowship, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear was approved and commended for study.]

7. Health and Healing.

7a. General Statements.

1949, pp. 40, 100. Regarding overture relating to euthanasia, we recommend that the Assembly advise that according to our understanding, we believe euthanasia is unscriptural and contrary to the law of God.

1955, pp. 46, 134. [Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Christianity and Health:]

The following overture from the Presbytery of Brazos was given to this committee:

"SINCE the study, teaching and practice of so-called 'faith-healing,' or 'divine healing,' are not only the practice of many of the non-established and traditional churches, but also increasingly are drawing attention among many of our constituency,

AND FURTHERMORE, since the theology and ethic of such healing may sometimes be questionable, if not contradictory and confusing,

BUT SINCE undoubtedly the Bible does give some definite basis for belief in the power of faith with reference to healing,

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Brazos respectfully overtures the General Assembly to appoint an ad interim committee to make a thorough study of this matter and make a written report of its findings to the General Assembly, in order that the General Assembly, if it deems best, may give our people and especially our ruling and teaching elders specific guidance and direction in the handling of this matter."

The members of the General Assembly's Ad Interim Committee on Christianity and Health approached our assignment with deep humility and earnest prayer, being keenly aware of the importance of the issues involved. No committee report can do justice to the divine mystery which is involved in the processes of healing. Those who give thought to such matters find themselves involved in processes which are not comprehended by human reasoning, and in truths which sometimes seem paradoxical to us.

The committee was composed of two medical doctors, one of whom practices in the field of general medicine, the other in the field of psychiatry; two faculty members from theological seminaries; three pastors of churches; and one representative of the General Assembly's Training School for Lay Workers. We studied individually and we had two meetings of the entire committee.

It would seem to us to be true that more people in general and more people in our own Church are now concerned about the relationship of our Christian Faith to our health, spiritual, mental and physical, than at any time in recent years. Lectures and sermons have been given, conferences and camps have been conducted, best selling books and articles have been written in numbers far exceeding anything that has been done in this field in the modern history of the Church. There has been a reawakening of the Church's attention to this phase of its ministry which occupied such a prominent place in New Testament times but which had, to say the least, been partially neglected in modern times. The very number and variety of the voices that have been raised and of the things that have been written and spoken has tended to create questions in the thinking of many people.

People are being healed through unknown factors. Prayer and medical science have worked together in healing. There are cases where medical science has given up and healings have occurred. Much prayer has been made in cases where healing has not occurred. People have prayed and died when medical curative help was not used. People have depended on scientific help alone to the neglect of prayer. Any individual or movement who makes any promise of "divine healing" seems to command an immediate following in our day. This is true to such an extent that many rush to claim the promises of healing without ever questioning the relationship between the kind of faith that is being advocated and the true Christian faith of the New Testament. Unquestionably instances of apparently miraculous healing can be cited as the results of many kinds of faith or of no faith at all. This unquestioning rush for help from any and every kind of source we take to be an indication that we in the Church should reexamine our ministry with a view to determining wherein we may have neglected not merely to meet the needs of people, but also to do what we are commissioned to do. The observation has been made, and we think with considerable wisdom, that the need here being made manifest is deeper than a desire for physical healing and material well-being only. In an age when many had come to think of God as far away and coldly impersonal and perhaps unconcerned with the affairs of men, the promises of "divine healing" are being grasped as offering evidence by which we will be convinced again of a living God.

Your committee has not interpreted its assignment to involve suggesting an authoritative statement for the General Assembly to adopt and "send down" to our people.

We have hoped that together, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we might be able to suggest some considerations which would help us to see this phase of the Church's ministry in relation to the whole work of the Church. We have sought to look at this ministry in relation to a faith which involves implicit trust in the sovereignty of the will of God in all things. We have sought to see it in relation to a faith which does not deny the reality of suffering, or of death as facts of human experience. Although we believe in health, mental, spiritual and physical, as a gift of God and seek to preserve it and restore it through care, hygiene, diet, carefulness against accidents, medical treatment and prayer, this does not mean to say that we deny the natural processes of aging and death, or that we believe that the coming of sickness and death defeat God's will for us. Our redemption is incomplete in this life. Yet although our redemption is never perfected in this world, we accept the gifts God gives us now as a pledge of that which is to be.

It is, therefore, the concern of your committee that this report should call our Church, pastors and people, to a reexamination of our ministry in the light of all the promises of Scripture.

A study of Christianity and health in the light of the Scriptures reveals that the Scriptures give no simple answer to many of the problems that are raised. The Scriptures teach, for example, that suffering is demonic, and the Scriptures also teach that suffering is redemptive. The Scriptures teach that man is utterly dependent upon God and yet is a responsible moral agent. The Scriptures teach that death is an enemy to be destroyed and that death constitutes the completion of life and may be life's greatest fulfillment and affirmation.

But some things are quite clear. The Bible reveals that God is concerned with the whole nature of man. Our Lord Jesus Christ considered healing a part of His mission no less than preaching and teaching. He himself healed many persons. There is no rebuke of any person for seeking healing. When John the Baptist sent to Jesus with questions of doubt, his messengers were invited to tell John not only that the poor had the gospel preached to them, but also that spiritually, mentally and physically sick persons were being healed. Jesus instructed the disciples to heal as they went about proclaiming the Kingdom. This they did. This continued to be the practice of the Church of the New Testament after the Ascension. The New Testament has much to say about healing. These passages are to be interpreted according to the same canons of interpretation applied to the Bible as a whole. Nowhere in the New Testament is there an indication that the practice was intended to be temporary in the life of the Church.

The Church has continued its concern in this matter. As the New Testament calls upon Christians to use prayer and anointing with oil (which is taken to represent the medical treatment of that day) so the Church has been concerned to continue its ministry of healing. The development of hospitals and medical missions has had a large place in church history. Many of those who dedicate their lives to medicine and nursing receive their inspiration from the Church. We see that medical science and spiritual forces have worked in parallel lines and with equally Christian motivation. Although more publicity has been given to the place of prayer in healing in recent times, we are not to forget that the Church has never ceased to pray for the sick. The Church has always taught that all healing is from God.

That desire for healing has led to some interpretations of faith which find no support in the Scriptures cannot be denied. All such misinterpretations seem to be the result of following one aspect of scriptural teaching to the neglect of others. The desire to use "faith" to manipulate God and to bring Him to do our will, the refusal to pray "thy will be done" cannot be reconciled with the New Testament teaching on faith and man's relationship to God. Again we would call attention to the fact that the use of faith as a means to guarantee one's own personal "peace of mind" may, for example,

be stressed to the neglect of the fact that men do claim to attain peace of mind by faith which is entirely un-Christian, as in the Nirvana of atheistic Buddhism. Such an interpretation also may be stressed to the neglect of the fact that a man's relationship to God in Jesus Christ instead of guaranteeing relaxation and peacefulness may and sometimes does lead him to be disturbed and concerned about his own sinfulness and about the needs of the world in which he lives. Again, when success in business and worldly affairs is promised as a reward of faith in Christ, there is a tendency to forget that sometimes men have been exceedingly successful, from a worldly standpoint, precisely because they have neglected to take Chirst into their business dealings, while others have been faced with the need to sacrifice some personal and worldly advantage for the sake of Christ.

Your committee believes that attention should be called to the fact that the teaching of some of the modern healing movements that pain and disease are due to sin needs to be reexamined in the light of the teachings of Scripture and of actual experience. Specific sickness and/or injury may or may not be the result of the specific behaviour of the individual involved. It is true that if we are selfish and full of resentments and false pride, if we drive ourselves too hard and in a self-destructive way, if we are envious, jealous and filled with hatred, and if we give ourselves to excesses, all these things bring with them their own results. Even the sin of running away from life can aggravate fear which eventually turns into hatred and illness. Certainly human beings suffer also as the result of social sins over which they sometimes have no control. But to say that each individual's suffering is in every instance the result of his own sin is to deny the scriptural teaching of the book of Job, or the words of our Lord spoken concerning the man born blind when He said, "It was not that this man sinned or his parents . . . " John 9:3.

Again we need to keep in mind that the faith of the New Testament Church would not lift the faith that results in healing and place it over and above all the other ministries of the Church. In the first epistle to the Corinthians the apostle Paul lists the ministries of the Church: "First apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues." 12:28. Lest we be tempted to lift one kind of ministry and give it a place of supreme importance to the neglect of others, let us remember this listing. Instead of suggesting, as the modern movements sometimes seem to, that here in the gift of healing we are in touch with the "real" power of Christ, Paul lists it with the others and brackets it, as has been pointed out, with helpers and administrators, as though to say that the work of a full-time secretary of a permanent committee, though perhaps less spectacular, is no less the Lord's work than is the ministry of healing.

One good result of this reawakened interest in the relationship of prayer and health has been the formation of prayer groups in many places. Let our pastors and people, however, be aware of the temptation which comes to some people in such groups to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, thus introducing divisive elements within the church fellowship. Let us also be aware of the temptation to retreat into prayer groups as a refuge. With so much controversy and disturbance over questions concerning segregation, church union, politics, the social implications of the gospel, etc.; and in light of the fact that so much of the work which is necessary for the on-going of the Church both in the local congregation and in the Church's larger responsibilities is unspectacular everyday routine, some may succumb to the temptation to retire into quiet, contemplative groups and stay there. This is an unworthy use of prayer. Prayer should bear fruit in strength and courage to come forth "where cross the crowded ways of life, where sound the cries of race and clan." The healing taught in the New Testament is concerned with the whole man and in all his relationships.

We would further call attention to a popular conception which we believe to be in error which would limit the healing which comes from God to those instances where

healing is sudden, spectacular and mysterious. We believe that it places a false limitation upon the power of God to say that if healing is mediated through the ministry of a physician or surgeon or psychiatrist, it is therefore less from God than healing which comes through less visible means. The vast majority of Christians today recognize in the advances of scientific medicine the open hand of a gracious God, and accept as from Him the ministration of doctors and nurses. We rejoice that the Holy Spirit has, through devoted study, research and practice of doctors and nurses, worked for the healing of His people. These methods of healing which God has given us are not different or in opposition to what is commonly called "spiritual healing," but they should work parallel and hand in hand. By way of illustration: The American Cancer Society reports that approximately 75,000 persons who received scientific medical treatment were cured of cancer in 1954. Two times that many could have been cured, it is estimated, if they had received medical attention in the earlier stages of the cancer's development. Who would say that this is not a gift of God?

One of the results of the discoveries of Science in our age is the sense of security which so many people find in the belief that we live in a reasonable order, that our lives are not at the mercy of caprice or of haphazard and totally unpredictable forces. Because this is true, and important, many are troubled at the thought of bringing prayer into the processes of healing. This seems to move healing out of the realm of causes and effects which can be examined and put to use, and to place it in the realms of personal whim. So that if a person happens to know about prayer, or happens to have someone who is interested enough to pray for him, he will receive the healing benefits of prayer; but if he happens not to know about prayer or happens not to have any praying friends, then those benefits are denied him. This seems to leave health at the mercy of chance or whim. But is this any more true in the use of prayer than in the use of penicillin? If a person happens to know about penicillin or to know someone who knows about it, he can be treated by it and if he does not know about it, he cannot be treated by it. The promises of the Scriptures, the evidences of experience seem to show, and it is not unreasonable to belive, that prayer may be just as much one of the conditions through which God sends His healing as is penicillin or the surgical removal of a diseased organ. As the New Testament admonished the use of prayer and the anointing with oil which, as pointed out above, was a commonly used physical treatment of that day, so we believe we should use prayer and medical treatment, not as opposed to each other but working together. And this is not to say as some seem falsely to have concluded, that when healing does not come after prayer, such failure is necessarily the result of lack of faith or of the ineffectiveness of prayer. It this were true, it would then follow that every healthy-bodied individual is of necessity more faithful than, say, the apostle Paul who again and again prayed that he might be delivered from the thorn in his flesh but who learned instead, by the grace of God, the lesson of power that grows out of weakness. "For the sake of Christ then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong." II Cor. 12:10. Even suffering and death do not defeat the will of God for His children. For suffering may become a redemptive element by which life is affirmed, God is glorified, and death is swallowed up in victory.

Finally, let us in the Church be reminded that as the apostle listed the gifts of those who serve in the Church: apostles, prophets, teachers, healers and the others, he also went beyond that to say: "Yet I show you a more excellent way." And that was the introduction to his great statement on Christian love. As Sir George MacLeod of Iona Community has observed, "More important than any of these ministries, taken by themselves, is the ministry of love. 'A more excellent path' than any one of them is the costly practice of the Christian Fellowship, the ongoing work of the Christian congregation in suffering long and being kind, in envying not, in thinking no evil, in

rejoicing in the truth. It is this love that never fails, this corporate ministry that is the real healing power; superior to preaching, prophecy, miracles and healers."[1] And this "more excellent way" is not a special and separated ministry but should pervade all that the Church does in its preaching, its teaching and its serving.

The thinking together of your committee on this subject brought us to face a fact which we had before expected would be true, viz: that there is more involved here than should be concluded by the work of one year. We, therefore, present this introductory statement in the sincere conviction that the importance of this question indicates that continued consideration be given to some means for keeping our Church aware of this phase of our ministry.

We, therefore, recommend to the General Assembly:

1. That this report be made available to the churches.
2. That this committee be continued for one year with authority to call additional personnel for conference concerning future plans to keep this phase of our ministry before the Church.

1. The Oracle. October, 1954. page 15.

1956, pp. 38, 126. [Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Christianity and Health.]

AFFIRMATION

1. We believe in the power of God to heal the whole man in body, mind and spirit.
2. We believe in the responsibility of man to do all possible to prevent and to heal sickness of body, mind or spirit. Our faith in a sovereign God does not deliver us from personal responsibility before Him to act upon our present knowledge of health and cure.
3. We believe in a cooperative ministry of those professions concerned with healing such as medicine and the ministry. Such a cooperation is a part of man's responsibility in preventing illness and in effecting cure.
4. We believe that it is necessary for every generation to affirm the power of God in human life, and at the same time to advance in the understanding of God's ways of working through His creation in healing. Thus, increased understanding of the sciences, undergirded by faith, may enable man more and more to meet his own responsibility in securing and maintaining health.
5. We believe that soundness of health is not necessarily a measure of righteousness or faith, and also that sickness is neither an indication of unrighteousness nor absence of saving faith. Interpretations contrary to this are specifically disputed by the Bible.
6. We believe that if we neglect our faith in the power of God, or on the other hand if we neglect our human responsibilities, we fall into error.
7. We believe that there are interpretations of faith in the area of healing rising out of the distortions mentioned above which are receiving wide credence but which find no support in the Scriptures when rightly interpreted. Hence, our people are cautioned to take care concerning promises which may have considerable appeal but which have no foundation in Scripture, or are not in the spirit of Jesus Christ, or are based on isolated texts from the Bible which are not interpreted in the light of the Biblical message. All such promises should be examined carefully and prayerfully and, where possible, in company with others.
8. We believe that the Christian Church can and should offer that love, fellowship and strength to every person under its influence which reveal the redeeming power of God for the growth of the individual. We believe this constitutes a preventive ministry in the sense of sustaining the person in hours of crisis so that disintegration of body, mind or spirit will not occur, and that this also serves a healing purpose as the Church functions as a channel for divine grace.

REPORT TO THE 1955 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The following overture from the Presbytery of Brazos was given to this committee:

"SINCE the study, teaching and practice of so-called 'faith-healing,' are not only the practice of many of the non-established and traditional churches, but also increasingly are drawing attention among many of our own constituency,
AND FURTHERMORE, since the theology and ethic of such healing may sometimes be questionable if not contradictory and confusing,
BUT SINCE undoubtedly the Bible does give some definite basis for belief in the power of faith with reference to healing,
THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Brazos respectfully overtures the General Assembly to appoint an ad interim committee to make a thorough study of this matter and make a written report of its findings to the General Assembly, in order that the General Assembly, if it deems best, may give our people and especially our ruling and teaching elders specific guidance and direction in the handling of this matter."

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The members of the General Assembly's Ad Interim Committee on Christianity and Health approached our assignment with deep humility and earnest prayer, being keenly aware of the importance of the issues involved. No committee report can do justice to the divine mystery which is involved in the processes of healing. Those who give thought to such matters find themselves involved in processes which are not comprehended by human reasoning, and in truths which sometimes seem paradoxical to us.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee was composed of two medical doctors, one of whom practices in the field of general medicine, the other in the field of psychiatry; two factulty members from theological seminaries; three pastors of churches, and one representative of the General Assembly's Training School for Lay Workers. We studied individually and we had two meetings of the entire committee.

CONTEMPORARY INTEREST IN AND CONCERN FOR HEALING AND RELIGION

It would seem to us to be true that more and more people in general and more people in our own Church are now concerned about the relationship of our Christian Faith to our health, spiritual, mental and physical, than at any time in recent years. Lectures and sermons have been given, conferences and camps have been conducted, best-selling books and articles have been written in numbers far exceeding anything that has been done in this field in the modern history of the Church. There has been a re-awakening of the Church's attention to this phase of its ministry which occupied such a prominent place in New Testament times but which had, to say the least, been partially neglected in modern times. The very number and variety of the voices that have been raised and of the things that have been written and spoken has tended to create questions in the thinking of many people.

STUDY REVEALS CERTAIN SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY FACTS

People are being healed through unknown factors. Prayer and medical science have worked together in healing. There are cases where medical science has given up and healings have occurred. Much prayer has been made in cases where healing has not occurred. People have prayed and died when medical curative help was not used. People have depended on scientific help alone to the neglect of prayer. Any individual or movement who makes any promise of "divine healing" seems to command an immediate following in our day. This is true to such an extent that many rush to claim the promises of healing without ever questioning the relationship between the kind

of faith that is being advocated and the true Christian faith of the New Testament. Unquestionable instances of apparently miraculous healing can be cited as the results of many kinds of faith or of no faith at all. This unquestioning rush for help from any and every kind of source we take to be an indication that we in the Church should re-examine our ministry with a view to determining wherein we may have neglected not merely to meet the needs of people, but also to do what we are commissioned to do. The observation has been made, and we think with considerable wisdom, that the need here being made manifest is deeper than a desire for physical healing and material well-being only. In an age when many had come to think of God as far away and coldly impersonal and perhaps unconcerned with the affairs of men, the promises of "divine healing" are being grasped as offering evidence by which we will be convinced again of a living God.

The Attitude of the Committee—Certain Pre-suppositions

Your committee has not interpreted its assignment to involve suggesting an authoritative statement for the General Assembly to adopt and "send down" to our people. We have hoped that together, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we might be able to suggest some considerations which would help us to see this phase of the church's ministry in relation to the whole work of the Church. We have sought to look at this ministry in relation to a faith which involves implicit trust in the sovereignty of the will of God in all things. We have sought to see in it relation to a faith which does not deny the reality of suffering, or of death as facts of human experience. Although we believe in health, mental, spiritual and physical, as a gift of God and seek to preserve it and restore it through care, hygiene, diet, carefulness against accidents, medical treatment and prayer, this does not mean to say that we deny the natural processes of aging and death, or that we believe that the coming of sickness and death defeat God's will for us. Our redemption is incomplete in this life. Yet although our redemption is never perfected in this world, we accept the gifts God gives us now as a pledge of that which is to be.

It is, therefore, the concern of your committee that this report should call our Church, pastors and people, to a re-examination of our ministry in the light of all the promises of Scripture.

The Teaching of Scripture in Regard to Sickness, Healing and Death

A study of Christianity and health in the light of the Scriptures reveals that the Scriptures give no simple answer to many of the problems that are raised. The Scriptures teach, for example, that suffering is demonic, and the Scriptures also teach that suffering is redemptive. The Scriptures teach that man is utterly dependent upon God and yet is a responsible, moral agent. The Scriptures teach that death is an enemy to be destroyed and that death constitutes the completion of the life and may be life's greatest fulfillment and affirmation.

Healing in the Ministry of Jesus and His Disciples

But some things are quite clear. The Bible reveals that God is concerned with the whole nature of man. Our Lord Jesus Christ considered healing a part of His mission no less than preaching and teaching. He himself healed many persons. There is no rebuke of any person for seeking healing. When John the Baptist sent to Jesus with question of doubt, his messengers were invited to tell John not only that the poor had the gospel preached to them, but also that spiritually, mentally and physically sick persons were being healed. Jesus instructed the disciples to heal as they went about proclaiming the Kingdom. This they did. This continued to be the practice of the Church of the New Testament after the Ascension. The New Testament has much to say about healing. These passages are to be interpreted according to the same canons

of interpretation applied to the Bible as a whole. Nowhere in the New Testament is there an indication that the practice was intended to be temporary in the life of the Church.

The Continued Concern of the Church

The Church has continued its concern in this matter. As the New Testament calls upon Christians to use prayer and anointing with oil (which is taken to represent the medical treatment of that day) so the Church has been concerned to continue its ministry of healing. The development of hospitals and medical missions has had a large place in church history. Many of those who dedicate their lives to medicine and nursing receive their inspiration from the Church. We see that medical science and spiritual forces have worked in parallel lines and with equally Christian motivation. Although more publicity has been given to the place of prayer in healing in recent times, we are not to forget that the Church has never ceased to pray for the sick. The Church has always taught that all healing is from God.

Questionable Interpretations Resulting From Concentration on Only One Aspect of Healing

That the desire for healing has led to some interpretations of faith which find no support in the Scriptures cannot be denied. All such misinterpretations seem to be the result of following one aspect of scriptural teaching to the neglect of others. The desire to use "faith" to manipulate God and to bring Him to do our will, the refusal to pray "thy will be done" cannot be reconciled with the New Testament teaching on faith and man's relationship to God. Again we would call attention to the fact that the use of faith as a means to guarantee one's own personal "peace of mind" may, for example, be stressed to the neglect of the fact that men do claim to attain peace of mind by faith which is entirely un-Christian, as in the Nirvana of atheistic Buddhism. Such an interpretation also may be stressed to the neglect of the fact that a man's relationship to God in Jesus Christ instead of guaranteeing relaxation and peacefulness may and sometimes does lead him to be disturbed and concerned about his own sinfulness and about the needs of the world in which he lives. Again, when success in business and worldly affairs is promised as a reward of faith in Christ, there is a tendency to forget that sometimes men have been exceedingly successful, from a worldly standpoint, precisely because they have neglected to take Christ into their business dealings, while others have been faced with the need to sacrifice some personal and worldly advantage for the sake of Christ.

Relationship Between Sin and Sickness Often Distorted

Your committee believes that attention should be called to the fact that the teaching of some of the modern healing movements that pain and disease are due to sin needs to be re-examined in the light of the teachings of Scripture and of actual experience. Specific sickness and/or injury may or may not be the result of the specific behaviour of the individual involved. It is true that if we are selfish and full of resentments and false pride, if we drive ourselves too hard and in a self-destructive way, if we are envious, jealous and filled with hatred, and if we give ourselves to excesses, all these things bring with them their own results. Even the sin of running away from life can aggravate fear which eventually turns into hatred and illness. Certainly human beings suffer also as the result of social sins over which they sometimes have no control. But to say that each individual's suffering is in every instance the result of his own sin is to deny the scriptural teaching of the book of Job, or the words of our Lord spoken concerning the man born blind when He said, "It was not that this man sinned or his parents . . ." John 9:3.

HEALING NOT SUPERIOR TO, BUT A PART OF, THE WHOLE GOSPEL MINISTRY

Again we need to keep in mind that the faith of the New Testament Church would not lift the faith that results in healing and place it over and above all the other ministries of the Church. In the first epistle to the Corinthians the apostle Paul lists the ministries of the Church: "First apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues." (12:28.) Lest we be tempted to lift one kind of ministry and give it a place of supreme importance to the neglect of others, let us remember this listing. Instead of suggesting, as the modern movements sometimes seem to, that here in the gift of healing we are in touch with the "real" power of Christ, Paul lists it with the others and brackets it, as has been pointed out, with helpers and administrators, as though to say that the work of a full-time secretary of a permanent committee, though perhaps less spectacular, is no less the Lord's work than is the ministry of healing.

THE VALUE OF PRAYER GROUPS, AND THE DANGERS OF ISOLATION FROM PEOPLE IN NEED

One good result of this reawakened interest in the relationship of prayer and health has been the formation of prayer groups in many places. Let our pastors and people, however, be aware of the temptation which comes to some people in such groups to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, thus introducing divisive elements within the church fellowship. Let us also be aware of the temptation to retreat into prayer groups as a refuge. With so much controversy and disturbance over questions concerning segregation, church union, politics, the social implications of the gospel, etc.; and in light of the fact that so much of the work which is necessary for the on-going of the Church both in the local congregation and in the Church's larger responsibilities is unspectacular everyday routine, some may succumb to the temptation to retire into quiet, contemplative groups and stay there. This is an unworthy use of prayer. Prayer should bear fruit in strength and courage to come forth "where cross the crowded ways of life, where sound the cries of race and clan." The healing taught in the New Testament is concerned with the whole man and in all his relationships.

ALL HEALING OF GOD, WHETHER SPECTACULAR OR ORDINARY

We would further call attention to a popular conception which we believe to be in error which would limit the healing which comes from God to those instances where healing is sudden, spectacular and mysterious. We believe that it places a false limitation upon the power of God to say that if healing is mediated through the ministry of a physician or surgeon or psychiatrist, it is therefore less from God than healing which comes through less visible means. The vast majority of Christians today recognize in the advances of scientific medicine the open hand of a gracious God, and accept as from Him the ministrations of doctors and nurses. We rejoice that the Holy Spirit has, through devoted study, research and practice of doctors and nurses, done much of the healing of His people. These methods of healing which God has given us are not different or in opposition to what is commonly called "spiritual healing," but they should work parallel and hand in hand. By way of illustration: The American Cancer Society reports that approximately 75,000 persons who received scientific medical treatment were cured of cancer in 1954. Two times that many could have been cured, it is estimated, if they had received medical attention in the earlier stages of the cancer's development. Who would say that this is not a gift of God?

THE NECESSITY OF USING ALL MEANS AT HAND FOR HEALING, MAKING NO HARD AND FAST DISTINCTION BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC AND SPIRITUAL

One of the results of the discoveries of science in our age is the sense of security which so many people find in the belief that we live in a reasonable order, that our

lives are not at the mercy of caprice or of haphazard and totally unpredictable forces. Because this is true, and important, many are troubled at the thought of bringing prayer into the processes of healing. This seems to move healing out of the realm of cause and effect which can be examined and put to use, and to place it in the realm of personal whim. So that if a person happens to know about prayer, or happens to have someone who is interested enough to pray for him, he will receive the healing benefits of prayer; but if he happens not to know about prayer or happens not to have any praying friends, then those benefits are denied him. This seems to leave health at the mercy of chance or whim. But is this any more true in the use of prayer than in the use of penicillin? If a person happens to know about penicillin or to know someone who knows about it, he can be treated by it and if he doesn't know about it, he cannot be treated by it. The promises of the Scriptures, the evidences of experience seem to show, and it is not unreasonable to believe, that prayer may be just as much one of the conditions through which God sends His healing as is penicillin or the surgical removal of a diseased organ. As the New Testament admonished the use of prayer and the anointing with oil which, as pointed out above, was a commonly used physical treatment of that day; so we believe we should use prayer and medical treatment, not as opposed to each other but working together. And this is not to say as some seem falsely to have concluded, that when healing does not come after prayer, such failure is necessarily the result of lack of faith or the ineffectiveness of prayer. If this were true, it would then follow that every healthy-bodied individual is of necessity more faithful than, say, the apostle Paul who again and again and again prayed that he might be delivered from the thorn in his flesh but who learned, by the grace of God, the lesson of power that grows out of weakness. "For the sake of Christ then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong." (II Cor. 12:10.) Even suffering and death do not defeat the will of God for His children. For suffering may become a redemptive element by which life is affirmed, God is glorified, and death is swallowed up in victory.

LOVE THE BASIS FOR ALL MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL

Finally, let us in the Church be reminded that as the apostle listed the gifts of those who serve in the Church: apostles, prophets, teachers, healers and the others, he also went beyond that to say: "Yet I show you a more excellent way." And that was the introduction to his great statement on Christian love. As Sir George McLeod of the Iona Community has observed, "More important than any of these ministries, taken by themselves, is the ministry of love. 'A more excellent path' than any one of them is the costly practice of the Christian Fellowship, the ongoing work of the Christian congregation in suffering long and being kind, in envying not, in thinking no evil, in rejoicing in the truth. It is this love that never fails, this corporate ministry that is the real healing power; superior to preaching, prophecy, miracles and healers." (*The Oracle*, Oct. 1954, page 15.) And this "more excellent way" is not a special and separated ministry but should pervade all that the Church does in its preaching, its teaching and its serving.

The thinking together of your committee on this subject brought us to face a fact which we had before expected would be true, viz.: that there is more involved here than should be concluded by the work of one year. We, therefore, present this introductory statement in the sincere conviction that the importance of this question indicates that continued consideration be given to some means for keeping our church aware of this phase of our ministry.

7b. Tobacco.

1913, p. 70-I. Overtures from Kanawha and Texas-Mexican Presbyteries, touching the use of tobacco by ministers, professors and students in our Theological Seminary. We recommend that these overtures be answered in the negative.

its opinion that all proper means and influences should be brought to bear to discourage the use of tobacco in all forms among ministers and candidates for the ministry, church officers and teachers in our Sunday Schools. Answered in the affirmative.

1914, p. 63. Overture from the Presbytery of Kanawha asking the Assembly to express

1920, p. 62. [Answer to overture from China missionaries on furlough:] The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States urges its pastors, missionaries and teachers in the church educational institutions to discourage the rapidly growing habit of smoking, especially of cigarettes, by our young people.

7c. Tuberculosis.

1909, p. 55. The select committee, to which was referred a paper from E. G. Routzahn, Director of American Tuberculosis Exhibition, to confer with the National Association for the study and prevention of tuberculosis, made the following report, which was adopted:

By reason of the world-wide interest exhibited in the prevention of tuberculosis, which is now recognized as contagious and preventable disease, and because of the broadly humanitarian character of this work which is engaging the attention of all civic and educational bodies, we would respectfully recommend that this Assembly express its hearty appreciation of the work of the National Association for the study and prevention of tuberculosis, and endorse the educational propaganda which is now being conducted under its auspices.

8. International Relations.

[Ed. note: Statements of the General Assembly of recent years will be listed chronologically with attention given major subject on which positions were taken. Earlier statements may be found in: 1861, p. 11, and especially in the "Address to All the Churches of Jesus Christ," p. 51 (see this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XXXIII, 4); 1862, pp. 19, 21, 22, 35, 36; 1863, p. 155; 1864, p. 293; 1876, p. 233, and especially pp. 285 ff.; 1890, pp. 18, 53; 1891, p. 242; 1892, p. 422; 1893, p. 51; 1894, p. 203; 1895, p. 387; 1896, p. 570; 1899, p. 423; 1907, p. 55; 1916, p. 75; 1917, pp. 23, 49, 70, 74; 1918, pp. 13, 41; 1920, pp. 70, 80; 1921, p. 34; 1925, p. 95; 1927, p. 40.]

8a. Armenia.

1920, p. 78. Whereas America shares responsibility for carrying out the provisions made for the protection of the weaker nations, and for the reorganization of the world on the basis of justice and freedom;

Be it resolved, That we petition the government of the United States in the name of justice, of humanity and of Christian civilization, to take such action as may be necessary to assist the Armenian people to live, establish order and achieve the economic regeneration of their country.

1928, p. 78. [Resolution:]

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States expresses its deep sympathy for the ancient people of Armenia in their sorrows and oppressions, and rejoices in every effort that is being made in this country and in other lands:

1. For the restoration of a united and independent Armenia, where the homeless and destitute Armenian refugees may find a home and no longer be dependent upon the charity of the world.

2. For the release and restoration of untold thousands of Christian women and children now held in slavery by Turkish masters.

3. For guarantees of full religious liberty for the persecuted subject peoples who have suffered for centuries under Turkish domination.

8b. Congo atrocities.

1903, p. 504. The following resolution having been previously adopted but reconsidered, was now amended and adopted, to-wit:

Resolved, by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, that a committee consisting of five members be appointed by the Moderator, whose duty it shall be to prepare and present to the President of the United States a memorial setting out the rights of missionaries from this country in the Congo Free State under the treaty of Berlin; how these rights are disregarded by the government of the Congo Free State, and urging the Government of the United States to take such action as may be necessary and proper under the circumstances to ascertain and correct the wrongs complained of, and to secure the rights to which citizens of the United States who are missionaries to Africa are entitled.

And the senators and representatives for the State under the jurisdiction of this Assembly are earnestly requested to give to the committee appointed under this resolution all the assistance which it may be in their power to afford.

1909, p. 17. The following resolution, offered by Dr. Samuel A. King, was adopted:

Resolved, That the action of the Assembly in the transmission of a telegram to the Government at Washington, about the protection of its missionaries, Rev. Dr. W. M. Morrison and Rev. Dr. W. H. Sheppard, in a trial to which they are about to be subjected [See Minutes, pages 14, 76], should not be construed as a violation of the historic position of the Church bearing upon the relations of the Church to the State, inasmuch as it was considered and said to be an extraordinary case and an humble petition.

8c. Conscientious Objectors.

1941, pp. 64, 65. [Overtures] requesting the Assembly to authorize the Committee on Social and Moral Welfare to act as the Committee of our Church in connection with the rights and needs of conscientious objectors who are members of our Church, answered in the affirmative.

1949, p. 100. We recommend that, in the correspondence regarding non-registrants for military service, we reply that our Church has consistently upheld the right of citizens to refuse to bear arms in conflict with their conscience or the tenets of their religious beliefs. It is our opinion that the Government of the United States has made proper provision in its laws for these conscientious objectors. We hold further that failure to comply with these laws on the part of non-registrants does not constitute conscientious objection of a religious nature. Therefore, we do not hold that the Church should support non-registrants in their position.

1952, p. 77. That the General Assembly record its appreciation for the new provisions made for conscientious objectors by the President's Executive Order of February 20, 1952, and express its conviction that due provision has apparently been made for acceptable alternate service for such objectors.

That the General Assembly request the various church agencies of our Church, as well as those with which our Church is associated, to cooperate with the Division of Christian Relations of the Board of Church Extension in providing opportunities for such alternative service through the agencies of the Church.

8d. Displaced Persons.

1948, pp. 26, 89. In reply to the communication from the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons, it is to be noted that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States recommended last year (Minutes, pp. 163, 164) that a

substantial number of displaced persons be admitted to the United States after careful screening to determine their fitness for entry. In view of the fact that no effective congressional action has been taken to authorize these admissions, despite the apparently increasing urgency for restoring these people to a semblance of normal living, the Standing Committee on Christian Relations recommends that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States: (1) Reaffirm the position it took last year relative to the admission of displaced persons to the United States, and (2) direct the Assembly's Permanent Committee on Christian Relations to respectfully petition the Congress of the United States to enact at an early date legislation authorizing the judicious admission of a fair share of displaced persons to the United States.

8e. Nuclear Warfare.

1950, p. 71. That (the) overture with reference to the hydrogen bomb be answered in the negative on the grounds that we do not feel qualified to make a deliverance on this matter.

1958, pp. 88, 228. The cold war between the Communists and free nations has been given fresh impetus by the launching of the earth satellite. A new era has suddenly dawned upon the world following hard on the heels of the beginning of the atomic age. So the race is accelerated—almost frantically—to develop yet more fantastic weapons of offensive and defensive warfare. As the struggle goes on the other nations of the world watch, wonder and work to win the help of the great giants in making their own land safe and secure. In this struggle the voice of the Church must be heard.

1964, pp. 67, 152. [Paper approved on "An Aspect of the Church, Nuclear Weapons, and Disarmament."]

8f. United Nations.

1945, pp. 49, 71. While in full sympathy with the purpose of the overture the Assembly does not see its way clear to answer it in the affirmative. As America is still regarded as a Christian country it is our conviction that meetings of all American legislative bodies should be opened with prayer. However, we must bear in mind that the San Francisco [United Nations] Conference is composed of representatives of many countries and of a number of religions. The Chairman of the Conference, therefore, called for a period of quiet meditation and thus gave the representatives of all religions the opportunity to pray in such manner as their consciences dictated.

1953, p. 92. 1. That, recognizing the defects and failures of the United Nations, the General Assembly take note of the outstanding achievements which the United Nations has to its credit and reaffirm its belief in the purpose and program of this organization.

2. That churches be urged to acquaint their constituencies with the program and achievements of the United Nations.

3. That the General Assembly engage in prayer for the United Nations and for the cessation of armed conflict in the world.

In conclusion, the Council on Christian Relations makes the following recommendation concerning the report:

"That the report be commended to the churches for use by both ministers and laymen; and to those preparing study materials for the men, women and young people of the Church."

1955, p. 78. (1) That in recognition of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly reaffirm its belief in the purpose and usefulness of this organization, and that churches be urged to acquaint their constituency with its achievements and program for peace and goodwill in the world.

(2) That, in view of the possibility of a conference in 1956 to consider revision of the United Nations Charter, church members be urged to study the Charter and to pray for and to be prepared to support the representatives of the nations insofar as they seek the guidance of God in more effective cooperation for World peace.

(3) That, recognizing the gravity of the international situation, the General Assembly commend the President of the United States and the Secretary of State for their support of the United Nations. Although recognizing that no human institution is a perfect instrument of justice, we respectfully urge them to continue to work through the United Nations in seeking to relieve international tensions and to promote peace in the world.

(4) That the Stated Clerk be instructed to send a copy of these resolutions to the President and the Secretary of State, assuring them of our earnest prayers.

1958, p. 88. (1) That the churches be reminded that the material strength of a nation is not its ultimate strength but rather depends upon its obedience to God's revelation in Jesus Christ; that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

(2) That adequate military defense, however necessary, remains insufficient as a preventive of war, recognizing that we must find ways and means to alleviate the poverty, fears, humiliations and insecurities of all people if the danger of war is to be met; and that we commend the efforts of our government toward this end.

(3) That church members be urged to inform themselves and lend their support to the United Nations, and such organizations as are instruments of cooperation and good will in the world according to the Spirit of Christ.

8g. War and Peace.

1928, p. 43. Overture seeking a specific expression from the Assembly of its disapproval of war as a means of settling international disputes.

[Answer:] "The Assembly directs the attention of the Presbytery of Atlanta to the actions of the Assemblies of 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1920 and 1925, touching the subject of the settlement of international disputes, and reaffirms the position therein taken, namely, that Christians in our own country and throughout the world should co-operate in securing the settlement of international issues and differences by means of arbitration and without resort to war; and further prays and hopes that the spirit and teachings of Christ, our Lord, may soon so permeate and control the nations of the earth that they will speedily co-operate in the outlawry of war and the adoption and application of some amicable and peaceful method or methods for the adjustment of all national and international questions and disputes."

[See this Digest, above, for actions cited.]

1929, p. 80. Resolution adopted: The historic position of our Church is that the function of the Church is purely spiritual. We believe that this principle should apply in time of war as well as in time of peace, and that, therefore, the Church should never again bless a war, or be used as an instrument in the promotion of war. We commend our government for its leadership in establishing the Pact to outlaw war. We believe that the Church as part of its spiritual mission should endeavor to write the principles of this pact in the hearts of its people, and urge this duty upon all those who teach or preach in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.

1931, p. 41. [Repeated, in answer to overtures.]

p. 41. In answer to an overture the General Assembly adopted the following:

1. We do not believe the Church-owned or controlled school should make compulsory military training a part of its curriculum.

2. We request synods and presbyteries owning and controlling schools now having compulsory military training to plan for the making such training optional as soon as possible.

1936, pp. 36, 97. [Excerpts from Report of Permanent Committee on Social and Moral Welfare:]

We would recommend:

1. That both as a church and as individuals we should do all that we can to bring the clear light of historical facts to bear on this problem, joining in an effort to promote a general education of our people as to the causes, the costs, the futility and the consequences of war.

2. That as Christian citizens our people should be urged to support our national leaders in every wise effort to make the influence of America felt among the nations for peace rather than for war.

3. That all of our number who have any opportunity to aid in shaping public opinion should unceasingly combat that type of propaganda which even now seeks to arouse our suspicion of, and hatred for, other peoples— who at worst are victims of their leaders and who perhaps have as much reason to be afraid of our increasing armaments as we have to fear theirs—seeking rather at all times to promote understanding of the needs and the problems of others and striving for the application of the Golden Rule between peoples as between individuals.

4. That, while working and hoping for peace among all nations, our members be determined that even if war should come in other portions of the world we will profit by the lessons of the last great conflagration, realizing that in this day of the high-powered and unscrupulous propagandist the evil may often be made to appear the good, and that neutral rights and neutral profits are purchased at too dear a price if they be paid for in human blood. To this end we advocate the shaping of public sentiment in advance and the encouragement of those who are seeking to provide us with protective neutrality legislation.

5. Above all, that prayer be made without ceasing that God will overrule the folly and the wickedness of man so that war may be averted and that, in our time, peace may come to prevail on earth.

1937, pp. 37, 108. Report of Permanent Committee on Moral and Social Welfare received as information and its recommendations adopted.

We recommend:

1. That the church declare unequivocally that war as a method of settling international disputes is utterly opposed to the Spirit of Christ.

2. That members of the church be urged (1) to develop in their own and in other people's mind the will to peace; (2) to acquaint themselves with the factors which lead to war, and with the various efforts now being made to prevent war; (3) to make known to their government their support of those policies which tend toward peace and their condemnation of those policies which tend toward war; (4) to practice in their individual lives the universal love and good will which is in Christ; (5) to set themselves to the task of organizing a world community in which justice and equality of opportunity shall be vouchsafed to every man, woman and child, to all nations and to all races.

3. That we urge our people to work unremittingly for the limitation of armaments by international agreement, and for permanent legislation designed to insure American Neutrality in the case of any European conflict.

4. That church organizations put renewed emphasis on and give increased attention to education for peace.

In this hour of world crisis we commend the President, the officers of our Government, and the Congress to the God of Peace and of Righteousness, and we pray that

to these, our chosen representatives, and not only to them, but to the rulers of all nations, there may come both the vision of a warless world and the purpose and will and the understanding to work for its consummation.

1941, pp. 65, 163. There are certain things which the Church must be very faithful in doing during a time of war.

(a) It must maintain and develop its spirit of international brotherhood and unity. The World Council of Churches, which is the organ of this international fellowship, should be supported with our interest, our prayers and our contributions.

(b) The Church must ever remain the Church and not suffer itself to be made an instrument in the hands of the State.

(c) The Church must keep before the people the fact of sin, never allowing them to lose sight of the fact that it was sin which brought the world to its present tragic state. At the same time, the Church must be alive to, and continually combat, the evils which are by-products of war: impurity, dishonesty, intemperance, callousness, bigotry, intolerance, hate.

(d) The concentration of large numbers of men in army camps has always produced moral problems. We must not condemn them for engaging in unhealthy activities, without providing health-giving and edifying opportunities for worship, fellowship and recreation.

(e) It is our opinion that the voice of the Church should be lifted against the sale of intoxicating liquors in or near any army camp.

(f) The Church must stand for liberty of conscience.

(g) The Church must be a refuge and a refreshing spring for weary and spent souls. No secular activity, however necessary, can take the place of the spiritual ministry of the church.

(h) The best defense is to attack. The Church should carry on continually an aggressive program and campaign of evangelism.

p. 68. Recess was taken to hear the radio address of the President of the United States.

The Assembly was closed with a season of prayer for our country and its President.

A telegram was ordered sent to the President of the United States, as follows:

"Our Assembly, in session since May 22, recessed to hear your address, then reconvened for half an hour of earnest prayer that Almighty God may cause His holy will to prevail, knowing that man's extremity is God's opportunity."

1942, p. 57. Inasmuch as we believe our nation and the people in the churches of our nation moved a bit closer to our God on that Day of Prayer and Confession proclaimed by the President of these United States last January; and that we as a nation and as individuals are still very far from any sort of worthiness of His blessing and deeply covered in sins; and that God's ear is ever attentive to confessions and petitions of those who come humbly before Him; and these things must come before we may expect Him to "Hear from Heaven, and forgive our sins and heal our land."

Therefore, be it resolved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States that we instruct our representatives to the Federal Council of Churches in America to request that body to petition the President to appoint other National Days of prayer and confession and repentance to the end that God may hear and forgive and bestow upon this nation and upon all the world a just and lasting peace.

1943, p. 142. The United States of America is in the second year of a war in which the fundamental liberties of mankind are at stake. The victory of America will not of itself insure the advance of God's Kingdom, but it will insure the Church a free opportunity to proclaim its faith and will provide an opportunity for all men of good will to labor for justice and brotherhood among men, neither of which would be true

if the United Nations were to meet defeat. It is our duty as Christian citizens to do all we can, that is consonant with our faith, to help in its gigantic struggle the nation which has afforded the Church a fair and favorable opportunity for development, and to preserve the Christian values which have been attained in this and other lands.

p. 146. The problems which will follow the war will be so great as to beggar the imagination. Large sections of our globe will be utterly desolate. The lack of food which is even now taking more lives in Europe and in Asia by starvation than are being destroyed in battle will continue and perhaps for a time increase. Pestilence and disease may well take a toll of humanity in a measure of which we do not care to think. Seed for the planting of crops and machinery for the production of goods will alike be lacking in many areas. With the downfall of the Axis Powers, which now seems to be inevitable, such floods of hatred and passion for revenge will be let loose in many lands as will threaten a cruelty and a vindictiveness equal to the horrors which those powers have already visited upon mankind. In many nations there will be no stable and responsible governments and there is danger of both anarchy and of civil war. If these dangers are to be overcome and a relatively just and durable peace established, it will be necessary that the United Nations, and particularly America, shall exercise statesmanship of the highest order and exhibit an enlightenment of conscience not hitherto made effective in international affairs. Obviously the Christian cannot be unconcerned in the face of such a challenge, for if the problems of our world are to be solved at all it must be in the light of the Christian Revelation. What can Christians contribute to the shortening of the nations' agony and the establishment of an international order in which liberty and justice shall prevail? Perhaps no adequate answer can be given now, but a way out of our difficulties must be sought and to that end there are certain duties which must be performed. In this section of our report we would emphasize at least a few of those duties.

[Ed. note: Duties mentioned are: 1. Prayer; 2. Combat the growth of hatred; 3. Strengthening the hands of leaders in planning for a great ministry of mercy to all mankind to follow immediately upon the cessation of hostilities; 4. Concern with the fate of the Jews; 5. Oppose the deadly sin of selfishness in national life; and 6. Dedication in a new spirit of devotion and of faith to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.]

1951, p. 78. That the report of the Council on Christian Relations on "National Security and the Christian Message" be commended by the General Assembly with the recommendation that it be received and transmitted to the Church for study.

8h. What should be preached from our pulpits in war time?

1898, p. 221. Rev. R. P. Kerr, presented a paper exhorting the confining of the pulpit to the proclamation of the Gospel, and cautioning against disregard of the Lord's day. The paper was unanimously adopted, and is as follows:

In view of the fact that the government of the United States is now engaged in a war, which naturally creates excitement, and more or less tension of anxiety, from time to time, with reference to the results of battles on land and sea, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States would call the attention of all our ministers to the historic position of the Church on all such matters; that while ministers and people, in public and private, should pray for our rulers, and for the officers and men of the army and navy, and that peace with honor may be soon established, yet it is the duty of ministers to proclaim from their pulpits at all times nothing but "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God," according to the Church's commission from her sovereign Head, Jesus Christ the Lord.

We recommend that this action of the General Assembly be read from all our pulpits at as early a day as possible.

8i. Should the national flag be used in our worship?

1920, p. 79. Overture deals with the propriety of displaying the national flags in church . . . .

[Answer:] The Assembly repeats its previous deliverances regarding the necessity of preserving the purity and spirituality of its forms of worship.

But, inasmuch as the Book of Church Order provides that the session have control of the services in the particular church, we recommend that these questions be referred to the session as the court having original jurisdiction.

1925, p. 67. In response to the overture as to the pledge of allegiance to the national flag as part of the worship of God at Leadership Training Conferences, the Assembly replies that while deeply interested in these conferences, they make no official report, and therefore the Assembly is without full information but it cannot approve of such use of the flag.

9. Labor and Economics.

1908, p. 19. Whereas, The evil of child labor has become prevalent in the Southern states as well as in other parts of the nation; and,

Whereas, The known results of the child labor system are the disintegration of the family, the promotion of illiteracy, the destruction of church influences and the development of a class of parents who reverse the dictum of Scripture, that the parents should lay up for the children and not the children for the parents;

Resolved, That we call upon Christian employers and Christian parents to obey the laws that have been enacted on this subject and to strive after more effective laws to the end that the exploitation of childhood within our borders shall be ended.

1936, pp. 36, 98. [Excerpt from Report of Permanent Committee on Social and Moral Welfare:]

It is the duty of the Church to declare the mind of Christ, which for conflict would substitute conciliation, for ruthless competition, co-operation, for the policy of exploitation, the spirit of brotherly service.

In so doing, however, it is not the duty of the Church to champion any economic system or political platform, lest she become either the defender of existing evils, or the advocate of measures that experience may not justify. Economic and political programs are devised to meet changing situations. The Church is commissioned to proclaim unchanging principles.

In an economic order consistent with the teachings of Christ, we believe that:

1. Human rights must have precedence over property rights;
2. The possessors of wealth are under obligation to use it for the welfare of mankind;
3. The right to own property involves the duty to employ it as an instrument of service, but not as an implement of exploitation;
4. Every child should have a fair chance to live under conditions conducive to happiness, health, mental growth and the attainment of Christian character;
5. Every adult is entitled to an opportunity to earn a decent living;
6. For every person incapable of self-support such provision should be made as is consistent with the Spirit of Christ, as revealed in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Adequate security should be provided against the accidents of life, illness, unemployment and old age;
7. Capital invested in enterprises that contribute to the common good is entitled to a fair return;
8. Employed workers are entitled to a fair wage for a fair day's work, and to reasonable hours and wholesome working conditions;

9. The consuming public is entitled to the essential commodities of life honestly prepared and advertised at as low a price as is consistent with a reasonable return upon invested capital, and fair compensation for those engaged in the production and distribution of such commodities;

10. All business should be considered a co-operative enterprise for the common good, in which capital, management, labor and society have rights that must be protected;

11. Needed economic readjustments must be brought about by fair and peaceful means, without deception, intimidation or violence;

12. Such adjustments can only be made in an atmosphere of good will, and in the spirit of the Golden Rule;

13. The application of such principles of justice to the economic order is the function of the State;

14. The church's duty is not to usurp that function but to hold the Christian ideal before the consciences of men, to cultivate among them the spirit of brotherly kindness and to bring them into fellowship with that Spirit, which only can enable men to live unselfishly. For without these ideals, without this brotherly kindness and without this divine power operating in and on individual life, no economic order can be fairly or securely established.

1937, pp. 37, 105. Report of Permanent Committee on Moral and Social Welfare received as information and its recommendations adopted.

[Section dealing with the Economic Situation, including The Unemployed, Child Labor, Share Croppers, and Poverty:] We recommend: 1. That members of the church study their individual responsibility for the achievement of these important ends. 2. That members of the church work for the abolition of child labor, and for the adequate provision for the protection, education, spiritual nurture and recreation of every child.

1943, pp. 75, 145. In a time when the best effort and the concentrated thought of our nation and its leaders is directed toward carrying on and winning the war, the nation is in danger of losing much of that which it has gained in past years in the matter of economic justice. Strikes and "labor rackets" still plague our land. Exorbitant profits come into view in our war industries with sickening frequency. The acquisitive instinct of man in his natural state is not converted into altruism by war. The Christian citizen must ever be alert lest old injustices be permitted to increase and new injustices born. It is not the prerogative of the Church to lay down specific laws in the economic realm, but it is the duty of the Christian citizen to fight against economic injustice and to fight for the establishment of Christian principles in our economic life. The mind of Christ must not be permitted to be strange and alien to business and commerce.

1953, p. 91. I. *Daily Work as Vocation*

1. That the churches undertake the responsibility of impressing men, women and young people of the value and significance of daily work as Christian vocation.

2. That presbyteries, through a committee or a subcommittee on Christian Relations, arrange wherever possible to hold vocational institutes in which Christian laymen shall consider the claims of Christ upon their daily work.

II. *Labor and Industry*

1. That churches seek to win all economic groups to the allegiance of Christ, recognizing a particular responsibility in the growing urban and industrial centers of the South.

2. That, recognizing the contributions made both by industry and labor to our economic welfare, we urge churchmen in both groups to bring their influence as Christian believers to bear upon management-labor problems.

3. That theological seminaries, leadership schools and summer conferences as well as the men and women, and young people of the church, include, as a part of their program of study, the basic problems confronting industry and the church.

1958, pp. 88, 226. Labor and Industry: 1. That church members be urged to confront their daily work as Christian vocation and to glorify God in it.

2. That, recognizing their responsibility for the well-being of persons in such matters as sufficient wages, health, housing and other living conditions, both industry and labor seek to deal realistically and forthrightly with injustice and corruption of any kind which would endanger the American economy and lessen the usefulness of the nation to the world.

3. That our seminaries and other educational institutions seek increasingly to acquaint students with the problems of industry and labor, and to relate them to the Christian ethic.

1958, p. 85; 1963, p. 52. That the General Assembly reaffirm the action taken in 1958 General Assembly

"That all employing agencies of the Church, in the congregation, presbytery and synod earnestly consider placing the salaries of women employees on the same level as that of men, basing salary schedules on such considerations as skill, performance, responsibility carried, preparation and experience . . ."

and that this action be referred not only to congregations, presbyteries, and synods, but also to the General Assembly's Boards and Agencies.

10. Law and Crime.
(Including Capital Punishment.)

1899, p. 431. The General Assembly takes occasion to express its strongest condemnation of the lawless spirit abroad in the land manifesting itself in many ways, but notable in scenes of mob violence and the taking of human life, in cases of supposed or proven crime, without due process of law, involving the awful danger of inflicting death upon an innocent person, while the real criminal goes free; tending also to cheapen human life, to unsettle the social order, and to weaken or destroy that reverence for law and constituted authority which the Scriptures require all to uphold.

We, therefore, while expressing our abhorrence of the crimes that lead to the disorders referred to, urge all our people and ministers, in all scriptural ways, to do their utmost towards cultivating and maintaining that order and reverence for authority which are enjoined by the Word of God.

1920, p. 74. A resolution was adopted, as follows:

Whereas our country and the world are passing through a period of reconstruction and readjustment, the issues of which are tremendous beyond our powers to estimate, and

Whereas there is at such time grave danger that men may lose sight of the one righteous standard of conduct and adopt wrong principles for the solution of pressing problems, and

Whereas there seems to be almost prevalent in this particular period an atmosphere unfavorable to the regard for law, either statutory or constitutional, and

Whereas also there are many characteristics of the time that conduce to the deadly sin of covetousness, and

Whereas we recognize the right and the duty of the Church to warn against danger and to hold up a standard of righteousness; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Presbyterian Church in the United States, speaking through this Assembly, renew its witness against every disobedience to established law and all disregard of constituted authority; that it lifts its voice against the destructive iniquity of covetousness in its many and insidious forms; that it would, in this deliverance, lift

up before all the people the Bible standard of right doing as the only measure of conduct; that it urges upon all, especially the rulers of mankind, the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only safe guide to the solution of the world problems; that it calls upon all its preachers and teachers incessantly to lift up this standard and urge these principles; and that it lovingly enjoins its own constituency in particular, in loyal devotion to them, to show among all the people examples of good citizenship and righteousness, observing every right law, hating covetousness, and walking humbly with the Lord.

1929, p. 81. Overtures concerning lawless conditions in the United States. [Answer:] We view with concern the tendency toward a disregard for law, deplore the lawless condition about us, and urge upon our ministers the duty of emphasizing the teaching of the Bible concerning the majesty of the law and the duty of obedience to constituted authority.

1932, p. 37. The following resolution was adopted by a rising vote:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., while conforming to its time-honored belief in the complete separation of Church and State, feels that an expression of its views on great moral questions is both opportune and imperative.

The widespread disregard for law, the purchase of liquor from bootleggers, and the serving of it to guests by many otherwise good people, is leading to sad and distressing results. Where a breakdown has occurred, it has been largely confined to parents and the older generations rather than to the splendid and courageous youth of today. Drunkenness has always been and is now a very grave problem in every country. Thousands who might have been useful, upright citizens have sold their characters and their very souls for days of debauchery and crime. Many have ruined their lives because they have insisted on using what they called personal liberty—the right to destroy body and soul; others have opposed the efforts put forth to protect the weak from the strong.

A large proportion of the press is giving daily publicity to propaganda, unreliable and unproven data, and only scant notice to favorable news or resolutions from many of the industrial leaders and the Christian and educational organizations. Some papers continually glorify the drinking of alcoholic beverages, forgetting that even the use of light wines and beer has generally been the cause of the drink habit, maintaining that no means for controlling the distribution and use of alcohol has thus far been devised, nor do they offer anything better or more effective. These journals circulate in countless homes and do untold damage to the minds of boys and girls in their formative years.

Another instrument for great good: the picture theatres, thousands in number, located in towns and cities, are in many instances presenting sordid and suggestive plays and scenes, demoralizing and degrading in the extreme. The producers and purveyors of such should be denied the patronage of Christian people everywhere, thus leading to prompt and permanent correction; meanwhile, parents should be very selective in behalf of the entire family.

The General Assembly places itself on record as favoring educational programs, a revival of civic interest and civic righteousness, the observance and enforcement of laws, and earnest support to governmental officers, imploring the Most High always to help us, as citizens of this great country, to be examples of righteousness and to cherish more fully our birthright to a country whose God is the Lord.

1947, pp. 101, 164. (1) That the Assembly go on record as condemning all organizations and individuals in our country whose aim and purpose is to hinder any American minorities in the exercise of their civil rights, or that seek to deny such rights to any groups or individuals because of their race, creed, class or color.

(2) That since our American Congress has seen fit to maintain its Committee on un-American activities, the Assembly call upon this committee to be no less concerned to investigate and expose the un-Americanism of organizations like the Columbians and the Ku Klux Klan—which are definitely akin to fascism—than it is to expose organizations whose subversive activities stem from their communist character.

(3) That the Assembly urge all our people to be on guard in their own communities against all possible violations of the civil rights of their fellow citizens, and that wherever possible they throw their influence and the influence of their local churches on the side of those forces that seek to uphold for all kinds and classes of Americans their civil and constitutional liberties.

1952, p. 77. That the General Assembly commend to the churches for their careful study the report entitled *Religion and Morals,* prepared by the Council of Christian Relations, and that in addition, the Assembly adopt this further statement:

The General Assembly expresses its profound concern over the very evident lowering of our national moral standards, as revealed in recent scandals in government, the Kefauver Committee report, basketball bribery cases, and in other ways.

We declare our conviction that this is basically a spiritual problem and can be solved only on the level of a renewed faith in God and knowledge of Him. We believe that this forsaking of the basic standards of honesty and integrity and the loss of a clear distinction between right and wrong has come because many citizens of our country, though nominally believing in God, actually do not have a sufficient sense of God's reality to affect their lives. A man can be no better than the god he worships whatever that god may be. If he really worships money, in that money comes first in his life, in that he obeys its demands upon him and in that he trusts it for all he wants in life, he will be no better than the money demands he be, for money is his god. If he really worships fame or power or pleasure or any one of the multitude of modern idols, he will be no better than his false god demands.

The "thus said the Lord" of the Ten Commandments and the other moral teachings of the Bible, will mean nothing to one who does not really believe in God. It is fundamentally because of this widespread loss of faith in God and a weakened knowledge of Him Whose Word is eternally true, that the immutable standards of right and wrong have been so widely forsaken. And it is only as men come really to worship the Eternal God and give to Him the first and supreme place in life, that the eternal principles of right and wrong which He has ordained shall be the rule of their everyday lives.

We believe the problem is basically spiritual and therefore that the Church has a tremendous responsibility in this matter. Surely if the Church does not take this responsibility to seek to reawaken men's faith in God and awareness of Him, it need expect no one else to do so. Nothing is more relevant to the problem of our present national moral depression that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is His Kingdom on earth and our only adequate avenue for bringing God's love and salvation to bear upon the lives of people and the life of our nation.

We, therefore, call upon the Church to recognize this basic fact of our national moral life, and to rededicate itself to its task of bringing to men and women everywhere a knowledge of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the total church program and through every means at our disposal—evangelism, Christian education, Church Extension—that they, believing in God as the Lord of all life and the Sovereign of the moral universe, may do His will in every circumstance of life.

1961, p. 66. [Resolution adopted:] Be it resolved by The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, at its Centennial Meeting in Dallas, Texas;

Whereas the President of the United States by his Proclamation, and the Congress of the United States by its Joint Resolution, have asked all Americans to observe May 1, 1961 throughout the Nation as LAW DAY,

Whereas, on this day in Nations behind the Iron Curtain a type of International Lawlessness is being observed;

Whereas this Assembly Gratefully acknowledges the blessings of government under law and the freedom of the individual to worship Almighty GOD under law according to the dictates of his conscience, and

Whereas The Presbyterian Church in the United States has throughout this nation's history contributed from among its constituents men devoted to the principles of government under law, freedom of worship and separation of church and state.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States join Americans everywhere in acknowledging the blessings of liberty under law as a precious gift of GOD.

1961, p. 79. [Paper on "Capital Punishment" tabled.]

1963, pp. 81, 153, 158. 1. That the Committee's 1961 Report on Capital Punishment (Minutes, 101st Assembly, pp. 99-104), a subject which the 99th and the 100th General Assemblies had found to be a proper one for consideration, be commended to the Church for prayerful study;

2. That for the words, "should not be retained," in the final paragraph of the 1961 Report of the Permanent Committee on Christian Relations there be substituted the words, "is a form of punishment, the use of which raises serious questions concerning the responsibilities of Christians";

3. That earnest consideration by Christians of the matter involved is consistent with continuing determination by the State of what the means of punishment should be, and is in no sense contrary to the Westminster Confession of Faith (Chap. XXV, "Of the Civil Magistrate") and the Larger Catechism (Answer No. 136), in the latters' acknowledgment of the State's legal authority in this general field.

1965, pp. 84, 158. [Paper adopted on "The Civil Rights Movement in the Light of Christian Teaching" in which the question of civil disobedience is raised.]

11. Poverty and Need.

1946, pp. 80, 156. Whereas, the passing months have made it increasingly evident that a large portion of the world's population is striving to exist in lands in which the available food supply is entirely inadequate to meet the minimum needs if the people, and unless aid is furnished at once from outside sources millions may die of starvation and additional millions sustain permanent health impairment from malnutrition, and whereas,

It has also been brought home to us that the only possible surplus food supply at all adequate at this time to meet this tragic situation is in our own nation, and whereas,

Believing as we do that Christian love is widespread in the hearts of the American people, and that the Good Neighbor policy should find expression in governmental action in the name of all of us,

Therefore, we earnestly petition the Federal authorities to take all necessary steps to assure the immediate equitable distribution of the surplus food stocks in the United States and the production of food and other essential supplies among those peoples now faced with the most amazing destitution known in human history.

And we further express our firm conviction that the people of this nation will gladly cooperate in the support of all governmental action necessary to the fulfillment of our obligations.

We recommend that the Stated Clerk be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, and that the various commissioners be requested to send copies to their representatives in the Congress with such comment as they may desire to add.

1950, p. 63. In response to a communication from the International Convention of the Disciples of Christ we recommend that we join them in an immediate petition to the Congress of the United States to promptly take the necessary action to give and deliver to the peoples of the world the surplus food supplies which the government now holds in storage where and to whom it will bring the greatest good to the health and happiness of mankind.

"Use of Surplus Foods"

1962, pp. 86, 114. The overture which led to the Assembly's referring this matter to the Permanent Committee referred to the Church's concern for maintenance of the principle of separation of Church and State. It also referred to the desirability of relieving hunger and need throughout the world and to the use, in this connection, of government surplus food and materials.

The Committee has (1) investigated the use which is made of government surplus foods and materials; (2) noted that guidance is abundantly available to our Church courts and their institutions concerning the use which is being made of surplus commodities by the federal Government (the work of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Food Stamp Plans, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Direct Distribution Programs indicating that what *should* be done is being done or efforts are being made in that direction); and (3) observed that our Government through its cooperation with a variety of agencies including the Church World Service, the United Nations, and the Food for Peace Plan (made possible through Public Law 480 of 1954, through which alone the United States has exported over four and a half billion dollars' worth of agricultural products) is aptly demonstrating a humanitarian concern and that no counsel should be given on use of surplus foods and materials in the relief of need.

From its study of the federal Government's use of surplus foods and materials, the Committee has concluded that such a practice, although it involves a working relationship between government and churches, does not violate the principle of the separation of Church and State. The Committee has further concluded that the giving away of commodities is more difficult than selling them, that our Government, which is approaching this highly complex problem with concern both for humanitarian principles and the economic stability of all nations involved, should be commended for its efforts to share the abundance of our most fortunate land with peoples less fortunate.

1965, pp. 84, 161. [Paper adopted on "Poverty in the Light of the Christian Faith."]

12. Race.

[Ed. note: Material on "Negro Work" in the Digest-1944 is not here repeated since this is no longer a part of the Assembly's program, and since the Negro Synod of Snedecor was dissolved in 1951.

See also this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XXXIII; Form of Govt., Miscel. Pastoral Letters; and D.W.W., § 201-5.]

1865, p. 370. Overture—What is the course to be pursued toward the colored people within our bounds?

On this subject your committee recommend the following action:

Whereas, the colored people never stood in any other relation to the Church than that of human beings lost with us in the fall of Adam; and redeemed with us by the infinitely meritorious death and sacrifice of Christ, and participants with us in all the

benefits and blessings of the Gospel: and whereas, our churches, pastors and people have always recognized this claim to Christian equality and brotherhood, and have rejoiced to have them associated in Christian union and communion in the public services and precious sacraments of the sanctuary:

Resolved, 1st, That the abolition of slavery by the civil and military powers, has not altered the relations as above defined, in which our Church stands to the colored people, nor in any degree lessened the debt of love and service which we owe to them, nor the interest with which we would still desire to be associated with them in all the privileges of our common Christianity.

Resolved, 2nd, That whereas experience has invariably proved the advantages of the colored people and the white being united together in the worship of God, we see no reason why it should be otherwise, now that they are freedmen and not slaves. Should our colored friends think it best to separate from us and organize themselves into distinct congregations under white pastors and elders for the present, or under colored elders and pastors as soon as God, in his providence shall raise up men suitably qualified for those offices, this Church will do all in its power to encourage, foster, and assist them.

1920, p. 45. In response to the address of Rev. Plato T. Durham, D.D., on the work of the Southern Inter-Racial Committee, we desire heartily to commend to our pastors and people this effort to bring to our inter-racial relations the spirit and principles of Jesus Christ, and request the co-operation of our people in the work of their local committees as far as possible.

1921, p. 80. 1. That the General Assembly reaffirm with the greatest possible earnestness the resolution adopted by the Charlotte Assembly concerning the work and aims of the Southern Inter-Racial Commission in commending to our pastors and people the effort to bring to our inter-racial relations the spirit and principles of Jesus Christ, and

2. That the General Assembly call the attention of our people to the necessity of maintaining justice and righteousness between the races in America, and we believe that the Inter-Racial Commission, led by Southern men, is wise in the promotion of Conference and Co-operation between white and colored leaders in local communities, and we urge our people to encourage the work in their local communities, and particularly do we urge the co-operation between white and colored ministers.

1937, pp. 37, 107. Report of the Permanent Committee on Moral and Social Welfare received as information, and its recommendations adopted.

We recommend: 1. That our ministers and church leaders seek faithfully to ascertain and interpret significant facts in the field of race relations for their people. 2. That as a Church and as individual Christians we strive more earnestly to apply the teachings of Christ in all our relations with other races.

1943, p. 25. Communication from Mr. Boris Gourevitch, New York, Vice-President and General Secretary of Union for the Protection of the Human Person, presenting an appeal for the defense of the rights of Jews in Central and Eastern Europe.

p. 46. In reply to communication from the Union for the Protection of the Human Person, the following action was taken: We recommend that our Stated Clerk be instructed to write Mr. Boris Gourevitch, . . . assuring him of our sympathy and moral support in the efforts being made by his Union for the relief and protection of persecuted minorities in Europe.

1943, p. 75. That our colleges be encouraged to admit for study Japanese-American students who have been certified by the government and are unable to continue their studies in the relocation camps, and that financial assistance and scholarships be granted when available.

That our ministers assist in relocating the Japanese-American citizens, when certified by the government, by informing their communities of the facts in the situation and by creating a friendly public opinion toward them:

1943, pp. 75, 144. [From report of Permanent Committee on Social and Moral Welfare:]

It is constantly flung at us when we condemn the Nazi persecution of non-Aryans that we are ourselves guilty of racial prejudice and injustice in many forms in our own land. This is a time of supreme opportunity to rid ourselves of this menace to all things fine in our religion and in our national life. The Christian citizen will therefore combat with all earnestness and power racial prejudice against Negroes, anti-Semitism, and unsympathetic treatment of the Japanese in internment areas. In the South we need to face this duty especially with reference to our Negro population. God hath made of one blood all nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth. In America where so many different races and nationals have sought a home, we will use every opportunity for manifesting toward them a Christian spirit and seeking for them fair treatment and fine opportunities of life and development.

1949, pp. 177-192. [A paper on "States' Rights and Human Rights" was received and commended to the churches for consideration and study. It is one of the clearest and forceful statements on race appearing in our Church. Its final paragraph reads:

"A church that tries to be neutral by keeping silent, or a church that resorts to compromise to save itself, will to that extent forfeit its redemptive power and influence among men. Only a church that heeds the summons of principle above all else, and that dares in deed and spirit to defend the rights of all men without fear or favor, will gain the abiding respect of the world and the full blessing of God."]

1950, pp. 32, 70. That overture with reference to the question of racial segregation in the sessions of the General Assembly and summer conferences and gatherings of our young people, be answered in the negative, and that the General Assembly make no rule regarding segregation for itself or its agencies, and that each presbytery and synod make its own policies for its bodies, conferences and camps.

1953, p. 91. 1. That the Church practice no discrimination in ministering to the needs of people, even as the love of God in Christ embraces all people alike.

2. That churches observe Race Relations Sunday in the way calculated to be most helpful in promoting racial good-will and understanding.

3. That in these days of changing attitudes and re-interpretation of the principles of democracy, ministers and laymen alike be alert to exhibit the Christian graces of humility, brotherly kindness, compassion, and patience toward all races of mankind.

1954, pp. 54, 187, ff. [Report on "The Church and Segregation" adopted with the following recommendations:]

1. That the General Assembly affirm that enforced segregation of the races is discrimination which is out of harmony with Christian theology and ethics and that the Church, in its relationship to cultural patterns, should lead rather than follow.

2. That the General Assembly, therefore, submit this report for careful study throughout the Church, and that it especially urge:

(1) That the trustees of institutions of higher education belonging to the General Assembly adopt a policy of opening the doors of these institutions to all races.

(2) That the synods consider earnestly the adoption of a similar recommendation to trustees of institutions under their control.

(3) That the governing bodies of the various conferences held throughout the Church consider the adoption of a similar policy.

(4) That the sessions of local churches admit persons to membership and fellowship in the local church on the Scriptural basis of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ without reference to race.

(5) That in this time of crisis and concern, we commend to all individuals in our communion and especially to all leaders of our churches the earnest cultivation and practice of the Christian graces of forbearance, patience, humility and persistent good will.

1954, pp. 54, 194 ff. [A report titled "A Statement to Southern Christians" was received and the following recommendation adopted:]

Having in mind the recent decision by the Supreme Court of the United States concerning segregation, the Assembly commends the principle of the decision and urges all members of our churches to consider thoughtfully and prayerfully the complete solution of the problem involved. It also urges all our people to lend their assistance to those charged with the duty of implementing the decision, and to remember that appeals to racial prejudice will not help but hinder the accomplishment of this aim.

1955, pp. 36, 79. That overture 44, relative to publishing articles regarding the abolition of segregation, be answered in the negative; and that the Assembly, in answering this and all other overtures concerning segregation and the work of the Council on Christian Relations, assure our brethren sending the overtures as follows:

1. That we are not unmindful of the tensions caused by the actions of the 1954 Assembly concerning the above subjects.

2. That we believe it to be highly desirable and necessary that the Assembly have a Council on Christian Relations studying great social and moral questions in the light of the Word of God, and reporting to the Assembly the results of its study.

3. That our brethren in those parts of the Church where the problems growing out of the deliverances of the 1954 Assembly are most acute will have the love and patience and prayers of all of us, as they in sincerity work toward the goal which the Assembly must ever hold before its people—the mind of Christ in every sphere of life.

1955, p. 77. That, in these days of transition in racial and cultural patterns, churches and individual church members be urged to lead in demonstrating the Christian graces of compassion, courage, forbearance and understanding.

1958, pp. 37, 89. Overture 47, 48, and 49 all request from the General Assembly guidance for pastors and sessions faced with a decision on the use of church property and facilities for the establishment of schools, public or private, supported wholly or in part by state or community funds, for the purpose of evading the decision of the Supreme Court that segregation in the public schools on the basis of race is unconstitutional.

These overtures deal in various ways with questions which involve basic principles of Presbyterian belief and polity.

Our Church has traditionally recognized the separation of Church and State, and the responsibility of the Session to determine the use of the property and facilities of the local church.

Chapter XIII, paragraph 60, of the *Book of Church Order*, affirms the original jurisdiction of the Session over a single church, but also sets forth clearly that the lower courts are subject to the review and control of the higher courts, in regular gradation, and that the Session is not a separate and independent tribunal.

Furthermore, the Confession of Faith, Chapter XXII, "On Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience," paragraph 4, page 121-122.

Therefore, the committee recommends that the General Assembly answer in the negative Overture 47, asking whether or not it is proper for member churches of the

Presbyterian Church in the United States to permit the use of their buildings and facilities for schools designed to circumvent the Supreme Court ruling through the maintenance of segregation on the basis of race. In this negative answer, the meaning is that "it is not proper."

The committee further recommends the General Assembly answer in the *affirmative*, Overture 48 asking for the recording of opposition to the use of any facilities, owned by a church of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, for the establishment of schools, public or private, supported as a whole or in part, by state or community funds for the purpose of evading the decrees of the Courts of the United States.

The committee recommends that the General Assembly answer in the *negative* Overture, 49 asking if it is in accord with the policies and position of our Church to allow the use of church buildings and facilities . . . to circumvent the decision of the Supreme Court.

1958, pp. 88, 226. All laymen and ministers who have taken a stand based upon obedience to law, respect for human dignity, and freedom to enjoy the blessings of a free nation are to be commended and assured of the gratitude and prayers of the General Assembly.

As the Christian people of the South face those problems of race which now present us with an unparalleled obligation and opportunity, the General Assembly proposes for careful consideration the following principles which in its judgment should guide them:

1. All people have been created in the image of God and are to be treated as such. Therefore, we should confront problems of race against the background of a world perspective.

2. Though differing in outward appearance men are essentially one; they have fundamentally the same needs, aspirations, hopes and fears.

3. It is God's will that the law of Christ, i.e., love or good will, be operative in all human relationships.

4. To do unto others as we would have them do unto us, we must seek sympathetically and imaginatively to understand their point of view, their needs, aspirations and fears; this is a rule for individuals, groups and nations.

5. The Christian conscience cannot rest content with any legal or compulsive arrangement that brands any people as inferior; which denies them the full right of citizenship on the ground of race, color or social status; or which prevents them from developing to the fullest possible extent the potentialities with which they, as individuals, have been endowed by the Creator.

6. The recent decision of the Supreme Court regarding segregation in the Public Schools must be recognized as the law of the land, and obeyed as such until and unless it is changed by legal and constitutional methods.

7. The public school system must be preserved and strengthened. To withhold the benefits of a public school education from any child; to prevent any community by punitive means from carrying out its educational responsibility is an unwise and dangerous expedient.

8. Freedom of speech must be preserved at all costs, without the danger of economic or political reprisal for those who express opinions contrary to our own.

9. Violence, and furious or unrestrained language which may incite thereto, must be avoided; all organizations, hooded or otherwise, which seek to take the law into their own hand, and all movements which would prevent citizens from resorting to law in their own defense must be opposed.

10. The right to vote must be made secure for citizens without restrictions based on race or color, without preventive strategems which make a mockery of democratic processes.

11. Communication between responsible leaders of the two races in the South must be developed, strengthened and maintained. It is essential that individual church members seek to be led by the Spirit of Christ in their daily contacts with those of other races, and so preserve the fellowship of believers in Him as Lord and Savior.

12. To the Christian people of the South there is now given an opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Gospel in solving a difficult problem in human relations whose far-reaching effects are incalculable. God grant that we may not fail our nation or our Lord in this period of crisis.

1960, pp. 26, 75. That overture 7 concerning a reminder to the Board of Trustees of Presbyterian institutions concerning the 1954 General Assembly action regarding desegregation in admission policy, be answered in the affirmative for the following reasons:

(1) That the 1954 General Assembly reached this decision after the deliberation in its effort to fulfill its role to seek the mind of Christ on this difficult issue;

(2) That many Synods and institutions have not acted on this matter or have taken contrary actions;

(3) That our mission work in Africa and elsewhere is seriously handicapped by our inability to educate potential native leaders in Presbyterian, U.S., colleges whereas scholarships are provided for them behind the Iron Curtain without racial discrimination; and

(4) That the current situation imperatively calls for a strong and urgent reaffirmation of the 1954 Assembly stand.

1963, pp. 81, 154. [A paper titled "The Relationship Between the Races in the Area Served by the Presbyterian Church, U. S." was adopted and the following recommendations approved:]

1. That this General Assembly reaffirm the position of previous Assemblies that "enforced segregation of the races is discrimination which is out of harmony with Christian theology and ethics, and that the church in its relationship to cultural patterns should lead and not follow." The attention of the General Assembly is called to the Biblical and theological basis for this position as outlined on pp. 187-198 of the 1954 Minutes of the General Assembly, and this statement is commended to local churches for their prayerful study.
2. That the General Assembly commend every Presbyterian institution, whether church, college, children's home, home for the aged, conference center, Board or agency of the church which has abolished racial barriers; and that it again urge that a non-discriminatory policy be adopted by all other such institutions and be made known to the public.
3. That Presbyterian churchmen, Negro and white, in their local communities seek to establish a realistic communication between the two racial groups, to reestablish a relationship of mutual trust and affection, and together prepare to prevent such episodes as have shamed our region, not waiting for equality and justice to be accomplished by force or the passions of people to be goaded to violence; and that Negro and white churchmen assume proportionate responsibility for racial evils in society and for the solution of such problems which we face together in these rapidly changing times.
4. That Presbyterian churchmen in local communities, while recognizing the right of citizens to criticize their leaders, protest in their own way defamatory statements and vindictive acts against those public officials whose decisions and actions are for the purpose of upholding the law and keeping the peace.
5. That both the clergy and the laity be reminded that this report is not mandatory but pastoral and prophetic in character; it should be studied in local churches and its subject matter should be discussed freely, vigorously, and affectionately; thereby opening minds to the promptings of God's Spirit, who is able to unite in Christ people of every temperament and every persuasion.

1964, pp. 39, 65. Concerning Overture 27, requesting the creation of an Emergency Committee on Religion and Race, the Committee recommends that the overture be answered by the following action so necessary in this time of national and world emergency: To instruct its Board of Christian Education to increase the activities of the Division of Christian Action and of its Council to do the following: (a) To provide information and counsel to ministers and congregations on how we can effectively contribute to the elimination of segregation and racial discrimination in our beloved Church and country; (b) To mobilize the resources of our Church to secure the cooperation of our seminaries and to use our established committees to give more practical assistance to our ministers who are in distress because of their faithful witness against racial injustice in the Church and society.

1964, pp. 47, 67. The following resolution was **not** adopted.

RESOLUTION—WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States has in many instances in years past declared itself strongly in word and speech on the side of racial justice and freedom, but

WHEREAS, because as a Church we must share the guilt and failures of our region of the United States where state and local laws and traditions have been often unjust and discriminatory, and where the effectiveness of our Christian witness inside and outside the bounds of our denomination has been impaired, and

WHEREAS, by tradition and theological position we are an ecumenical church seeking always to strengthen our unity and mission in Jesus Christ with other denominations in this nation and throughout the world, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the 104th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States express its affirmative response to the call of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of the Churches of Christ to participate in the National Interreligious Convocation on Civil Rights, a Protestant witness in the struggle for freedom and justice for all Americans, beginning in Washington, D. C. on April 28, 1964, and instruct the Moderator to name a representative from this body to represent the Presbyterian Church U.S. in the initial worship services as a sign of our Christian solidarity in the current struggle for racial justice and freedom, and as token that we shall show forth love not only in word or speech but in deed and in truth.

1964, pp. 28, 81, 153. That Overture 15, regarding the danger involved in demonstrations and the importance of employing only legal means to seek the change of laws and customs, be answered by reference to the Pastoral Letter which this General Assembly has addressed to the local Sessions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.

1964, pp. 67, 153. [Pastoral Letter on Race.]

1965, pp. 84, 158. [Paper adopted on "The Civil Rights Movement in the Light of Christian Teaching."]

13. Roman Catholicism.

[See also above item 6, Freedom.]

1912, pp. 70-i, 125. The report of the Ad-Interim Committee on Romanism was taken from the docket.

The following resolution touching the report was adopted:

Resolved, 1. That this Assembly, recognizing the ability and painstaking diligence with which the *Ad-Interim* Committee on Romanism, a Menace to Liberty, has discharged its duty, hereby tenders sincere thanks to the Committee.

2. That the Assembly instruct the Executive Committee of Publication to publish the first two divisions of the *Ad-Interim* Committee's report in pamphlet form for the information of our people. (Minutes, p. 125ff.)

3. That in meeting the menace of Romanism, this Assembly would recommend no other means than the dissemination of knowledge and the faithful, earnest preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

[Ed. note: The full report (p. 125ff) is the most complete consideration of Romanism made by a General Assembly.]

1914, p. 25. Overture asking the Assembly to readopt portions of its action on Romanism in 1912 and to arrange for a wider distribution of this report.

Answer: The Assembly approves, reaffirming the action on this question of the 1912 Assembly and instructing the Publication Committee to print and send a copy of the report of the Ad-Interim Committee to that Assembly to all the ministers, elders and deacons of our Church.

The Assembly declines to approve that part of the Overture which contemplates an Inter-Church Bureau of Information on this subject.

[See also this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XXX, 6.]

1945, p. 71. That in view of the world situation and of the political activities of the Roman Catholic Church which does not believe in religious liberty in our sense of the word, it is the sense of this Assembly that the Protestant denominations should work in the closest possible co-operation with each other.

1945, p. 71. We recommend the adoption of the following resolution which was referred to this Committee: "Mindful of our cherished heritage of the separation of Church and State, and believing that the practice of maintaining an unofficial, or official, ambassador at the Roman Catholic Vatican is out of accord with the ideals and principles of the American people, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States respectfully requests the President of the United States to withdraw the personal representative of the late President at the Vatican."

1946, pp. 27, 82. Overture 4: "In view of the principle of separation of church and state, we overture the General Assembly to petition the President of the United States to discontinue his personal representative at the Vatican." We recommend:

1. The Assembly answer the overture in the affirmative.
2. That the following message be sent to the President of the United States:

While we are fully aware of the spiritual function of the Church, and disclaim all jurisdiction in political and civil affairs, we deem it our duty as Christian citizens to exercise the right of humble petition for the discontinuance, at the earliest practicable date, of the policy of the President to have a personal representative at the Vatican. This policy violates the Nation's traditional and oft-pronounced determination to preserve as sacred the principle of separation of church and state; and it both saddens and dishonors the branches of Christianity representing a large majority of the nation's citizenship who, over their history, have held and expressed clear and strong convictions in support of that principle.

3. The Assembly appoint Rev. John A. MacLean, Richmond, Va., principal, and Rev. A. L. Currie, alternate, to be its representative in a group from the membership churches within the Federal Council and other evangelical bodies now arranging to call in person upon President Truman on June 5, at 11 o'clock a.m. at the White House, Washington, D. C.

1946, pp. 80, 165. Pastoral Letter: Increasingly evident is the unwisdom of the marriage between Presbyterians and Roman Catholics.

While the Roman Catholic laity accept Presbyterians as fellow Christians, their priests do not recognize our ministry as valid or our Communion as a part of the Church of Christ. This creates a deep and wide gulf which at once appears in the marriage rite itself.

If a priest of the Roman Catholic Church performs the ceremony, the Presbyterian party to the marriage is required to promise to do nothing to change the faith of the Roman Catholic party; altho the Roman Catholic is expected by his Church to win the Presbyterian. Also the Presbyterian is required to sign away the unborn children to an ecclesiastical organization that will forever forbid them to worship with their parent in the Presbyterian Church.

We call upon our members to stand uncompromisingly in this matter, to resist resolutely this unfair demand and refuse to make such a promise, especially in an hour when they are not truly free but are under the emotional compulsion of romantic love. Having acted under that compulsion the non-Catholic henceforth lives under a promise which a conscientious Christian will find it increasingly difficult to observe without mental and spiritual strain, threatening the peace and stability of the home.

If, on the other hand, a Presbyterian minister officiates at the marriage, the Roman Catholic party is denied the Communion of his Church and is considered by that Church to be living in sin.

Priding herself upon the rigid enforcement of her law the Roman Catholic Church is relentless in this matter, with the result that there has been, and is, suffering and tragedy in many homes throughout our land.

In view of these facts, the General Assembly counsels Presbyterians to refrain from marriage with Roman Catholics as long as the demands and rulings of that Church remain unchanged. This counsel is not given in a spirit of retaliation, even though we believe the demands and rulings mentioned to be harsh and unfair. We do not advance the cause of Christ by returning evil for evil. Positive and constructive action is demanded of us for the spiritual welfare of our people. The Roman Catholic attitude with reference to mixed marriages makes it impossible for a wholesome family religious life to exist and continually requires the Protestant to surrender or compromise his personal convictions. What is even more serious, it involves the signing away of the spiritual birthright of unborn children by denying them the possibility of any religious training in the home other than that prescribed by the Roman Catholic Church. It is far better that the parties concerned should not marry than that these tragic results should follow.

1947, p. 89. The report of Rev. John A. MacLean to our Stated Clerk, dated June 12, 1946, was received, to the effect that he had carried out the 1946 General Assembly's request to be our representative on a committee representing American Protestant Churches to protest to President Truman against maintaining an ambassador to the Vatican. Dr. MacLean stated that this was done on June 5, 1946, and that the following statement of the committee after the visit was to the effect:

"We were given assurance that the appointment of Mr. Taylor was a temporary expedient to give the President the fullest opportunity to make his contribution to the peace. We were assured that Mr. Taylor's service as ambassador to the Pope might terminate at an early date, but would certainly terminate with the signing of the peace treaties."

We recommend that the Moderator write President Truman calling his attention to the above statement and expressing the earnest hope that now that the treaty with Italy has been signed the termination of this official relationship between our country and the Vatican might soon be brought to an end.

1948, p. 88. 1. That the statement of the Permanent Committee on Christian Relations concerning "the evangelical position in its antithesis to Roman Catholicism," which was prepared on the instructions of the 1947 Assembly, be approved; and that the Assembly be requested through the Permanent Committee on Christian Relations, to make this report available in an inexpensive form for distribution through the churches; and that a short bibliography be appended to this pamphlet, giving the

names of pamphlets, and books, emphasizing in a way that would appeal especially to young people our positive Protestant beliefs. (See Appendix, pp. 151-164.)

1950, pp. 23, 48. Overture concerning our government's sending a representative to the Vatican, be answered in the affirmative. We recommend that the Moderator appoint an official representative respectfully to request the President of the United States not to reappoint a representative to the Vatican.

1952, pp. 35, 68. That overtures relative to the appointment of a representative by the President of the United States to a church body be answered in the affirmative, and that we strongly protest to the President and to the Senators of states in which our General Assembly is constituted, against any effort to have an Ambassador, official or unofficial from our government, to the head of any particular church.

1959, pp. 39, 86. That overture 35 having to do with the position of our Church relative to certain principles and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, be answered:

FIRST, by the reaffirmation of the General Assembly of its historic position on the separation of Church and State, and by calling attention to the action of the General Assembly of 1948 in adopting the report of its Committee on Christian Relations, wherein these principles of separation are defined, and by noting that copies of the 1948 statement are available from the Board of Christian Education; and SECOND, by requesting the Board of Christian Education to reprint and mail to all ministers of the Church the Pastoral Letter on Marriage between Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, which letter was approved by the General Assembly of 1946.

14. Sex, Marriage, Family.

[Chronologically arranged. Includes items such as juvenile delinquency, pornography, etc.]

1937, pp. 37, 110. Report of Permanent Committee on Moral and Social Welfare received as information and its recommendations adopted.

We recommend:

1. That parents and teachers endeavor earnestly to know what kind of literature is going into the hands of the boys and girls committed to their care, and that they do all in their power to encourage the taste for constructive rather than destructive reading.

2. That, where obscene literature is being sold in violation of the law, Christian citizens demand the enforcement of the law and, where necessary, the passage of protective measures against the sale of such literature.

1937, pp. 37, 112. Report of Permanent Committee on Moral and Social Welfare received as information and its recommendations adopted.

We recommend that our ministers, laymen and women:

1. Co-operate with national, State and local agencies in the promotion of social hygiene activities.

2. Aid social workers and authorities in the prevention of prostitution and sex delinquency.

3. Aid educators and parents in providing sound sex instruction and preparation of youth for successful family life.

1937, pp. 37, 102. Report of Permanent Committee on Moral and Social Welfare received as information and its recommendations adopted.

We recommend that pastors and all teachers in the Church instruct our youth and our young married people in the teachings of Scripture and the laws of life that should find their practical expression in the marriage relationship and in the home.

1943, pp. 75, 144. The increase of marriages in wartime brings with it the danger of increase in our rate of divorce—a rate which is already a national disgrace. It is our high duty to emphasize the sanctity of marriage and the home, to see that proper instruction in these vital things is given to our children and to do everything we can to protect and stabilize home and family life.

1943, pp. 75, 144. One of the evils which is greatly increased by war conditions is sexual immorality. The Christian citizen will commend and assist the efforts which are being made all over the nation to stamp out venereal disease. At the same time he knows that these efforts are and always will be inadequate unless there is also unremitting instruction given our people, both young and old, on the Christian duty of morality and the sinful consequence of breaking the Seventh Commandment. In no other sin is it quite so easy to trace the punishment of God unto the third and fourth generation as in this sin of sexual immorality.

1955, p. 78. That the General Assembly, aware of the serious problem of juvenile delinquency in many parts of the nation, and recognizing the inescapable bearing of adult delinquency upon this problem, call upon the churches to study the causes of delinquency in their communities and to develop and promote activities which will minister to the physical, moral and spiritual needs of people.

1956, p. 75. That the General Assembly go on record as deeply deploring . . . the publishing and distribution of horror-sex-crime stories in any format. That church members be urged to use their influence in the local community to arouse sentiment against such publications, both through group and individual channels, and to protest to the agencies which promote such practices.

1956, pp. 75, 171 ff. That the report of the Council on Christian Relations to the General Assembly, entitled "The Church's Relationship to Community Delinquency Problems," be adopted and commended for study and for wide distribution among the churches.

1961, p. 69. [Resolution adopted:] That we commend the Television and Movie Industry for the many very fine programs and films which have been produced and encourage these industries to continue to produce good family type programs and films. Deply concerned with the frequently immoral and immodest themes depicted on the motion picture and TV screens of this land, and equally concerned with the manner of presentation of such themes—now therefore the one-hundred-first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States hereby registers its disapproval of the production and the release of immoral and salacious motion pictures and other such material prepared for public entertainment.

1962, pp. 85, 108. [A paper on "Marriage and Family Relations" stated a "Christian View of Sex," and spoke to problems with pornographic literature, preparation for marriage, and sterilization.]

We attempt to state the Christian view of sex knowing that it is neither final nor complete, but believing that what is written here is true.

1. The Church believes sex to be good, not evil; sacred, not secular; spiritual as well as physical, and given by a gracious and loving God to men and women for the welfare and happiness of the individual as well as for mankind as a whole. It was because God saw that "it was not good for man to be alone," that He made "a helper fit for him." (Genesis 2:18) In the divine plan men and women were made to complement each other. In speaking of the permanence of Christian marriage, Jesus declares that "a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one." (Matthew

19:5) Through the joy of this oneness in the family God has granted them the privilege of cooperating with Him in the creation of new lives.

2. Because of God's creative act sex is good in and of itself. All that God has created is good. Obviously, sex can be twisted, perverted, and misused, but it is God's intention that it should be used for the highest purposes. Like a river without banks, the wrong expression of this natural desire can get out of bounds, creating a swamp which becomes a breeding place for disease and misery. Kept within the confining banks of God's laws and love, it can be a mighty force for man's individual happiness as well as for the well-being of society, and the strengthening of family ties.

3. Sex is a natural desire and there is a bodily element in it, but Christianity declares that man's body is sacred. Ours is an embodied religion. Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, "became flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:14) The Christian is a person who has presented his body to God, and as Paul writes: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!" (I Corinthians 6:15) Through Christ's act of redemption, the Christian has been bought with a price. Furthermore, "your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit." (I Corinthians 6:19) "So glorify God in your body." (I Corinthians 6:20)

4. Sex is physical, but it is much more. It is an expression of the whole man, or the whole woman. Human beings cannot divide and subdivide their basic nature, thinking that what they do with one part of themselves has no bearing on the rest of their persons. There is a wholeness about man. Christianity claims that when man expresses himself in the intimacies of sex, he is giving expression to himself as a whole.

5. In Christian marriage sex is for the production of new life and we cannot overemphasize the wonder of this, but the relationship is more than this. It is for the mutual expression of affection and of joy between two people who love Christ more than each other, and so are enabled to love each other more. Christ is the key to marital happiness. Tensions between husbands and wives are translated by His grace into a love that is warm and tender.

6. The Christian view of sex has meaning also for those not married. Sex is a mighty power in life but it is a force that can be directed into constructive channels. Jesus Christ helps a person to sublimate and control this force, and to use it for His glory.

7. Christians believe that the moral law is eternal, not temporary. The Church's interpretation of the moral law may change from age to age, but the law itself never changes. It is from everlasting to everlasting. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" is as applicable today as it was when Moses first descended Mount Sinai with the Law. This moral law was not given in order to enslave man but to release him. We believe God's intention is that the moral law shall so guard man's expression of his natural desires and hungers that he may become a stronger, better, happier person.

8. Christians do not believe that premarital relations are a good preparation for marriage. The Church contends that such indulgence is morally, spiritually, and psychological bad preparation for marriage. Such actions leave two people who should love each other deply, with a feeling of loathing and with a sense that this relationship has been cheapened and degraded.

The conclusion of the whole matter is this: We believe that sincere Christians holding this high view of sex will find in this intimate relation of marriage deep satisfaction, rich joy, and growth of their love in understanding, unselfishness, strength, and peace. This view can make for happy, well-adjusted people, and a strong nation.

1963, pp. 23, 81. We recommend that the General Assembly join in the concern expressed by the following communication from Asheville Presbytery on pornographic literature, and call attention to the statement on this subject in last year's Report of the Permanent Committee on Christian Relations as recorded in the 1962 Minutes of the General Assembly, pp. 110-112.

"THE PRESBYTERY OF ASHEVILLE, of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, representing Presbyterian churches throughout the area of Western North Carolina, hereby records its great concern over the mounting evidence of moral decadence in our nation's life reflected in the flood of salacious and pornographic material to which both young people and adults are being subjected.

Most especially do we deplore the continued use of the United States mails for the dissemination of salacious and pornographic literature, despite action taken by postal authorities seeking to curb such use.

From earliest times the decadence of civilizations has been paced by an excessive preoccupation with sex and pornography. We believe that human nature is always tempted to immorality and that mankind, left to its own devices, will always turn to evil. There will always be a ready market for salacious material, wherever or however available. The public appetite should not be allowed to become the measurement of public morals. Unless informed and controlled by an enlightened public conscience, the standards of public decency and morality invariable will be lowered by the demands of immoral and depraved human appetites and the equally immoral and depraved business practices of those willing to satisfy those demands for a price.

We urge legislative and law enforcement agencies everywhere to attack this problem wherever it appears as the social evil it is, if necessary enacting legislation to curb the further production and dissemination of pornographic material, especially among young people."

1964, pp. 47, 67. Resolution adopted, as follows: WHEREAS, in many communities throughout all parts of the United States, various ethnic and religious groups and associations are seeking to bring about changes in community appreciation of rights, responsibilities and customs.

AND WHEREAS, in the course of such activities, children in wholesale numbers are being withdrawn either permanently or temporarily from school and are thereby deprived of an opportunity to obtain that education so necessary and essential for development into satisfactory adulthood.

AND WHEREAS, irresponsible adults, regardless of race, creed or station in life, have used and encouraged the use of children in riotous and other unlawful activities, thus endangering their normal development and respect for constituted authority, and often risked their physical and moral safety.

AND WHEREAS, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, dedicated to the proper development of children and the preservation of their present and future safety and happiness, should not tolerate any condition or conditions that threaten to destroy the children of our nation.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Presbyterian Church in the United States in its 104th General Assembly meeting in Montreat, North Carolina, in this most important year of 1964, does hereby deplore the defiance of court orders and the unlawful manipulation and use of children of juvenile age by adults in the advancement of local or national programs regardless of the nature or purpose of such programs.

15. Church and State.

[Including such matters as Bible, prayer, and religious education in public schools.]

[Ed. note: Material on various particular subjects is here arranged chronologically. See also above item 13, Roman Catholicism.

For basic position of our Church see especially this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XXXIII, 4—"The Non-Secular Character of the Church."]

1904, p. 38. The people of our Church are hereby counseled and exhorted to be diligent in their duties as citizens, in guarding the purity, and elevating the character of the public schools of the country, maintained by the State. The Christian citizens of a country owe it to themselves, their children, the State and their Lord, to be faithful in protecting public schools from the evils of influences unfriendly to Christianity, in the studies, the teachers, or the directors of the public schools in which the large majority of the children of the land are taught.

The Assembly gratefully recognizes the fact that public education, maintained by the State, in our borders—both higher and secondary—is, in general, friendly to religious faith and life, in the personnel of the instructors and directors, and in the matter of instruction. Let our people, as citizens, see to it that Christian influences in all State schools are constantly maintained in purity and power.

1904, pp. 40, 94. [Ed. note: The following resolutions of the Alliance of Reformed Churches (Western Section) were "recommended" by the standing committee. The committee report was adopted, but the word "adopt" was not used with reference to the resolutions.]

"(a) We recommend that this Assembly express its sincere gratification that so much stress is laid upon sound moral training by our school system, and that Bible is so largely read in the public schools of this country; and it also expresses the earnest hope that this desirable condition may continue through all the days to come.

(b) We recommend that this Assembly expresses its regret that confusion should have been introduced into the practice regarding the use of the Bible in our public schools by reason of the inconsistent decisions by the courts and the varying interpretations given by school authorities in different places of practically the same constitutional and statutory provisions, and that the Church advises its officers and people that they should seek to exert a prudent Christian influence upon public sentiment in their respective localities upon this subject.

(c) We recommend that this Church declares that moral instruction and ethical training are necessary for good citizenship, and should have a place in our public school system, and that this is possible without inculcating any denominational tenets; and, further, that the Bible is the very best instrument to impart this moral instruction and training in connection with our public schools."

1915, p. 36. [Similar action.]

1926, p. 49. Overture that the Assembly request the presbyteries to urge every one of its ministers laboring in a country or Home Mission Field to visit regularly the public schools, to seek the friendship of pupils and teachers and, whenever possible, to give instruction in the Bible; answered in the affirmative.

1935, p. 42. Resolution: ". . . This General Assembly urges . . . bringing to the attention of our ministers and church membership, plans for securing religious training of the unreached children of our Southland by means of elective Bible courses in the Public school, Weekday Religious Education, Daily Vacation Bible Schools, Extension Sunday schools and any other suitable means."

1943, p. 88. That the Assembly urge the local units of the women of the Church to lend every encouragement to the teaching of Bible in the Public schools.

1943, pp. 28, 51. In regard to the Navy V-12 Program, the Assembly would express approval of its provisions regarding the training of ministerial candidates for the duration of the present emergency. The Assembly would reaffirm the conviction of our Church that the training of the ministry must always be carried on by the Church itself; it believes that nothing in the V-12 Program as now set up conflicts with that principle.

[Ed. note: This V-12 Program was the Navy's provision for a future supply of chaplains which permitted participants to complete academic studies before going to active service with the Navy.]

pp. 38, 129. Report of Ad Interim Committee on Classification of Pre-Theological Candidates in Selective Service System.

At the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, held in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1942, in response to Overture No. 50 from Asheville Presbytery, the following action was taken:

"We endorse the recent action of the American Association of College and University Presidents wherein they request the authorities to issue a decree giving to candidates for the ministry in college the same status as pre-dental and pre-medical students, which seems to be just and fair, and appoint a committee consisting of the Moderator, Dr. Lacy, Dr. Richards and Dr. Cunningham, to confer with General Hershey, in reference to a standard practice for all Draft Boards."

After the adjournment of the Assembly, the Moderator communicated with National Headquarters of the Selective Service System in Washington, D. C., and, thereafter, General Lewis B. Hershey, Director, issued Occupational Bulletin No. 11, which is hereto attached as part of this report.

This Bulletin puts into effect the desire expressed by the General Assembly, and your Committee deems it unnecessary to have any conference with General Hershey.

1945, pp. 28, 54. Overture 5 requesting the General Assembly to protest to the national government against its violation of the principle of the separation of church and state in restricting travel to church meetings.

We recommend the following answer: The General Assembly does not regard restrictions on travel in a national emergency as a violation of the principle of separation of church and state. The Assembly deplores the glaring inconsistencies on the part of governmental agencies in permitting sporting events and recreational camps while forbidding church gatherings in which study is a prominent feature.

1945, pp. 36, 87. It has come to the attention of the Presbytery of Atlanta that there are pending before the Congress of the United States bills calling for the appropriation of Federal funds to the support of education in the various States of the Union and that certain of these bills, Senate Bill 717 for illustration, provide that public funds be appropriated to "non-public" schools. It has also come to the attention of the Presbytery that certain bills pending before Congress to provide lunches for public school children also include appropriations to be made to private schools. In one bill at least the term "parochial schools" is used.

The Presbytery of Atlanta, therefore, respectfully overtures the General Assembly to take the following action:

First: To restate its historic position on the separation of Church and State.

Second: To call upon its ministers to inform the members of their churches of Biblical and historical reasons for our doctrine of the separation of Church and State.

Third: To call upon the ministers and members throughout the church to use their rights as citizens to petition through letter or telegram the members of Congress and especially the members of the Committees on education of both houses of Congress

expressing their opposition to the use of public tax money to support in any way the work of private or sectarian schools and their attitude toward particular bills of this nature that may be presented from time to time.

Fourth: That the General Assembly state definitely its position on the use of public funds for the support of private or sectarian educational institutions and that this statement be sent to the Senate Committee on Education and Labor and to the Senators representing the sixteen southern states.

Fifth: To communicate with the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of Churches in order that other Protestant Churches may join us in this matter.

. . . Answered in the affirmative; and that the Moderator and Stated Clerk be authorized to carry out its recommendations.

1945, p. 69. That the Assembly recommends to our ministers and ruling elders and members that they do all they can to bring the Bible back into our public schools, for reading, in worship, and for the teaching of the basic truths of the Christian faith. The fearful increase of crime among our young people makes such teaching of vital importance. This teaching can and should be provided absolutely without sectarian bias, and need not in any way contravene our established views touching the relation of Church and State.

1945, p. 72. Whereas the Honorable Harry S. Truman, in his first public address to the American people as President, prayed the prayer of Solomon: "Give thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people";

And *whereas* the Scripture records that this speech pleased God when uttered by Solomon, and it is the belief of this Assembly that democracy can be true and enduring only when its civil authorities seek and do the will of God, and our President has given signal recognition to this fundamental principle in beginning his administration;

Be it therefore resolved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States that we give hearty thanks for this spirit of our President and record our commendation of it, and that we enjoin upon our people their continual joining with him in this prayer that his administration in the difficult problems ahead may be led of God and may be His will.

1952, pp. 42, 56. That the resolution referred to this committee by the Assembly, requesting that the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. petition the Congress of the United States to so amend the Federal Law on Social Security as to include ordained ministers of the Gospel on a voluntary basis, be answered in the negative.

1947, pp. 37, 81. Presbytery overtured the General Assembly (overture 44) that it instruct the Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication to put on a vigorous Assembly-wide campaign to make our people aware of and concerned about the great need for thorough and sacrificial training in our Sunday Schools, because of the increasing secularism of our public school system and the increasing government support of the parochial school systems. Your standing committee answers the overture as follows: In view of the fact that the present program of the Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication and the Sunday School enlargement campaign are working towards this end, we recommend that the overture be affirmed.

1947, pp. 39, 101. That overtures 56, 57, 58, 60 and 63 protesting the appropriation of public funds for the use of parochial schools be answered in the affirmative.

That overtures 61, 62, and 94, requesting a statement protesting the ruling of the Supreme Court of the United States concerning the New Jersey Case of the use of tax funds to transport pupils to a parochial school, be answered in the negative. Attention

is directed to the preceding recommendation and to the section of the report of the Permanent Committee on this subject which states the historic position of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Yet, while protests and petitions may always be lodged with the legislative and executive branches of government, it is improper to address them to the judiciary of a state or nation.

That overture 59 be answered in the affirmative, and that the section of the Committee's report under "Federal Funds for Parochial Schools" and the accompanying recommendation be printed for wide distribution through the Church.

That overture 64 concerning a statement about the evangelical position in its antithesis to Roman Catholicism be referred to the Permanent Committee on Christian Relations and a statement be presented to the next meeting of the Assembly.

That the letter from the National Committee of the League Opposed to Sectarian Appropriations asking the General Assembly to endorse a Proposed Constitutional Amendment to Prohibit Sectarian Appropriations be answered in the negative, because of the unsatisfactory form of the Article of Amendment.

1948, pp. 37, 57. Overture 60 requests the Assembly to study the effect of the recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United States and to suggest other ways in which the church may meet its Religious Educational opportunities and responsibilities. We recommend that it be answered in the affirmative by referring to the Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication, the March 8, 1948, decision of the United States Supreme Court, with all of the implications of this decision; and that the Religious Education Committee be requested to bring a report to the 1949 General Assembly. By way of information it may be added that while some parts of some present programs in certain communities have been declared unconstitutional, other phases have not been so declared and this court action should not lead to any abandonment of programs of week-day Religious Education, unless, after careful consideration of the various alternatives, and at the direction and advice of the proper authorities, such course of action be found necessary.

1949, p. 96. That overture 60 requesting a study of the effect of the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States on Weekday Religious Education in our public schools, which was referred to the Executive Committee of Religious Education for study, be answered by the recommendations growing out of that study, to the effect that our churches be urged:

(1) To continue to collaborate fully with every local movement to secure weekday religious instruction of our children and youth in cooperation with our public schools, provided local school boards do not disapprove.

(2) To take every necessary step to see that the law, as interpreted by the attorneys general of the various states, and the city or county attorneys, is fully complied with.

(3) To seek in every way possible to find some means of continuing the weekday program even where clearance cannot be secured for the use of public school property such as weekday schools, catechetical classes, etc.

(4) And to strengthen every avenue of Christian instruction through the local church, the Sunday School, youth groups, and the Christian home, in order that the Christian nurture of our children may not suffer in the least regardless of what future court decisions may hold for Weekday Religious Education.

(5) We recommend the careful reading of pages 69-72 of the annual report of the Executive Committee of Religious Education, as a fine interpretation of the present legal status of Weekday Religious Education.

1953, p. 91. *Citizenship.*

1. That the General Assembly reaffirm its opposition to the exploitation of racial and religious prejudices for political purposes.

2. That the men and women of the Church be urged to use wisely their right of suffrage and to work for the same privilege for all citizens.

3. That laymen consider seriously the opportunities afforded in political life for the practice of Christian vocation.

Church and State

1. That the General Assembly send greetings to President Eisenhower and assure him of the prayers of the Church for him, his cabinet, and members of the legislative bodies, that they may lead the nation wisely and for the glory of God.

2. That the General Assembly express to President Eisenhower its conviction that the appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican would work against the principle of separation of Church and State; and express the hope that such a practice may not be approved by the new administration.

3. That churches be urged to proceed constructively in promoting weekday religious instruction, in view of the Supreme Court decision that released-time from public schools does not necessarily constitute a violation of the Constitution of the United States.

1960, pp. 73, 76. That the resolution concerning a Roman Catholic candidate for the Presidency of the United States be answered in the negative for the following reasons:

(1) That the General Assembly does not deem it appropriate to its function to endorse or condemn any individual candidate for public office;

(2) That we do not have a clear and consistent statement from the Roman Catholic Church concerning the freedom of individual member's conscience in dealing with matters of public policy; and

(3) That such an expression as the resolution calls for would be misunderstood as religious prejudice or bigotry.

Further, that reaffirming the historic American position with respect to the separation of Church and State, we encourage all Presbyterians to exercise their responsible role as citizens to determine the basic issues in any campaign, recognizing that the candidates personal faith in God, their integrity, and their positions concerning public policy are more important than their denominational or party affiliation.

1962, pp. 32, 86, 115. We recommend that overture 29 asking the General Assembly to inform the United States Senators and Representatives of Congress who represent our area of its opposition to any legislation tending to weaken the independence of the Church from the state, be answered as follows: It is our opinion that this matter has been sufficiently dealt with in the body of the report of the Permanent Committee on Christian Relations, Section III, Federal Aid to Private Schools.

[The key statement of that report (see immediately below) is:] The considerations set forth above are believd to justify opposition to the use of federal funds for the support of private or parochial schools in the firm of grants and/or loans for non-public elementary and secondary schools.

1962, pp. 86, 115. We recommend that the report dealing with Federal Aid to Private Schools be adopted as amended.

Federal Aid to Private Schools

It is the Committee's understanding that, while in the 101st Assembly there was reference in discussion to Church-State relations in general, the specific issue on which the Committee's thought is desired in the present report is that of federal aid to private (denominational and parochial) schools.

Opposition to the use of tax money for the support of private and sectarian schools is not new. Public schools have long existed alongside private schools. Within less than fourteen years after the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth a free public school was established in what is now Boston, and it has continued to exist as the Boston Latin School. In the nineteenth century free public education became general, and from time to time questions have arisen as to whether or not merely these public schools, but also private ones, might properly receive support from public funds. Some early developments in the State of Virginia will illustrate this. When in 1779 Thomas Jefferson introduced in the legislature of that State "A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom," Patrick Henry offered a resolution by which tax money would have been allocated for support of the Christian religion. James Madison, at the request of the religious society of Baptists in Virginia, then presented "A Memorial and Remonstrance on the Religious Rights of Man," the essential point of it being that ". . . the same authority that can force a citizen to contribute . . . for the support of only one establishment, may force him to contribute to any establishment. . . ." Henry's resolution failed of passage, while Jefferson's bill became law.

When, in 1787, the Constitutional Convention met at Philadelphia and the Continental Congress was at the same time in annual session at New York, the matters of separation of church and state and tax support for religion were burning issues. In the Northwest Ordinance, passed in that same year, the Continental Congress emphasized that "schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." The seven original articles of the Constitution of the United States contained no reference to religion, but it was agreed that if the Constitution should be adopted there should be added a Bill of Rights (which was to comprise the first ten Amendments). The First Amendment provides that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . . ."

Many authoritative writers could be adduced in support of the principle of separating church and state. James Madison, for example, in a letter of March 2, 1819, to Robert Walsh, wrote in part:

> It was the universal opinion of the century preceding the last, that civil government could not stand without the prop of a religious establishment, and that the Christian religion itself would perish if not supported by a legal provision for the clergy. The experience of Virginia conspicuously corroborates the disproof of both opinions. The civil Government, though bereft of everything like an associated hierarchy, possesses the requisite stability and performs its functions with complete success; whilst the number, the industry, and the morality of the Priesthood, and the devotion of the people, have manifestly increased by the total separation of the church from the State.[1]

Elihu Root found occasion to express his views when, in 1894, there was an attempt to amend the Constitution of the State of New York so as to permit aid and assistance (in the form of free textbooks and transportation) to private sectarian and parochial schools. Referring to the Pilgrim Fathers and other early settlers who came to America, Mr. Root said:

> . . . there is one thing, and one thing only, which this people, generous, broad-minded and liberal, said, have always said, and say today, that never in this state of ours shall be repeated that union of Church and State, which drove your fathers and mine from their homes in the old world. And that . . . is the principle which we seek to embody in this Constitution of ours by the declaration reported by the Committee on Education. . . . It is not a question of religion, or of creed, or of party; it is a question of declaring and maintaining the great American principle of eternal separation between Church and State.[2]

Writing fifteen years ago, Charles Clayton Morrison indicated four ways in which the church might be related to the state:

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[1] *Letters and Other Writings of James Madison* (New York, 1884), Vol. 3, p. 125.
[2] Elihu Root, *Addresses on Government and Citizenship* (1918), pp. 139, 140.

The church may be *above* the state, or *below* the state, or in *alliance* with the state, or *side by side* with the state in a free society. First, . . . the church may be above the state. This is the Roman Catholic theory. . . . Second, the church may be below the state, subordinate to it, serving the state, conforming its teachings to the ideology of the state and sanctifying the actions and authority of the state. This is totalitarianism. Third, the church may be organically allied with the state, so that the state provides for its support by taxation. This is the theory of the established or state church.

The fourth way in which church and state may be related is the American way. Here church and state exist side by side, but completely separate and independent in a free society. This arrangement is peculiarly congenial to democracy.[3]

Almost from the beginning assaults have been made upon the wall separating Church and State. Some believe that the wall has been pierced in many places. Some of the States of the Union permit the use of free text books by private and parochial schools. The 74th Congressed passed the National School Lunch Act. The 80th Congress appropriated money for the operation and maintenance of school facilities, this legislation being passed when the facilities were overburdened with enrollment that had developed during war conditions. The 85th Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, authorizing loans to college students. This legislation also provided, *inter alia,* for financial aid for instruction (in science, mathematics, and foreign language), fellowships, counseling and testing, language development, and science information service. Congress has also provided for federal funds to be made available for college housing. There are reports of effort to extend the National Defense Education Act through provision of loans that may be used to erect private school buildings for general purposes.

The national judiciary has in a number of cases had occasion to pass upon the constitutionality of legislation in this field. In the case of *Everson v. Board of Education,* Mr. Justice Rutledge, in a dissenting opinion in which three other justices joined, said that, "We have staked the very existence of our country on the faith that complete separation between the state and religion is best for the state and best for religion."[4] The United States Supreme Court has consistently held that government may not finance religious groups. It seems to be agreed that "across-the-board" grants and loans for church schools would be unconstitutional under the First Amendment. Some observers have suggested that constitutional barriers have been evaded by alleging that the loans and grants are not for the schools and colleges themselves but for the individual students, but it is hardly convincing to say that subsidizing the institution is unconstitutional while subsidizing the student is not.

Sputnick prompted the passage of the National Defense Education Act, but if separation is good for the churches and for the country it should not be abandoned under the guise of national defense. Some make the defense that aid for science, mathematics, and foreign languages is different from general aid. It has been well said, however, that it is impossible to aid a part of a system without aiding the whole system.

In the *McCollum* case Mr. Justice Frankfurter wrote a strong concurring opinion in the course of which he quoted a pertinent statement made by President Grant in remarks to the Army of Tennessee, as follows:

> Encourage free schools and resolve that not one dollar appropriated for their support shall be appropriated to the support of any sectarian schools. Resolve

[3] *Separation of Church and State in America* (pamphlet, 1947), p. 3.
[4] 330 U.S. at 59 (1947).

> that neither the State nor the nation, nor both combined, shall support institutions of learning other than those sufficient to afford every child growing up in the land the opportunity of a good common-school education, unmixed with sectarian, pagan, or atheistical dogmas.[5]

The considerations set forth above are believed to justify opposition to the use of federal funds for the support of private or parochial schools in the form of grants and/or loans for non-public elementary and secondary schools.

1963, p. 41. That the following text be approved and that upon its approval it be forwarded to Congressman Wilbur Mills, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives, to Dr. James Hamilton, Associate Director of the National Council of Churches' Washington, D. C., office, and to the church and secular press:

> The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States has noted with gratitude the manifest concern of the Congress of the United States for the welfare of the churches and their schools, orphanages and other such agencies, as evidenced by the action of the Congress in increasing the percentage of income allowable as a deduction in the computation of taxes. The thirty per cent now permitted has been of benefit to the churches and their agencies. The status of contributions as fully deductible is, under our tax structure, vital to the continuance of the service of the churches to the national and world community.
>
> This same concern of the Congress is also seen in the regulations which permit bequests and other capital gifts to be received untaxed. The work of the colleges, homes for the needy and many other charitable agencies of the church would be seriously impaired were this privilege to be denied.
>
> Legislation now proposed threatens the work of the churches in both of these matters.
>
> We believe that whatever restricts the churches in their works of charity and mercy is not in the public interest. We therefore respectfully urge you to give consideration to the welfare of the churches as legislation is framed to the end faith may flourish among us and that men of good will may be permitted the resources with which to undergird all proper charities.

1964, pp. 67, 148, 152. [Paper on "The Lord's Prayer and Bible Reading in Public Schools in the Light of Recent Supreme Court Decisions" approved.]

Conclusion—

1. We hold that the state should not impose religion in any of its expressions upon its citizens. The recent Court decisions, overruling state laws requiring Bible reading and the Lord's Prayer, are therefore in our judgment theologically sound.

2. We hold that religious ceremonies may be held in public schools on a permissive, voluntary, basis without violation of conscience. There is a valid distinction between the State's compelling its constituents together for a religious ceremony and the state's permitting those who have gathered to acknowledge a higher power and to invoke a blessing upon their corporate life in a way generally and prudently agreed upon by them.

1965, pp. 25, 77. That Overture 4 requesting endorsement of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to allow voluntary Bible Reading and Prayer in Public Schools be answered as follows:

> Because it is unwise to give support to a constitutional amendment which has not been written or submitted either to Congress or to the respective state for ap-

[5] 330 U.S. 203, at 218 (1947).

proval; and because the 104th General Assembly affirmed clearly the basic principles of our denomination in this matter, to wit,

"We hold that religious ceremonies may be held in public schools on a permissive, voluntary basis without violation of conscience. There is a valid distinction between the State's compelling its constituents to gather for a religious ceremony and the State's permitting those who have gathered to acknowledge a higher power to make a blessing upon their corporate life in a way generally and prudently agreed upon by them." (Minutes 1964, p. 152.)

1965, pp. 27, 77. That Overture 58 from the Presbytery of St. Louis requesting action "not inconsistent with" resolution to Missouri congressman concerning the election of congressmen in Mississippi be answered in the negative.

16. Worldly Amusements.

16a. Early Deliverances.

1865, p. 361. A paper on the subject of fashionable amusements, containing three inquiries, with their proposed answers:

The inquiries were answered as follows, viz.:

1. Whether every church session has the right to make it a rule that dancing and other amusements are disciplinary.

Answer: No church judicatory has a right to make any new rules of church membership different from those contained in the Constitution; but it is the undoubted right of the church session, and of every other judicatory, to make a deliverance affirming its sense of what is "an offense," in the meaning of the Book of Discipline, Chap. I, Sec. III [pres. § 102-1.]

2. Whether such rule commonly exists in Presbyterian churches.

Answer: Probably none of our judicatories are as faithful as they ought to be; but it is believed that the churches generally do, in some form, discountenance dancing. And the Presbyterian Church, through its supreme judicatory, has repeatedly borne its testimony against dancing and other worldly amusements.

3. Whether such rule is expedient, or what should be the mind of the whole body, and what its action.

Answer: It is the duty of every judicatory to enforce the teachings of our Standards on this and other fashionable amusements, such as theatrical performances, cardplaying, etc. And while the Assembly believes that the "lascivious dancings" declared to be forbidden in the Seventh Commandment by the answer to the 139th question of the Larger Catechism, are not those usual in our best society, yet it is our belief that the tenor of the teachings of the Scriptures, and of our Standards, is in direct opposition to this social usage. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and the Apostle exhorts Christians not to be conformed to the world. Though we do not say that all these worldly amusements are "in their own nature sinful," it is clear that they "may tempt" those who engage in them, and others, to sin; and moreover, the Scriptures condemn them as worldiness. If the practice of the dance in mixed assemblies be not conforming to the world, it is difficult to name any offense against the injunction of the Apostle. Nor need the Church of Christ have any hesitancy in announcing its position on this subject; for the men of the world, with one consent, agree that it is inconsistent with the nature of the Christian profession for members of the church to engage in the dance.

In this connection, the Assembly would take occasion to exhort our Christian people to avoid the excesses into which they are in danger of being drawn by the demands of fashion. The Scriptures forbid "revellings" and all intemperate self-indulgence, with which teachings the prevalent custom of protracting social assemblies, with or without music and dancing, to the hours of the morning, but especially when accompanied

with drinking and card-playing, is manifestly inconsistent. Moreover, the Assembly, observing that parties of pleasure are usually composed almost exclusively of unmarried young people, would give it as its earnest advice, that the best form of social reunion be made to partake as much as possible of the style and tone of the family circle, in which youthful enjoyment is tempered by the presence of the older and married members.

The Assembly expresses itself with the more earnestness on this whole subject, because of the disposition which is observed in all parts of our borders to run into the inordinate indulgence of worldliness at this time, in forgetfulness of the mighty chastenings of God which are even yet upon us, and because we see members of our churches and our beloved baptized youth, in forgetfulness of the covenant of God which is upon them, carried away with the world's delusions, to the subversion of the divine influences of the sanctuary, and to the neglect of the interests of their souls. Wherefore the Assembly would urge our people to take the word of exhortation, to abstain from all forms of evil, and to study and pursue that sobriety which becometh the Gospel, so that the Church of Christ shall indeed be "a peculiar people." And we hereby exhort our ministers and church sessions to a discharge of their duties. Let them proceed by affectionate and faithful instruction from the pulpit, as well as in private, by admonition, and by such other measures as Christian prudence may dictate; but when all other means fail, then let them proceed to such methods of discipline as shall separate from the Church those who love the world, and practice conformity thereto rather than to the law of Christ.

1869, p. 390. Overture, [that] the Assembly would direct all its "moral and spiritual powers," by such measures as shall seem to [it] best, effectually causing all church sessions and presbyteries to enforce the discipline provided in our Constitution against offenses, and especially against conformity to dissipated and lascivious amusements of the world, intemperance, and relaxed expedients for evading pecuniary obligations now permitted by the legislation of the country.

[Answer:] The Assembly would earnestly and solemnly enjoin upon all the sessions and presbyteries under its care the absolute necessity of enforcing "the discipline provided in our Constitution against offenses," under the word offenses including attendance by our members upon theatrical exhibitions and performances, and promiscuous dancings; against intemperance, and against availing themselves of the "expedients for evading pecuniary obligations now permitted by the legislation of the country," in such a manner as cannot be justified by a conscience enlightened by the Spirit and the Word of God, and as must dishonor the cause of Jesus Christ.

1877, p. 411. Overture asking the Assembly to interpret the law of the Church concerning worldly amusements, as set forth in the deliverances of the Assemblies of 1865 and 1869 in the following particulars:

I. Does the law forbid card-playing for purposes of amusement, or for purposes of gambling merely?

II. Does it forbid dancing, or only promiscuous dancing?

III. If the latter only, to what accident of the dance does the word "promiscuous" refer? Does the law forbid round dances merely as distinguished from the square? or dancing at a public ball as distinguished from dancing in a private house? or the mingling of males and females in this amusement for the reason, among others, that in such cases the dance has a tendency to influence the licentious passions?

Answer: 1st, The Assembly has uniformly discouraged and condemned the modern dance in all its forms, as tending to evil, whether practiced in public balls or in private parlors.

2d, Some forms of this amusement are more mischievous than others; the round dance than the square, the public ball than the private parlor; but all are evil and should be discountenanced.

3d, The extent of the mischief done depends largely upon circumstances. The church session is therefore the only court competent to judge what remedy to apply; but the Assembly being persuaded that, in most cases, it is the result of thoughtlessness or ignorance, recommends great patience in dealing with those who offend in this way.

4th, The following was added by the Assembly as an amendment: And we further affectionately urge all our Christian parents not to send their children to dancing schools where they acquire a fondness and an aptitude for this dangerous amusement.

16b. In what sense the Assembly's deliverances on worldly amusements are to be understood.

1879, p. 23. Overture asking the Assembly for definite instructions upon the following points:

1. Are the deliverances of 1865, 1869, and 1877, on the subject of worldly amusements, to be accepted and enforced as law by judicial process?

2. Are all offenses named in them to be so dealt with, or are exceptions to be made?

[Answer:]

First, This Assembly would answer the first question in the negative, upon the following grounds:

1. That these deliverances do not require judicial prosecution expressly, and could not require it without violating the spirit of our law.

2. That none of these deliverances were made by the Assembly in a strictly judicial capacity, but were all deliverances *in thesi,* and therefore can be considered as only didactic, advisory and monitory.

3. That this Assembly has no power to issue orders to institute process, except according to the provisions of Book of Discipline, Chap. VII, in the old, and Chap. XIII, Sec. I, in the revised book [pres. § 14-6, 113-1]; and all these provisions imply that the court of remote jurisdiction is dealing with a particular court of original jurisdiction, and not with such courts in general. The injunctions, therefore, upon the sessions to exercise discipline in the matter of worldly amusements are to be understood only as utterances of the solemn testimony of these Assemblies against a great and growing evil in the Church. The power to utter such a testimony will not be disputed, since it is so expressly given to the Assemblies in the Form of Government, Chap. XII, Sec. V, of the old, and in the revised Book of Church Order, Forms of Government, V, Sec. VI, Art. VI [pres. § 18-6]; and this testimony this Assembly does here most solemnly and affectionately reiterate.

In thus defining the meaning and intent of the action of former Assemblies, this General Assembly does not mean, in the slightest degree, to interfere with the power of discipline, in any of its forms, which is given to the courts below by the Constitution of the Church; or to intimate that discipline in its sternest form may not be necessary, in some cases, in order to arrest the evils in question. The occasion, the mode, the degree and the kind of discipline, must be left to the courts of original jurisdiction, under the checks and restraints of the Constitution. All that is designed is to deny the power of the Assembly to make law for the Church in the matter of "offenses," or to give to its deliverances *in thesi* the force of judicial decisions.

Second, The second question, which is, "Are all the offenses named in the deliverances of 1865, 1869 and 1877, to be dealt with in the way of judicial process, or are exceptions to be made?" needs no answer after what has been said in answer to the first.

16c. Declines to make a further deliverance on the subject of dancing.

1880, p. 193. [Overture] asking the Assembly to make a more full and explicit deliverance on the subject of dancing and worldly amusements.

This Assembly declines attempting any such deliverance—

1st, Because the deliverances of former Assemblies on this subject are as full and specific as the nature of the case allows.

2nd, Because the evils referred to are to be met, not by resort to deliverances of the Assembly, but rather by care on the part of the court of original jurisdiction.

16d. Former deliverances have not been revoked.

1881, p. 358. [Overture] inquiring whether the deliverance of the Assembly of 1877 on dancing has been affected by the action of the Assemblies of 1879-'80, and requesting that said deliverance be reaffirmed.

Answer: The deliverance of 1877 has not been revoked by any subsequent action of the Assembly.

1893, p. 23. The Assembly directs the Executive Committee of Publication to prepare and publish a tract, collating the testimony of the Standards of our Church and the various deliverances of our Assemblies on worldly amusements and immoralities.

p. 26. Your committee recommends this answer to the overture of the Presbytery of Concord on card-playing and other worldly amusements: In view of the action of former Assemblies, whose deliverances have been numerous, and at the same time uniform and emphatic in their condemnation of these forms of worldly amusement, this Assembly deems a further deliverance unnecessary.

16e. Excommunication for dancing.

1893, p. 35. [Overture] asks a deliverance as to whether it lies within the power of a church session to excommunicate a church member for dancing.

Answer: The censures which may be inflicted by a church session are admonition, suspension and excommunication. This last is the extreme penalty of the law, and is ordinarily to be inflicted only after the milder censures have been employed and "have failed to reclaim the delinquent," and not unless the offender has been proved guilty of "gross crime or heresy," and is "incorrigible and contumacious." Nothing is to be considered as an offense "which cannot be proved to be such from Scripture, as interpreted in our Standards."

These Standards interpret the Scriptures as condemning "lascivious dancings" (Larger Catechism, Quest. 139), and when, in the judgment of a session, an accused person has been proved guilty of participating in such "dancings," and when all other means have failed to reclaim the offender, it is clearly "within the power of the session to excommunicate" the offending member in order "to deliver the Church from the scandal of his offense, and to inspire all with fear by the example of his discipline." (Rules of Discipline, Chap. IV, Sec. IV [pres. § 103-4.]

16f. Pastoral letter on Worldly Amusements.

1900, p. 626. For the promotion of the spiritual well-being of the Church, the General Assembly feels constrained to address all our people a few words of instruction and advice on the importance of abstaining from such amusements as are destructive of or unfavorable to the religious life of the Christian.

Under the term worldly amusements may be included the dance, the theatre and the card-table. There is dancing which is innocent in itself; there are plays that are not

immoral, and card-playing without gambling cannot be called a sin. There are also dances, stage plays and games of cards that are in themselves harmful and contrary to the law of God, and such being evil, and only evil, are condemned and forbidden by the Church. On these matters the Church, through its Constitution, the deliverances of its courts, and from its pulpits, has spoken in the strongest terms.

The question then arises, May not Christians freely indulge in such forms of worldly amusements as are not sinful in themselves? In reply the General Assembly urges our people to abstain altogether from the amusements referred to, as a matter of Christian prudence, example, and out of regard for the honor of Christ, because—

1. These things are accounted worldly, and are regarded as characteristic of a worldly, as distinguished from a spiritual, life. Christians cannot afford to do those things which are looked upon as belonging peculiarly to the world, and by doing which the line of separation between the world and the church is erased, or obscured. "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, O my people, saith the Lord."

2. Experience shows that persons engaging in worldly amusements are easily led into such indulgences as are wrong in themselves. Entering into these things, it is difficult to stop within the bounds of prudence, and under their fascination and the influence of worldly surroundings many are led into sin, and become alienated from God, to the ruin of their souls. Those who dance at all are in danger of being led into dances that are improper. Those who attend the theater are likely to witness and take pleasure in things which are evil; and card-playing has led many a person to gambling, which is one of the most fatal of all vices.

3. Worldly amusements, and the company into which they often bring those engaged in them, are not favorable to growth in grace and a loving service of God and the Church. It cannot be denied that those who indulge in worldly amusements do not become eminent for piety, do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, and do not excel in Christian work. It is touching such matters as these, not things evil in themselves only, but also things considered evil, or associated with evil, that Christians must practice self-denial and live lives which will mark them as separate from the world. Those things are not "expedient" which draw the soul away from communion with God, and from the greatest efficiency in His holy Church.

Be Christians in earnest. Let the dear, sad, glorious cross of Christ overshadow all your life. Never get beyond its chastening presence, and let its precious sacrifice be the model and inspiration of all you do.

1911, pp. 44, 46; 1912, p. 19. [Similar letters.]

16g. Definition of "Worldly Conformity".

1902, p. 285. In reply to an overture asking a definition of the phrase "worldly conformity" in the narrative blanks, we would answer: By "worldly conformity" is meant conforming to the sinful practices of the world. See Rom. XII, 2, and I John II, 15 and 16.

1910, p. 68. In reply to an overture concerning worldly conformity we recommend that the Assembly answer that the formulation of a complete and satisfactory definition being impossible, the matter be left to the Christian discretion of each session.

1911, p. 28. [Answering an overture:] The term Worldly Conformity in question No. 9 of the form of the narrative on the state of Religion, includes all those forms of worldly pleasure and selfish indulgence which the world and the Church both recognize as unbecoming in a follower of Jesus Christ and marking the difference between the classes of whom it is said "to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

1916, p. 73. [Answer to an overture:] All amusements evil in themselves are to be avoided, of course, and amusements that are innocent in themselves may become evil through excess, and it is the duty of the session, in the exercise of its constitutional powers, to warn their young people against such, but nothing is to be considered an offense "which cannot be proved to be such" from Scripture, as interpreted in our Standards.

1918, p. 32. We recommend [in answer to an overture] that "Worldly Conformity" be defined: "That conformity to a sinful world which puts self-indulgence above the will of God in such principles and practices as mar Christian character and influence."

16h. All previous deliverances reaffirmed, 1921.

1921, p. 65. All past deliverances of the Assembly on the question of worldly amusements are hereby reaffirmed, and all pastors and sessions are requested to call the special attention of their churches to this action.

16i. Later statements.

1930, p. 83. Overture touching worldly amusements. [Answer:] The General Assembly recognizes the subtle temptations presented through the appeals of present-day recreational and social life organized into forms which may readily lend themselves to abuses of unquestionably harmful character. Therefore the Assembly calls Christian people, young and older, to a careful searching of heart and training of tastes, under the sought guidance of the Holy Spirit in these matters touching so vitally the personal and social life of professed Christians.

Recognizing the supreme authority of the voice that speaks, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate . . .Touch not the unclean thing," we call upon our people to face squarely the issues presented by the complex life of today, investigate their true character, measure their power to quicken or deaden spiritual life and arrive at character-making decisions which shall control personal attitude.

The personal decision in such matters is to be made by a scripturally enlightened conscience under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, rather than through enforced obedience to positive prohibitions of particular forms of hurtful indulgence and amusements.

1945, pp. 86, 151. In answering Overture No. 52 referred to this Committee by the 1944 General Assembly, which Overture asked that the General Assembly reaffirm its deliverance of 1900 and singled out dancing for condemnation, we would call attention to the fact that the deliverance of 1900 specifically covered the dance, the theatre and the card table. The 1900 Assembly made this statement: "There is dancing which is innocent in itself, there are plays that are not immoral, and card playing without gambling cannot be called a sin. There are also dances, stage plays, and games of cards that are in themselves harmful, and contrary to the law of God, and such being evil, and only evil, are condemned and forbidden by the Church." The remainder of the deliverance admonished Christians to abstain from worldly amusements entirely lest they be led into sin and be hindered in their spiritual growth and Christian work.

In 1916, (see Minutes, page 73) the General Assembly made this deliverance on the subject of amusements: "All amusements evil in themselves are to be avoided, of course, and amusements that are innocent in themselves may become evil through excess, and it is the duty of the session, in the exercise of its constitutional powers, to warn their young people against such, but nothing is to be considered an offence which cannot be proved to be such from the Scripture, as interpreted by our Standards."

In attempting a definition of the term "Worldly Conformity," the General Assembly stated in 1902 that it meant "conforming to the sinful practices of the World" (see Minutes, page 285). In 1910, the Assembly declared that the formulation of a complete and satisfactory definition of this term being impossible, the matter be left to the Christian discretion of each session (see Minutes, page 68). In 1918, (see Minutes, page 32) worldly conformity was thus defined: "That conformity to a sinful world, which puts self-indulgence above the will of God in such principles and practices as mar Christian character and influence."

In 1930 the Assembly, addressing itself to this same question adopted a report which was written by the late Dr. William R. Dobyns, a portion of which reads as follows: "Recognizing the supreme authority of the voice that speaks, 'Come ye out from among them and be ye separate, ... Touch not the unclean thing,' we call upon our people to face squarely the issues presented by the complex life of today, investigate their true character, measure their power to quicken or deaden spiritual life and arrive at character-making decisions which shall control personal attitude. "The personal decision in such matters is to be made by a Scripturally enlightened conscience under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, rather than through enforced obedience to positive prohibitions of particular forms of hurtful indulgence and amusements."

In view of these statements and because of the considerations set forth below, we respectfully recommend that the General Assembly decline to issue a new declaration on the subject of dancing:

1. It would be quite impossible to condemn dancing *per se* from the teachings of the Scriptures.

2. "Lascivious dancing," which is forbidden in Question 139 of the Larger Catechism, is not under review and is already universally condemned by all right thinking Christians. A deliverance on the subject of lascivious dancing is unnecessary and would be of little aid in the enforcement of discipline.

3. The amusements usually listed as worldly—dancing, theatre-going, and card playing—are not inherently evil, nor do they always lead to evil. To condemn them therefore as "worldly amustments" is to give young people and others a false and distorted view of the Christian life; it would be better for the Church to warn against over-indulgence in, and abuse of these and other amusements, and to encourage positively all wholesome recreation and fun.

4. Instead of condemning amusements which may be innocent, we should rather condemn the evil motives which sometimes pervert them. The "principles and practices that mar Christian character and influence" have their roots in the heart and may be, and often are, manifested as dangerously in business, politics, race relations, and in national selfishness and isolationism, as in amusements.

Having stated our reasons for declining to answer the Overture in the affirmation, we would reaffirm with all the force we possess, the closing paragraph of the pastoral letter of 1900: "Be Christians in earnest. Let the dear, sad, glorious Cross overshadow *all* your life. Never get beyond its chastening presence, and let its precious sacrifice be the model and inspiration of *all* you do." If a Christian finds that his amusements, his business, his politics or his position with reference to the great and unsolved problems of the world are taking him away from Christ, it is his duty to give up, or to bring them into conformity with the Christian ideal, for Christ's dear sake. "Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good."

16j. Gambling.

1862, pp. 35 ff. [Especially mentioned in this pastoral letter.]

1890, p. 33. To the communication addressed to the Assembly by the Anti-Lottery League of Louisiana, and to the paper presented by the Rev. W. A. Alexander upon the same subject, the Assembly made the following answer—viz.: Inasmuch as we have had brought before us evidence of the widespread and increasing influence of certain lottery schemes throughout the land that have sought and are seeking the patronage of our people, and inasmuch as we have had reason to believe that some of those over whom we are called to exercise spiritual oversight have been induced to buy and sell lottery tickets, this General Assembly feels called upon at this time to bear testimony against this evil. In our judgment these various lottery schemes are an unmitigated evil and a vicious iniquity. By the promise of large gains in return for small investments, they appeal with peculiar force to the covetousness of the carnal heart, and awaken a craving and corrupting greed for gain. Thus they are most seductive in their evil influence. The fact that they are in many cases intrenched behind forms of law, and are thus given a *quasi* justification in the eyes of the thoughtless and unwary, only makes them the more insidious and, therefore, the more dangerous. They are but organized systems of gambling, are striking at the foundations of morality and righteousness and have become powerful agencies for corrupting the youth of our land.

In some instances they have with brazen effrontery entered the halls of legislation, and have sought to bribe our law-makers in the interest of their nefarious traffic. We do, therefore, most emphatically condemn, and earnestly and affectionately warn our people against this wickedness; and we call upon them not only to abstain wholly from buying or selling lottery tickets themselves, but also to use their utmost endeavors to restrain all others from so doing.

We do also declare ourselves in hearty sympathy with all lawful and proper efforts to secure the enactment of such laws by the State legislatures, and by the Congress of the United States as will suppress every lottery scheme in the land, and thus protect, as far as possible, our people from the insidious temptation thus set before them.

1894, p. 241. Whereas we recognize and deeply deplore the existence and the blighting consequences of the sin of gambling, especially as the evil and its results are manifested in the form of lottery hazard, therefore,

Resolved, That this Assembly renews the deliverances of former Assemblies against this evil, and exhorts and warns our people against the insidious and destructive influences of this sin.

1936, pp. 36, 101. [Excerpt from Report of the Permanent Committee on Social and Moral Welfare:]

We recommend that this General Assembly earnestly urge upon all members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States as Christian citizens both by their own conduct and by their personal influence in their local governments to discourage all forms of gambling in their communities and especially to help in the removal of all public forms of gambling and gambling devices from public places, to the end that the youth of the land may not be demoralized by these instruments of Satan.

1943, pp. 75, 144. Measures now pending in Congress, and magazine articles by supposedly responsible public servants, looking toward the establishment of a national lottery as a means of financing our war effort bring home to us the danger of having the demoralizing influence of gambling made legal and respectable. The Christian citizen should stand firmly against this evil wherever and however it rears its ugly head.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 18-7.

1. Moderator of each Assembly not to be "ex officio" a member of the next Assembly.

1908, p. 33. An overture asking the Assembly to declare that the Moderator of each Assembly is *ex officio* a member at large of the next succeeding Assembly.

Answer: Under the Constitution we see no way by which the overture can be answered favorably.

1909, p. 47; 1910, p. 66. [Similar actions.]

1917, p. 17. The privileges of the floor were extended to all the ex-Moderators present.

2. No meeting of the Assembly can bind absolutely another meeting.

1939, p. 67. Overture asking that the General Assembly make a ruling that would limit amending Church Standards to the years that are multiples of five, answered in the negative, for the reason that no Assembly can bind a future Assembly.

3. An Assembly should not rescind the action of another Assembly.

1870, p. 522. An immediate rescinding of the act of the previous Assembly would consist neither with courtesy to the Assembly, nor with that reverence which the Assembly, by its example, should inculcate upon the people, for "decrees and determinations of synods and councils, not contrary to the Word of God, not only for their agreement with the Word, but for the power whereby they are made." (Confession of Faith, Chap. XXXI, Sec. II [pres. XXXIII, 2].) And this the more especially when no time has been allowed to test by experience whether the measure is liable to work injuriously or not.

[Ed. note: This was an extraordinarily loose quotation from the Confession.]

1893, p. 47. [Action of 1870 cited for precedent.]

1965, p. 176. [Action of previous Assembly rescinded on recommendation of ad interim committee.]

4. An Assembly may not deal with parliamentary procedure of another Assembly.

1945, p. 65. Your Committee [on Judicial Business] has received the communication of Rev. John Scott Johnson of Augusta Presbytery by whose complaint the following action of the General Assembly is sought:

(1) Condemnation of allegedly undue and indifferent haste in disposing of business during the closing hours of the Assembly;

(2) Reaffirmance of the right of any presbytery to be heard in all matters which it calls to the attention of the Assembly;

(3) Reaffirmance of the right of any commissioner, who has not spoken, to be recognized by the Moderator until debate is cut off;

(4) Rebuke of a Moderator pro-tem, at the 1944 General Assembly for conduct allegedly unparliamentary and discourteous in that it operated to deny complainant full privileges of the floor in open debate.

Your Committee finds no basis for action under specification (1) since this assumes existence of a practice of inordinate haste of which fact we do not take judicial notice, and which, if true, is to be corrected through proceedings other than those here employed.

Your Committee is of the opinion that neither (2) nor (3) presents matter appropriate to the power and purposes of this Committee. We deem it fitting, however, to avail of this opportunity to recognize and defend the responsibility of a presiding officer to accord to each member equal privileges consistent with a fair and reasonable compliance with parliamentary procedures. As to whether this abstract right was denied or such duty was ignored in the present situation we are not privileged to decide.

With reference to (4) it is the judgment of this Committee that the complaint at most charges a personal offense committed, if at all, at a former meeting of the Assembly long since adjourned, and is one lodged against a minister. Original jurisdiction to entertain complaints against a minister lies exclusively in the presbytery of which such minister is a member and therefore the present complaint does not present a judicial cause of which this Assembly or this Committee has original jurisdiction or which it is required to adjudicate.

Wherefore we respectfully recommend that no action be taken herein but that this course be deemed without prejudice to complainant to take such other and appropriate steps as he may be advised; due recognition of Paragraph 188, Book of Church Order [§ 104-1], having been first given.

We take this occasion to express the hope that under God's guidance the entire matter may be amicably resolved without impairment of confidence in the General Assembly and in its steadfast purpose to respect the rights of all its members.

1962, pp. 24, 58. That Overture 6 asking General Assembly to decide whether the action of the 1961 General Assembly sustaining the ruling of the Moderator was in order be answered in the negative on the basis that the 1962 General Assembly cannot properly deal with a parliamentary procedure of the 1961 General Assembly.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 19-2.

1. Powers of a Commission limited to the work committed to it.

1897, p. 40. [Overture] the General Assembly to give a deliverance upon Section VII, Paragraph 2, Book of Church Order [pres. § 19-2], relative to the powers and duties of a Presbyterial Commission:

1. Is said paragraph exhaustive in its definition of the powers and duties of a Presbyterial Commission, or may a Presbyterial Commission perform duties other than those specified in said paragraph?

2. May a Presbyterial Commission, consisting of three ministers and one or more elders (which is a quorum of presbytery), perform any duty competent for a presbytery to perform?

1. The Book of Church Order is sufficiently explicit in defining the powers of a Commission. A Commission cannot transact business other than that committed to it.

2. A Commission is incompetent, although consisting of a quorum of presbytery, to do any work except that which has been committed to it.

[See also this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of W. T. Russel.]

2. A Commission's determination of its own jurisdiction is subject to review by the court creating the Commission.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 19-2, 3 & 4 below.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 19-2, 3 and 4.

1. Commission may be given powers in all matters as in the judgment of the court do not require participation by all members.

1927, p. 51. Overture:

1. Are the Presbyterian church courts of limited jurisdiction?

2. If so, should not the word "among" be omitted from par. 93 [pres. § 19-2, 3 and 4], Book of Church Order, and all the delegated powers specifically named?

3. Define the difference between giving "judicial powers to a commission" and giving to a commission original jurisdiction in a judicial case.

Can a court delegate "original jurisdiction" to a commission?

4. Can a commission on its own initiative receive charges and institute judicial process?

5. Can a commission settle a question of its own jurisdiction?

Answer: 1. The jurisdiction of Presbyterian Church courts is limited, but only by the Word of God as interpreted in the Standards of the Church. See Book of Church Order, par. 173 [pres. § 102-1].

2. Par. 93-95 [pres. § 19-2 ff.] merely prescribe the extent to which church courts may exercise their general jurisdiction through the agency of commissions. The use of the word "among" at the beginning of par. 93 was intended to extend the operation of the paragraph which was previously limited to the matters enumerated. It now extends to the enumerated matters and also to other matters of a similar nature—that is to such matters as in the judgment of the court do not require participation by all members. The power of a presbytery to clothe a commission with judicial powers is not an "assumed" power. It is expressly conferred by par. 94. We think the meaning of paragraphs 93 and 94 is sufficiently clear and do not recommend the amendment suggested in the overture.

3. Conferring the right to decide is the giving of judicial power. But when the right given a commission to decide is limited to the decision of matters referred to it by a court having jurisdiction, no original jurisdiction is delegated. A body has original jurisdiction only when its determination of a matter may be invoked, in the first instance. A commission created by a church court has no such jurisdiction. The judicial powers with which it is clothed can be exerted only to determine such matters as are referred to it by the court creating it.

4. A commission cannot on its own initiative receive charges and institute judicial process.

5. A commission must, in the first instance, determine its own jurisdiction, but this determination is subject to review by the court creating the commission.

1941, p. 41. Overture requesting an interpretation of Paragraph 93, Form of Government, in connection with Paragraph 76, dealing with the powers of a Commission. We recommend that the Assembly adopt the following statement:

There is nothing in the Book of Church Order which specifically prohibits the reference of any presbyterial matter to a commission, with the exception of the saving clause in paragraph 93, reserving for the presbytery itself the previous examination of a candidate for ordination. Nevertheless, the Assembly discourages the reference to a commission of any matter other than those specified in paragraphs 76a and 93 [pres. § 21-1 and 19-2, 4] as being contrary to established custom and good Presbyterian procedure.

2. Right to a seat in a Commission of Presbytery.

1882, p. 571. [Overture:] When a Commission is appointed by presbytery, in accordance with the Book of Church Order, has any other member of presbytery than the Commission the right to claim a seat in said Commission? Answered in the negative.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 19-4.
(Cf. Rules of Dis., § 116-7).

The full record of a Judicial Commission of an appellate court should be read.

1934, p. 45. The omission to read at least a portion of the record was a grave irregularity, but we do not think such error was so vital as to invalidate the adjudication of the General Assembly or to render it void.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, the Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 23-1.

1. Election by congregation.

1955, p. 27. [Overture] answered as follows: "Because the congregation has had no part in the election of an assistant pastor, he cannot be an officer over the people nor a member of the Session."

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 23-1, 2 and 3.

[Cf. the following actions with this Digest, Form of Govt., § 26-1.]

1. Lay Evangelists.

1878, p. 625. [Answer to an overture:] The General Assembly whilst recognizing the fact that there are spheres of christian labor which private christians, as well as ruling elders, may profitably and lawfully occupy, yet feels called upon to give its solemn protest against the practice, now becoming general, of men who have never been ordained nor licensed to preach the Gospel, engaging in that peculiar function of the Christian ministry; and earnestly urges all our ministers and people to avoid encouraging the same, whether by active co-operation or otherwise.

The plain teaching of our Standards is that "the Word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office."—*Larger Catechism. Q.* 158. Indeed, the whole doctrine of our Church as to the ministry, and the regulations under which men are inducted into it, show that, in addition to the call of God, the authority of the Church is necessary to call and appoint them to this work, whether as pastors or evangelists, and no amount of apparent or even real good which may be connected with the labors of unauthorized preachers or evangelists can justify us in dishonoring the ordinance of Christ and, by this means, undermining his Church.

p. 653. [Extract from the Minute adopted by the Assembly expressing its judgment in the case of the complaint of Rev. R. K. Smoot and others, against the action of the Synod of Texas upon the records of the Presbytery of Western Texas, in the matter of H. F. Williams.]

The General Assembly sustains the complaint of Rev. R. K. Smoot and others against the Synod of Texas on these grounds, viz.: By refusing to condemn the proceedings of the Presbytery of Western Texas in the matter of H. F. Williams, the Synod did endorse and encourage what is known as "Lay Evangelism"—a system which is irregular and contrary to the order of the Church with reference to the Christian ministry, and calculated to produce confusion and many other evils, sooner or later.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. R. K. Smoot.]

2. Preaching by irresponsible Evangelists, and unlicensed persons.

1894, p. 239. Whereas, in many parts of our Church, irresponsible evangelists and unlicensed persons are preaching the Gospel within our bounds, therefore,

Resolved, That the General Assembly enjoins upon our presbyteries, pastors and church sessions to prevent the unscriptural and unconstitutional practice of permitting unlicensed persons to preach in our churches.

1904, p. 28. Presbyteries are urged to avoid the toleration of any practices which may encourage "unlicensed evangelists."

3. No lay preachers.

1869, p. 391. An overture requesting the Assembly "to adopt some plan whereby presbyteries may be authorized to license as lay preachers or exhorters such persons as may be found qualified in mind and heart to instruct and edify the churches,

without requiring of them that course of literary and theological education which is required for our regular ministry," etc.

The following answer [was made:]

That the Assembly express its approbation of presbyteries granting permission to persons of suitable gifts to hold meetings and speak the word of exhortation in churches, in their respective bounds, with the consent of the sessions where such exist, and also in destitute neighborhoods; such persons being required to abstain from assuming the proper functions of the ministry, and being held subject to the control of presbytery.

1870, p. 522. The Presbyteries of Roanoke, West Hanover and Memphis prayed the Assembly to rescind [this] action. [The Assembly, after saying that these overtures were directed rather against the action requested by the South Alabama ministers than against the action really taken by the Assembly, which action was manifestly different from that proposed, explained the above action in the following reply:]

It will be perceived that, under this deliverance, no issues arise concerning the propriety of confining the ministry exclusively to educated men, or of admitting a new class of authoritative teachers as prophets of the Church, to expound and enforce officially the word of Christ. But the Assembly, in the most guarded manner, simply expresses approbation of presbyteries granting special permission to particular persons, by way of incitement and encouragement, to the exercise of their gifts in doing what, within the limits of Christian prudence, every Christian man has inherently a right to do under the broad commission of the great Head: "Let him that heareth, say Come."

Even had the deliverance of the last Assembly gone further than this, without involving palpable violation of the order or imminent danger to the interests of religion, an immediate rescinding of the act of the previous Assembly would consist neither with courtesy to the Assembly nor with that reverence which the Assembly, by its example, should inculcate upon the people for "decrees and determinations of synods and councils, not contrary to the Word of God, not only for their agreement with the Word, but for the power whereby they are made." [Conf., Chap. XXXIII, 2.] And this the more especially when no time has been allowed to test, by experience, whether the measure is liable to work injuriously or not.

The Assembly, therefore, declines to take the action suggested by these overtures.

1879, p. 39. [In answer to requests from the Synod of Texas and the Presbytery of Western Texas:]

Resolved, that the action of the Assembly in 1869, authorizing the appointment of exhorters under the control of presbytery, be, and the same is, hereby repealed.

1955, p. 51. Relative to status and training of "Lay Preachers": we recommend the following answer: The recognition of a separate group entitled "Lay Preachers" is not warranted under our system, particularly in the light of the assignment of this function to Ruling Elders in paragraph 41, Book of Church Order [§ 11-4].

1964, pp. 25, 79. That Overture regarding the establishment of a special order of ministry ["lay preachers"] be answered in the negative, in the light of our conviction that the extraordinary case clause of the Book of Church Order provides sufficiently for the meeting of this need.

4. Public teaching by the unordained.

1895, p. 394. Presbytery, "in view of perplexing questions which confront the Church at the present time," overtures the General Assembly "to appoint an *ad interim* committee to consider and report to the General Assembly of 1896 what action, if any, ought to be taken on the following subjects, viz.: To define the relation of elders, deacons and unofficial persons, such as candidates, lay evangelists and other workers to public teaching; and to define the limits of Christian liberty and duty in the use of this talent, and especially to ascertain if these questions may not be settled on the principles already recognized and applied to Sunday school workers and to societies within the Church; and whether all this may not be done by the Assembly in a declarative way without constitutional enactment."

The Assembly [declined] to appoint such committee.

p. 433. Overture to add to Chapter V, Section IV, Form of Government [pres. § 16-10], the following paragraph, viz.:

"Paragraph 10. Ministers in good standing in other evangelical churches, unlicensed evangelists, ruling elders, candidates for the gospel ministry, or other competent brethren, may be invited to do special work in our churches when presbytery shall be satisfied, after due examination or inquiry, of their Christian character, soundness in the faith, and ability to edify the Church."

The Assembly [declined] to grant the overture.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 25-4.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 23-5.

1. May a candidate, not called to a definite work, be ordained?

1865, p. 362. Whether a presbytery has a right to ordain a licentiate to the work of the gospel ministry, simply because he desires it, although neither one nor more churches have requested that he should be ordained.

Answer: Every office in the Church of God, according to the Scriptures and the Standards of our Church, is a definite charge; and hence no man can lawfully be ordained to the gospel ministry unless it be to the performance of some work appropriate to that office according to the Constitution. And as one great evidence of a divine vocation is a call from a particular church, no man ought to be ordained, except in cases extraordinary, without such a call. Moreover, as persons are liable to mistake their calling, and as the office of the ministry is a permanent one, by divine institution, presbyteries ought to exercise great caution in ordaining evangelists, lest the ministry be filled with intruders and the Church be afflicted with a vagrant and secularized clergy. Nor ought they ever to do so until full proof has been made of the licentiate, by the presbytery which ordains him, and it has received such a favorable report concerning him from the churches as gives the promise of wide usefulness.

The case mentioned in the memorial seems to violate all these principles. If the licentiate be not called to a particular church, and if he be not looking to the work of the evangelist in frontier and destitute settlements, his ordination, sine titulo, would be not only irregular and unconstitutional, but manifestly unscriptural.

1929, p. 83. Overture asking whether a presbytery is competent to ordain a licentiate who has not been called to a definite work. Answer: The Book of Church Order plainly provides for such cases under the extended meaning to be attached to the word "Evangelist"; hence, it is competent for a presbytery to use its discretion in individual cases.

1932, p. 43. Overture asking the Assembly to give a ruling on the question as to whether a presbytery may ordain a licentiate as an evangelist at his own request, without his having received a call to a definite field for his services. Answered in the negative.

1944, pp. 26, 51. [Overture asking] the General Assembly to interpret the Book of Church Order as to requirements for ordination to the Gospel ministry, with particular reference to the following:

1. What may be accepted as evidence of "the manifest approbation of God's people"? (Par. 96) [§ 23-1]

2. Shall a presbytery require documentary evidence of specific action by a particular church, a church court or an authorized educational or missionary agency of a church court that the applicant for ordination has been "called to office"? (Pars. 99, 100) [§ 23-4]

3. What shall be required of a candidate as evidence that he has been called to the chaplaincy to warrant ordination?

4. Can a presbytery lawfully waive the requirement of call to a definite work when satisfied as to a candidate's qualifications, and when, in its judgment, ordination would be of advantage to him?

[Answered as follows:]

(1) We recommend that the following reply be given: The fact that a man has been recommended by the session of his church, presented to and received under the care of a presbytery, finished his required work in a seminary approved by the aforementioned presbytery, and has the endorsement of the faculty of the seminary, and a call to a definite work, shall be evidence of the manifest approbation of God's people.

(2) We recommend that this be answered by referring to action of General Assembly of 1943 as recorded on page 51 of the Minutes of that Assembly. [Now obsolete. Ed.]

(3) We recommend that this be answered: The approval and the recommendation of the Defense Service Council [now the Board of Church Extension].

(4) We recommend that this be answered by reference to the answer to (1) above.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 24-1.

1. Care to be used in receiving candidates.

1876, p. 230. In order to secure a class of candidates for the ministry which shall more fully meet the requirements of the sacred office which they profess to seek—

Resolved, 1, That this General Assembly enjoins it upon the presbyteries more carefully to investigate the antecedents, and inquire into the character of the candidates for the gospel ministry.

2. That the presbyteries be advised, as a general rule, to receive under their care no candidate for the ministry at the same meeting when the application is made.

[Ed. note: There are numerous actions in a similar vein.]

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-5.]

2. Applicants before Presbyteries shall have testimonials from their Sessions.

1880, p. 211. All candidates coming before presbyteries shall have, from the sessions of the churches to which they belong, certificates testifying to their physical, mental and spiritual qualifications.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 24-2, 5.

1. The authority of the Presbytery over its candidates.

1893, p. 45. [Answer to an overture:] Candidates are under the control and direction of presbytery, both in regard to their conduct, and the schools, colleges and seminaries they shall attend, but the authority in regard to schools attended should be exercised with prudence.

1918, p. 54. We would suggest that this answer be given to the overture touching the ecclesiastical relation of a candidate for the ministry:

(1) The "care of the presbytery" does not include an original jurisdiction further than the mere oversight and direction of a candidate's education and preparation for the ministry.

(2) The presbytery, when it takes a candidate under its care, assumes oversight over his education and preparation, but no jurisdiction over his Christian life and character. Jurisdiction over this does not pass to the presbytery, until he received ordination.

(3) It is not possible for the courts, session and presbytery, to hold original jurisdiction over a candidate for the ministry.

We would refer the presbytery to a most illuminating report adopted by the General Assembly of 1829 on this very subject. The report is found in Moore's Digest, p. 560.

1962, pp. 25, 58. [A "reference" from a presbytery asking:] Are the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in the United States now constitutionally empowered to issue binding instructions to Candidates for the ministry concerning institutions of learning they shall attend, providing the schools of the Candidate's own choice are "standard"?

Answered by reference to the Book of Church Order, Sections 24-5 and 24-9.

[Ed. note: For the definition of "standard" see this Digest, Form of Govt., § 27-1 ff, item 1.]

2. Candidates should attend theological schools controlled by our Church.

1891, p. 232. In ordinary cases candidates shall be required to attend theological institutions within the bounds and under the supervision of our own Church.

1890, pp. 35, 42; 1891, p. 244; 1892, p. 423; 1893, p. 44; 1898, p. 213. [Similar actions.]

[Cf. this Digest, Form of Govt., § 27-5.]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 24-6.

The Assembly refuses to require a period of missionary service of all candidates.

1869, p. 378. In answer to an overture in reference to requiring every licentiate to spend two years in itinerant missionary labor before settlement, [the Assembly adopted the following:]

Resolved, That whilst the Assembly believes that the employment of competent evangelists is the most effectual means of supplying the destitutions in our bounds, yet, in view of the fact that so few of that class can now be secured, it recommends to presbyteries to throw their licentiates, as far as practicable, into the destitute fields around them.

1871, p. 15. [To a similar request the following reply was made:]

The Form of Government, Chap. XV, Secs. I and IX, gives to any congregation the right to extend their pastoral call to any probationer, "when he shall have preached so much to their satisfaction that the people appear prepared to elect a pastor," and authorizes the presbytery having jurisdiction of the case "if they think it expedient, to present the call to him." While this Assembly highly commends these missionary labors as means for testing and training the gifts of probationers and spreading the Gospel, it does not deem itself competent to take away the above right from the churches, nor the discretion of the presbyteries in the case.

1872, p. 156. [Answer to a similar overture:] In many cases settled pastors are more needed than itinerant missionaries. Besides, our younger men are licensed to preach the Gospel wherever God in his providence may call them, at home or abroad. The whole frame of our system would be set aside by an attempt to retard the settlement of pastors wherever churches are or can be formed strong enough to sustain them.

1873, p. 313. [Overtures looking to the adoption of this same rule were rejected.] [Ed. note: But adopted report of Evangelistic Labor Committee commends this practice of some presbyteries "whenever it is in their judgment expedient." (p. 316.)]

1936, pp. 26, 52. Overture [asking] the Assembly to consider the advisability of passing a rule that all candidates for the Gospel Ministry, upon graduation from the Seminary, be required to serve an apprenticeship of two years in strictly home mission fields, or as assistant pastors, before being allowed to accept a call to a self-sustaining church, unless it be a country church, answered in the negative.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 25-3.

Change refused.

1963, pp. 31, 107. That Overture 26, regarding the amendment of the Book of Church Order, Section 25-3 (a) (b) so as to make an associate or assistant pastor eligible to succeed the pastor in a church which they serve together, be answered with the recommendation of the Permanent Judicial Commission that the General Assembly answer in the negative for the following reasons:

1. These provisions having been so recently adopted, this Commission feels that it would be premature to make any changes until and unless further experience indicates that such changes are necessary, and
2. The value to be derived from the present requirement outweighs the advantage to be derived from a change and the possible hardship that may result in an individual case.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 25-4.

1. The Assembly disapproves the relation of Stated Supply by Ministers who give only part time to its duties.

1937, p. 74. Overture asking the Assembly to make a deliverance discountenancing the arrangement of Stated Supply on the part of ministers who cannot devote full-time to pastoral service, answered in the affirmative, and the matter discussed therein referred to the Ad Interim Committee on Changes in Pastorates for the formulation of such rules as will correct the situation complained of.

1938, pp. 43, 127. [From report of Ad Interim Committee:]

Your Committee does not feel that definite regulations pertaining to dual positions in the Church can be formulated, which will equitably cover every situation. On the other hand, it is our judgment that the Presbyterial Commission on the Minister and his Work is better qualified to handle such cases under its jurisdiction without definite rules, it matters not how flexible those rules might be.

2. Position of "Pastor Emeritus" purely honorary.

1943, p. 78. That the answer to overture asking the General Assembly to define the status of "Pastor Emeritus" and his relationship to the Ministers' Annuity Fund, be that the position of "Pastor Emeritus" is purely honorary and has no official relationship to either session or congregation, and in no way conflicts with the provision of the Ministers' Annuity Fund.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 26-2.

1. Definition of members "in good and regular standing."

1861, pp. 11, 37. Every member of our Church is entitled to a dismission in good standing, unless process be commenced against him.

2. Voting by proxy not allowed.

1900, p. 613. Overture asking the Assembly as to whether or not members of a church may vote by proxy.

[Answer:] Voting by proxy is not allowed.

1906, p. 24. Overture: (1) Does the Book of Church Order forbid a member of a church from voting in a congregational meeting for a pastor, or officer or any other matter by proxy?

(2) Can a person entitled to vote in a congregational meeting be "present" in the person of his proxy?

The former question was answered in the affirmative, and the latter in the negative.

3. Definition of "voters".

1940, p. 74. Overture asking for construction of "voters" in new Par. 124, answered that "voters" means members in good and regular standing, present and voting.

4. "Submission of nomination" to the Commission on the Minister and his Work does not necessitate "approval of nomination".

1940, p. 76. The Assembly voted to reconsider its action on the Manual presented by the Standing Committee on the Minister and his work. The following additional action was taken: That the sentence in the suggestions to congregations on How to Call a Pastor as follows: "Nominations from the floor may be received, but only of those whose names have been previously submitted to the Commission on the Minister and His Work, and approved," be referred to the Permanent Committee on the Minister and His Work, with instructions that they bring it into conformity with the article or articles in the Book of Church Order bearing on the subject, it being the sense of the Assembly that the Commission should be consulted by an individual, but that it shall not be necessary to receive their approval before nominating a pastor.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 26-3.

1. Manses.

1869, p. 393. The Assembly exhorts every presbytery to call the attention of each church in its bounds to the importance of having a manse provided for its pastor in some central and convenient place, and with a few acres of arable and wooded land attached in the case of country churches. The comfort and usefulness of ministers will be greatly promoted by this measure, and the cords of affection and confidence between pastor and people will be greatly strengthened.

2. Definite sum of remuneration must be stated.

1939, p. 66. Overture asking for instruction as to the use in a call to a pastor, of the words "a free will offering," in lieu of the statement of a definite amount of remuneration, answered that the Book of Church Order (par. 126) [§ 26-3] provides that a definite amount of remuneration shall be stated.

3. Call for a Pastor without promise of adequate support.

1869, p. 376. Can a call for a pastor be considered regular by a presbytery which does not pledge the congregation calling to provide an adequate support for the pastor?

[Answer:] Such calls as the overture contemplates are not strictly regular; but in cases in which churches are not able to pledge the competent support of pastors, the expediency of constituting the pastoral relation should be left to the judgment of presbyteries.

4. Churches are urged to pay their part to the Ministers' Annuity Fund during pastoral vacancies.

1941, p. 59. With regard to [the overture] your Committee recommends that the Assembly urge the voluntary payment of dues to the Ministers' Annuity Fund during pastoral vacancies, but that there shall be nothing compulsory or binding upon churches regarding such payments during such vacancies.

5. Limitation of term of pastorate in the call is inadmissible.

1936, pp. 23, 39. Overtures asking the General Assembly so to construe Chap. 23, Par. 126 [pres. § 26-3] (Revised Edition, 1932), Book of Church Order (which paragraph contains the *form of call of the local church to a minister to become its pastor*), as to declare whether or not the local church, in making out such a call, has the right under this paragraph, *as it now reads*, to insert any words or phrases which impose a limitation upon the length of proposed pastorate, answered in the negative. The Committee endorses the conclusions of the Permanent Judicial Committee that such limitation is inadmissible.

[Ed. note: Proposals to limit the pastoral relation to a definite term of years have been consistently refused by the General Assembly. See 1889, p. 622; 1903, p. 507; 1935, p. 42; 1936, pp. 39, 40, 43, 115 ff.; 1937, pp. 33, 123 ff.; 1938, pp. 43, 128; 1939, pp. 53, 138; 1944, p. 169; 1946, pp. 40, 93; 1947, pp. 41, 103; 1949, pp. 41, 101; 1957, p. 62.]

6. Sabbatical leave for pastor suggested.

1946, p. 93. That the Assembly commend the following plans to the churches: That a periodical sabbatical leave is advisable for ministers in order to afford them opportunity for physical, intellectual and spiritual refreshment. It is suggested that, in general, such leave be for a period of three months, or longer, at least once every seven years, the final determination of the length and frequency of such leaves, however, to be left to the discretion of each local church. It is further suggested that ministers on sabbatical leave receive full salary during their absence and that the local church provide and bear the expense of temporary supplies during the absence of its regular pastor. These suggestions are made because of the firm conviction that such a plan, if carried out, would prove to be of inestimable value both to ministers and congregation, injecting freshness, vitality and vision for the promotion of our church program and for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

7. Change in call must be approved by congregation and Presbytery.

1958, p. 84. The minutes of the Assembly's Committee [on the Minister and His Work] contained the following action which was overlooked in the preparation of its annual report to this General Assembly.

"We call attention to the fact that any change in the official call, which is the contract between the minister and the church, must be approved by the congregation and the presbytery. These changes must be presented directly to the presbytery for approval or to it through the Commission on the Minister and His Work."

The Standing Committee recommends approval of this statement and requests that the General Assembly call it to the attention of churches and Commissions on the Minister and His Work.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 26-4.

Signing call in Larger Parish. Each church must call.

1958, pp. 28, 54. [Overture answered:] The several congregations involved in a Larger Parish may specify in voting on the call to a minister that the call is to be signed by the Parish Council, provided that at least one representative on the Council, elected from each church, sign the call and provided that each church approve the joint call in a congregational meeting, specifying the terms of its call.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 26-6.

Presbytery may require membership in Annuity Fund.

1964, pp. 23, 109. [Communication] from the Board of Annuities and Relief with regard to the powers of Presbytery in relation to Ministers Annuity Fund. It is recommended that the Assembly say to the Synod of Alabama and to East Alabama Presbytery that a Presbytery has the right to require a minister to enter the Fund.

The minutes of the Synod of Alabama be approved with the following major exception:

The Synod of Alabama was out of order in its action questioning the constitutional authority of the Presbytery of East Alabama to set the conditions under which a call shall be found in order by the Presbytery. (This was with particular reference to the Presbytery's requirement that its ministers and churches participate in the Ministers Annuity Fund.)

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 26-9.

Work not under jurisdiction of a court.

1965, pp. 31, 96. [Overture] to appoint and/or instruct a committee to study and report to the General Assembly an outline of the Doctrine of the Ministry as it pertains to unusual kinds of work, work which is ordinarily called "secular," and work not under the jurisdiction of the Church; to submit for approval criteria for judging whether or not a particular work is appropriate for an ordained minister; and to propose a new section on the subject for Chapter 10 of *The Book of Church Order* if one is deemed desirable.

That . . . the overture be answered in the negative for the reason that this involves details which are not appropriate for inclusion in the Book of Church Order and which should be left to individual Presbyteries to handle.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 27-1 ff.

Educational standards for the ministry.

[Cf. this Digest, Standards of theological education in the Seminaries.]

[Ed. note: Despite a number of efforts to lower the educational standards required for a minister, the General Assembly has consistently maintained the examinations for licensure and ordination at their high level. (See 1865, p. 367; 1884, p. 244; 1889, p. 587; 1890, pp. 15, 23, 29, 53; 1891, pp. 247, 255; 1892, p. 453; 1893, p. 28; 1894, pp. 190, 263; 1885, p. 402; 1904, p. 28; 1913, p. 70-m.)

An action of 1913, p. 30, enacted changes which permitted a diploma to replace examination in academic studies at college or seminary, and, further, permitted the thesis in theology to be written in English if the presbytery did not specify Latin.

The Revision of 1925 added the English Bible to the list of subjects for the examination.

The most recent debate concerned the original languages of the Scripture. An amendment proposed (1934, p. 34) making Hebrew an elective. The presbyteries disapproved, 50 to 36. (1935, p. 32.) (See further 1935, p. 65; 1936, pp. 27, 52; 1942, p. 75; 1950, pp. 37, 47; and 1951, pp. 34, 67.)]

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 27-5.

1. What is a "standard" educational institution?

1962, pp. 25, 58. A "reference" from a presbytery [asking,] What, in the judgment of the General Assembly, is a standard institution of learning within the meaning of the use of the term in the . . . Book of Church Order?

[Answered:] a. The college must be accredited by the recognized regional accrediting agencies. b. The seminary must be accredited by the American Association of Theological Schools. c. The seminary must offer in its curriculum all the subjects necessary for tests for ordination in the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

2. "Theological topic" means topic in systematic theology.

1947, pp. 29, 52. [Overture] to interpret Paragraph 112, section 1 [§ 27-5 (2)], of the Book of Church Order. Does the phrase, "a thesis on some assigned theological topic" mean a topic in systematic theology?

Answered in the affirmative, because it is the belief of the Assembly that the plan and purpose of the entire examination of the candidate is that presbytery may have a correct conception of his knowledge and conviction in systematic theology.

3. "Extraordinary candidate" provision must not be subterfuge for ordaining unprepared candidates.

1949, pp. 38, 63. [Overture] to reaffirm the definite requirements previously stated for the preparation of its candidates for the Christian ministry in the colleges and seminaries of our own denomination, that the General Assembly ask that every presbytery seriously observe these often repeated declarations, and that whenever presbyteries receive and ordain candidates as ministers under the so-called "extraordinary clause" that the presbytery be sure that the case in question is truly an "extraordinary case" and not a subterfuge to avoid the years of training which is the historic requirement of the Presbyterian Church in the United States for its ministers.

[Answered in the affirmative.]

1951, pp. 34, 67. [Overture:] 1. To declare that henceforth in the licensing of Negro candidates for the Gospel Ministry, the requirements as set forth in the Book of Church Order must be fulfilled according to the common practice of the Church as a whole. [Or] 2. To declare that omissions from these requirements for licensure, as provided for by the Book of Church Order in regard to extraordinary cases, shall not be considered generally necessary and regular in the Church's practice when in regard to Negro candidates.

We recommend that the Assembly direct the presbyteries to be very cautious in the use of "The Extraordinary Clause" in ordaining candidates for the ministry lest this clause become a gateway for the unprepared into the ministry of the Church.

4. Lack in language requirement makes "extraordinary candidate".

1963, pp. 31, 108. That overture regarding clarification of the meaning of the word "certificates" in Section 27-5 of the Book of Church Order, be answered with the recommendation of the Permanent Judicial Commission that Section 27-5 (1) of the Book of Church Order be interpreted to require that a Presbytery regard as an extraordinary candidate any candidate presenting as an academic qualification a certificate which omits the required language studies. We believe this to be the clear intent of the Section and also to be the uniform practice of the Presbyteries.

5. How far may the "extraordinary candidate" provision be pressed?

1896, p. 580. Overture asking to what extent the requirements for licensure and ordination may be waived under the provision for extraordinary cases. [Answer:]

In the nature of the case, and according to the Book of Church Order, the presbytery must act in each instance according to its discretion subject to the review of the synod.

6. Declines to prescribe a course of study for persons licensed under the "extraordinary candidate" provision.

1896, p. 570. [A proposed amendment to Form of Government, requiring presbyteries to institute a four years' course of study for all licensed under the extraordinary clause, was declined by the Assembly.]

1906, p. 56. [An overture making a request similar to the above, and prohibiting by constitutional amendment the ordination of such until they shall have attained satisfactory proficiency in the required studies, was declined by the Assembly.]

7. Candidates who are deficient.

1896, p. 614. [The Synod of South Carolina in its records of 1895, p. 13, recommended to its presbyteries,] that when students fail to pass any of their examinations at the seminaries, the presbyteries require of them a satisfactory explanation of the failure and, in case such an explanation is not forthcoming, either refuse to license them until they make good their deficiency, or license them as extraordinary cases.

The Assembly [took] exception to this action as unwise and injurious in its effects, inasmuch as it recommends for licensure students who have failed to reach the minimum standard of scholarship.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 27-6.

1. Form of Government ordination questions are mandatory.

1960, pp. 25, 68. Overture requesting an *in thesi* deliverance from the General Assembly on the importance it attaches to the use of the questions required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in the ordination of Church Officers, be answered as follows: "The General Assembly attaches supreme importance to the necessity of using the questions required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States when officers of this church assume the vows of their office and considers them to be mandatory."

2. Definition of the phrase: "system of doctrine."

1898, p. 223. [Overture] to give a deliverance relative to the meaning of the words, "system of doctrine." It wishes to know whether a minister or officer can accept the Standards as a whole without subscribing to each particular doctrine therein.

Answer: We recommend that the Assembly give answer as follows: First, The words "system of doctrine" as applied to the whole body of truth contained in the Confession of Faith, being not ambiguous, but sufficiently definite and plain, the Assembly considers it unnecessary, and therefore declines to give any further definition. Second, The use of the words "system of doctrine" in the terms of subscription precludes the idea of necessary acceptance of every statement in the Standards by the subscribers, but involves the acceptance of so much as is vital to the system as a whole. Differences of opinion as to whether any divergences are or are not vital to the system, when of sufficient importance, should be determined judicially by the proper ecclesiastical courts.

1934, p. 32. Answer to an overture asking for a definition of the Phrase, "The System of Doctrine taught in the Holy Scripture," and an affirmation of the content of the statement, "the fundamentals of this system of doctrine," viz.: By "the System of Doctrine taught in the Holy Scripture," as used in our ordination vows, we understand that exhibition of the essential doctrines of Scripture arranged in logical and sys-

tematic order as the Scripture interpreted by the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. While the candidate for ordination receives and adopts the Confession of Faith and the Catechism of the Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scripture, he does not affirm that each doctrine of the Confession is an integral part of that system, or an essential doctrine of the Scripture.

(1) This interpretation is in accordance with the deliverances of the General Assembly of 1898.

(2) The General Assembly cannot set forth "the fundamentals of this system of doctrine" as required in the ordination vow. It can, of course, declare what it conceives to be the fundamentals of this system. But it cannot determine abstractly, apart from regular judicial process, how the presbytery, which under our Constitution is charged with the duty of ordaining candidates, is to interpret this requirement in the regular discharge of its own functions. To attempt to do so would be in effect to amend the Constitution by extra-constitutional methods.

3. Doctrines specified as involved in the ordination vows.

1939, pp. 37, 71. [Resolution answered as follows:]

The General Assembly hereby declares that it regards the acceptance of the infallible truth and divine authority of the Scriptures, and of Christ as very and eternal God who became man by being born of a virgin, who offered Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, who rose from the dead with the same body with which he suffered and who will return again to judge the world, as being involved in the ordination vows to which we subscribe.

1940, p. 45. Overture asking for a deliverance of this Assembly, clarifying the action of the General Assembly of 1939, in which it declared that the acceptance of certain truths contained in the Confession of Faith are involved in the ordination vows to which we subscribe, we would reply that this was merely an *in thesi* deliverance, interpreting a part of the content of the ordination vows without any intention of changing the whole substance of them.

1942, p. 88. Overtures regarding ordination vows for ministerial candidates, in the event of union with the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., we recommend that they be answered in the negative on the ground that the matters referred to are already a part of the Standards of the Churches U. S. and U. S. A., and are therefore embodied in the ordination vows now prescribed by both Churches.

p. 87. [Vote on the above: 127 to 90.]

[Ed. note: These overtures would have directed the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union "to consent and agree to no form of union that does not require of its candidates for ordination in the united church, in their ordination vows, 'the acceptance of the infallible truth and divine authority of the Scriptures, and of Christ as very and eternal God, who became man by being born of a virgin, who offered Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God, who rose from the dead with the same body with which He suffered, and who will return again to judge the world.' "]

1942, p. 95. Resolution: The vote of the General Assembly on recommendation eleven of the report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations concerning certain doctrines of faith shall not be construed as a denial of any of these doctrines nor as indicating a relaxation of belief in any of them.

[See also this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Ch. I, 2; XXXIII, 4; Form of Govt., § 14-3, 16-5, 27-6.]

4. Judicial handling of confession of disaccord with the "system of doctrine."

[Ed. note: An instance under that part of the second ordination vow enacted in 1925 (all that which follows the semi-colon) may be handled by the court

as a "case without process" under Rules of Dis., § 110-1, 111-1, 112-1. See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of the Presbytery of Western Texas.]

5. Use of Ministers from other Presbyteries and denominations in the installation of Pastors.

1901, p. 22. [Answer to an overture:] While we hold that the installation service should be conducted by the proper commissioners of our own church, yet we do not consider it an infraction of our law to call upon a minister of another denomination to lead in prayer.

1933, p. 49. Overture requesting the General Assembly to interpret the clause in the Form of Government, Par. 138 [pres. § 27-6], answered in this way:

To Question No. 1: In extraordinary situations presbytery may invite a minister or ruling elder from some other presbytery to deliver the charge to the pastor or congregation, provided that such action does not contravene the provisions of the Book of Church Order regarding the commission for installation.

To Question No. 2: The presbytery cannot appoint a minister from some other denomination to deliver the charge.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 28-1.

1. The pastoral relation not to be lightly broken.

1868, p. 272. *Whereas,* the permanent relationship of the pastor to his people is one of the distinctive and most cherished features of the Presbyterian Church; and *whereas,* the frequent removal to other fields of labor by regularly installed ministers without complying with the rules laid down by our Book of Church Government, or obtaining the consent of their respective charges, demands the serious consideration of this body; therefore, be it

Resolved, By the General Assembly, that the synods and presbyteries within its jurisdiction be enjoined to require in future a more rigid adherence to the rules and decrees of the Church regulating the pastoral relationship and the mode of its dissolution.

2. Retirement of Executive Secretaries, Stated Clerk and other servants of the Assembly at age 70.

1934, pp. 30, 118. [From adopted report of the Ad Interim Committee to study the Basis of Salaries and Retirement Allowances for All Servants of the Church:]

"We recommend:

2. That the General Assembly exercise its right to retire its servants with annuities as occasions may arise.

3. That the age retirement for Executive Secretaries, the Stated Clerk and other servants of the General Assembly elected by it be fixed at 70 years.

4. That the amount of retirement allowance be determined by the Assembly on the merits of each case, but in no case shall such retirement allowance exceed eighteen hundred ($1800.00) per annum."

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 29-1.

Eligibility of women must be recognized.

1965, pp. 30, 96. Overture to make explicit whether the eligibility of women to hold office in a local congregation is permissive or mandatory. Illustration: If a congregation nominates its officers by mail ballot from a list of qualified members submitted by the Sessions, is it mandatory that the names of women, otherwise qualified by age, residence, etc., be included?

[Answered:] It is mandatory that women be considered eligible for election as officers, and this requirement extends to ensuring that the processes of election shall be designed to provide for women on the same basis as men.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 29-3.

1. Definition of "system of doctrine."

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 27-6.]

2. Ordination of Deacon when elected Ruling Elder, and "vice versa".

1908, p. 53. [Overture] as to the reordination of a deacon when elected to the eldership, and of an elder when elected to the diaconate, the Assembly would say:

1. That when a deacon is elected to the office of an elder, he must be ordained to that office, unless previously ordained thereto.

2. That when an elder is elected to the office of a deacon, he must be ordained to that office, unless previously ordained thereto.

[Cf. Form of Govt., § 23-5.]

3. Judicial handling of confession of disaccord with the "system of doctrine."

[Ed. note: An instance under that part of the second ordination vow enacted in 1925 (all that which follows the semi-colon) be handled by the courts as a "case without process" under Rules of Dis., § 110-1, 111-1, 112-1. See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of the Presbytery of Western Texas.]

4. Ordination questions in Form of Government mandatory.

1960, pp. 25, 68. The General Assembly attaches supreme importance to the necessity of using the questions required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States when officers of this church assume the vows of their office and considers them to be mandatory.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 29-4.

1. An Elder returning a letter of dismission, resumes his functions.

1876, p. 238. [Answer to an overture:] As the Constitution (Form of Government, Chap. IV, Sec. III. [pres. § 11-3], requires that the ruling elder must be a male member, in full communion in the church in which he is to exercise his office, a ruling elder obtaining a letter of dismission from his church does not thereby sever his connection with the church, nor until he is received as a member of the church to which he is dismissed; and when he returns his letter he may resume his office again as a ruling elder in that church. For otherwise, he must cease to be an acting elder for another cause, and in another mode, than one of the two only modes provided for in Chap. VI, Secs. III and IV [pres. § 29-4, 5]; since only when unacceptable to the congregation, and then only either by his own voluntary act, or by act of the session under advice of the presbytery, can he cease to be an acting elder in the church.

The receiving a letter of dismission, while it may suspend the full communion of the member, does not terminate his connection with the church. The General Assembly of 1875 decided (though by some oversight the decision is omitted in the printed Minutes) that the return of an unused letter of dismission reinstated the party to full communion in the church from which it was taken.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 29-11.

1. Explanations of the limited term of office for Ruling Elders and/or Deacons.

1933, p. 48. Overture [answered:] That in Item No. 1, which asks: "Does the fact that no discussion was permitted when this Amendment was before the Assembly invalidate the action of the Assembly?" be answered: That there is nothing to indicate that the action of the Assembly was invalid.

That Item No. 2, which asks: "Does the term 'shall prefer to elect ruling elders and deacons for a limited term' prevent a congregation's deciding to elect deacons only for a limited term?" be answered: That this should read ("and/or").

That Item No. 3, which asks: "Does the phrase 'provided that the time of such active service be not less than three years' prevent the first class elected from serving for one year only and the second class for only two years?" be answered in the negative.

1956, pp. 26, 43. [Overture] to clarify the reporting of ruling elders and deacons in the statistical reports of sessions and presbyteries as to active or inactive status or both.

Statistical reports of Sessions should record only active elders and deacons, the word *"active"* signifying those who have the right to vote as members of the Session or [Board of Deacons] at the time of reporting.

1962, pp. 23, 58. WHEREAS, the *Book of Church Order* does not clearly define the permissible capacities of service in which a Ruling Elder whose term of service on his Session has expired under the Limited Term of Service Plan may engage, the Presbytery of Lexington respectfully overtures the General Assembly to interpret the *Book of Church Order* by answering the following questions:

1. Is it permissible for such a Ruling Elder to serve as a Clerk of a Session?
2. Is it permissible for such a Ruling Elder to serve on a Committee of a Presbytery?
3. Is it permissible for such a Ruling Elder to serve on a Commission of a Presbytery?
4. Is it permissible for such a Ruling Elder to serve as a Commissioner to the General Assembly?

That Overture 3 from the Presbytery of Lexington regarding the service of an inactive Ruling Elder be answered in the affirmative in all four items.

[If adopted, revision of § 13-5 sent down by the 1965 General Assembly, will make answer to "1" become negative.]

2. Retirement of Elders and Deacons should be handled by limited term of service plan.

1965, pp. 32, 97. That Overture 25 relative to retirement of Ruling Elders and Deacons be answered . . . in the negative for the reason that it is inappropriate for the Book of Church Order to lay down arbitrary requirements in this regard. It is felt that this problem can be adequately dealt with through the application of the limited term of service plan, which the Book of Church Order already provides for.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 29-12.

Officers from other Presbyterian bodies.

1953, pp. 26, 52. Overture 11 requests the General Assembly to take such action as will permit Elders and Deacons from other Presbyterian bodies on coming into the Presbyterian Church, U.S., and on being elected to the office of Elder or Deacon, to be installed without reordination. We recommend this be answered in the affirma-

tive inasmuch as this procedure is already permitted under our Book of Church Order. (Paragraph 157) [§ 29-12].

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 30-1.

1. The Assembly should send down amendments only in the proper way.

1883, p. 20. On an overture in regard to an irregular enactment of the General Assembly, recommending that the action of 1882 complained of be sent down to the presbyteries, this action being as follows (Minutes of 1882, page 569): "But in all such cases the session of the church to which the elder or the deacon who seeks dismission belongs shall act as the presbytery acts in similar cases where a minister is concerned."

[Ed. note: The above cited clause had been enacted by the Assembly of 1882 as part of an amendment to what is now § 12-1 of the Rules of Discipline. The clause complained of had not been sent down to the presbyteries.]

1884, p. 247. Enacted.

p. 238. [Overture] as to whether the amendment in reference to a quorum of session, as found on page 26, Minutes of Assembly (1883), which amendment said Assembly did not enact, is now a part of our law.

Answer: The Committee recommended that this informality be remedied by the Assembly's enacting said amendment. And the Assembly does hereby enact. . . .

p. 239. The Presbytery of Ouachita calls the attention of the Assembly to a want of compliance on the part of the last Assembly with the constitutional forms in the manner of sending down the proposed amendments to the Constitution, and overtures this Assembly to reconsider the matter and send the amendments down in the form required by the rule.

Answer, Whereas, the General Assembly at Lexington did send down to the presbyteries certain overtures concerning constitutional amendments couched in such language as does not in itself decide whether it intended to "recommend" that the presbyteries "advise and consent thereto," or not; therefore,

Resolved, That this Assembly regards it as the intention of that Assembly to comply with the principle of the Constitution provided for such a case, and will act accordingly; and therefore recommend that the overture be answered in the negative.

p. 243. [Overture] whether certain defects in the proceedings for the amendment of Chap. V, Sec. III, Par. 1, Form of Government, do not affect the validity of the amendment. The Presbytery makes the following specifications:

1. The Assembly of 1882 did not "recommend" it, but only sent it down. 2. The presbyteries did not "advise and consent" that the Assembly should make the change in the Constitution, but voted to do it themselves. 3. The Assembly of 1883 did not enact it, as the rule requires. (See Minutes of Assembly, pp. 26 and 27.) The following answer was adopted: That the Assembly refer the Presbytery to the action of this Assembly in regard to the overtures sent down by the Assembly of 1883.

2. Stated Clerk may give information on the balloting of the Presbyteries.

1939, p. 59. In reply to the request for definite instructions by our Stated Clerk concerning the giving of information on balloting by presbyteries, we recommend the following:

That the Stated Clerk be authorized to give information concerning the voting of presbyteries to ministers and members of our church requesting same, except in cases where it is obviously intended to be used for circularizing.

3. Barrier to amendment declined.

1945, pp. 28, 54. Overture 7 requesting the General Assembly, in view of the disturbed conditions through the nation, to discourage the sending down to presbyteries proposed amendments to the Book of Church Order.

We recommend that this be answered in the negative.

Overture 8 as touching the same matter as found in Overture 7.

We recommend a negative answer.

1947, p. 52. That the matter presented from the Permanent Judicial Committee concerning amendment to the Standing Rules of the General Assembly to the end that the General Assembly consider overtures for amendment to the Book of Church Order only in years that are multiples of five, be answered in the negative.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 30-3.

Union on Assembly level only.

1962, p. 59. That the minutes of the Synod of Kentucky be approved with the exception of the report on pp. 17 of the Joint Study Committee on Merger. The attention of the Synod should be called to the fact that the Book of Church Order; 18-6 (17); 30-3, makes no provision for union or merger on Synod or Presbytery levels.

That the minutes of the Synod of Missouri be approved with the exception . . . on pp. 36, the report of a resolution calling for a committee to study the "bringing together of their overlapping Synods" (UP-USA & US). The attention of the Synod should be called to the fact that the Book of Church Order; 18-6 (17); 30-3, makes no provision for union or merger on Synod or Presbytery levels.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT, § 31-1.

1. Plan of federation.

1958, p. 172. [A model plan of federation for particular churches was approved. This plan was approved by the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. also. See their minutes, 1958, p. 280.]

2. Pastor of "federated" church may not be member of both Presbyteries.

1952, pp. 29, 53. That overture asking the General Assembly to make provision so that a minister of the U.S.A. Church serving a federated U.S. and U.S.A. Congregation, may also become a member of the U.S. Presbytery within the bounds of which he serves, be answered in the negative, in order to be consistent with the findings of the General Assembly of 1887 and 1923. (Leslie, *Presbyterian Law and Procedure,* 1930, page 163.)

[Ed. note: It must be noted that a "federated" church in § 31-1 is not the same thing as the "union" church in § 31-2 for which many details are spelled out in the Form of Government.]

THE RULES OF DISCIPLINE.

Part III.

Enacted 1861.
Revised 1879.
Revised 1925.
Revised 1945.
Revised 1961.

Part III.

THE RULES OF DISCIPLINE.

The Nature of Discipline.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-1, 2 and 3, 1879, p. 23.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 101-4.

Adult non-communing members—their relation to the Church.

1890, p. 24. Overture respecting the relation of adult baptized non-communicants to the Church.

[Answer:] While such persons fail to avail themselves of their privileges, their relationship to the church is not thereby severed but they are still under its care. (See Book of Discipline, Chap. II, Pars. 3, 4, 5.) [pres. § 101-4.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 102-1.

1. Mandatory language in the Book of Church Order.

1964, p. 112. Consistent with the entirety of the Book of Church Order, the word "shall" is normally to be construed in a mandatory sense, but this meaning shall always be considerd in the entire context in which the word appears.

[Ed. note: In the present Book of Church Order, as in its predecessors, "may" is used when the intent is permissive, "should" is used when the intent is advisory, and "shall" is used when the intent is mandatory.]

2. Church courts have power to make deliverance affirming what is an offense.

1865, p. 361. [Has] every church session the right to make it a rule that dancing and other amusements are disciplinary?

Answer: No church judicatory has a right to make any new rules of church membership different from those contained in the Constitution; but it is the undoubted right of the church session, and of every other judicatory, to make a deliverance affirming its sense of what is "an offense," in the meaning of the Book of Discipline, Chap. I, Sec. III.

[Ed. note: The reference is obviously to pres. § 102-1.]

1880, pp. 201, 202. [See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-1, 2 and 3.]

3. Fact of disobedience to, or contempt of, a civil court is not "per se" an offence.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Rev. D. P. Robinson, 1887, p. 243.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 103-2.

Force of admonition ends when inflicted.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of W. S. Turner, 1881, p. 378.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 104-1.

Original jurisdiction in relation to Ministers pertains "exclusively" to the Presbytery.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 16-7, 17-5, 18-6; Rules of Dis., § 104-2, 107-1.]

1941, p. 47. Majority report of Standing Committee on Theological Seminaries adopted.

The Committee on Theological Seminaries recommends that overtures from the Presbytery of Harmony, requesting the General Assembly "to make careful inquiry into the curricula and instruction of our Theological Seminaries"; from the Presbytery of Knoxville, requesting the General Assembly to "appoint a fact-finding committee to determine the teaching of our four Theological Seminaries and their respective faculties as to the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures"; from the Presbytery of Mecklenburg, requesting the General Assembly "to appoint an Ad Interim Fact-finding Committee to investigate the accusation (of Elder Thomas Glasgow against Rev. E. T. Thompson) and report its findings to the General Assembly of 1942"; from the Presbytery of Roanoke, requesting the General Assembly "to appoint an Ad Interim Committee to make a thorough study of the teachings of Dr. Thompson—and report to the next General Assembly"; from the Presbytery of Central Mississippi, requesting the Assembly "to appoint an Ad Interim Committee to investigate teachings of Rev. E. T. Thompson and report to the next Assembly as to appropriate measures to be taken thereto"—be answered in the negative.

We present the following reasons based on the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, which in the Book of Church Order, Paragraph 60, explicitly defines the relation of the various courts in regular gradation. [Here is quoted Par. 60.]

1. Charges against the belief of a minister according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States are to be brought by the prescribed legal procedure as laid down in Chapter 5, Book of Church Order.

(a) Original jurisdiction in the case of a minister:

Par. 182—"Original jurisdiction in relation to Ministers of the Gospels pertains exclusively to the presbytery. . . ."

Confirming statements are found in the Book of Church Order:

Par. 76—"The presbytery has power to . . . to receive, dismiss, ordain, install, remove, and judge ministers."

Par. 217—"Process against a minister shall be entered before the presbytery of which he is a member."

(b) We find that the overtures above mentioned have not complied with the provisions of Chapter 5 of the Book of Church Order in bringing any charge against a minister before this Court, and that no case against a minister is now constitutionally before the General Assembly.

Confirming statements are found in the Book of Church Order:

Par. 194—"Process against an offender shall not be commenced unless some person or persons undertake to make out the charge; or unless the court finds it necessary, for the honor of religion, itself to take the step provided for in Chapter V, Par. 183."

(c) In the opinion of this Committee the function of the General Assembly, "To bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice injuriously affecting the Church; to decide in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline" (Par. 90, Book of Church Order), is to be exercised only as such controversies are brought to the attention of the General Assembly in accordance with the Book of Church Order which states "The General Assembly shall have power to receive and issue all appeals, references and complaints regularly brought before it from the lower Courts" (Par. 90).

2. The supervision of the General Assembly over the seminaries of the Church is to be exercised through the owning and controlling synods as provided for in the charters of the respective institutions. For example, we quote from the Charter of Union Theological Seminary:

"1. This institution shall be known as the Union Theological Seminary of Virginia.
"2. The Seminary shall be under the care of the Synods of Virginia, North Carolina, West Virginia and Appalachia by whom directors shall be appointed as hereinafter described who shall constitute an executive body, to be known as 'The Board of Directors of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia'.
"3. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States shall have the right of general supervision over the interests of the Seminary and, for this purpose, the directors shall lay before the Assembly, at its Annual Meetings, a report setting forth the existing condition of the institution and the Assembly can advise and recommend measures for its welfare. Should the Assembly see reason at any time to object to any of the acts of the Directors, or the authorities of the institution, it shall send down in writing to the Synods its opinion in the premises, but shall have no controlling negative, nor the right to originate any measures for the management of the Seminary."

We cite as precedent for our opinion the action of the General Assembly of 1886, page 15, the full quotation as in Alexander's Digest (revised 1922) page 492:

[Ed. note: For this action see this Digest, Form of Govt., § 18-6.]

p. 61. [Excerpt from Final report of Standing Committee on Theological Seminaries:]

From the report of Union Seminary we learn that the Board of Trustees took pains to inquire into the teachings of Dr. Ernest Trice Thompson in class-room and in the religious press, and satisfied themselves as to the acceptance of the same. Also we learned from representatives of the Presbytery of East Hanover that the Presbytery also made a rather careful investigation into the teachings of Dr. Thompson and satisfied that court of his conformity to our Standards. We recommend that the Assembly direct the controlling Synods of Union Seminary to take particular cognizance of these two facts when they receive the report of the Board and when the Synod of Virginia reviews the minutes of the Presbytery of East Hanover at their respective meetings this fall.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 104-2.

1. A higher court may not "require" a lower court to institute process.

1929, p. 82. This Assembly enjoins upon the Presbytery of Arkansas its duty to investigate the rumors that are abroad as to the soundness in the faith of Rev. Hay Watson Smith.

1933, p. 58. The Presbytery of Arkansas acted within its authority in receiving the charges preferred against Dr. H. W. Smith by Rev. A. Killough, and, in the light of the investigation then being made, in declining to indict Dr. Smith. The matter under consideration by the Presbytery at that time was the injunction of the General Assembly of 1929, and the action of the Synod of 1930, all of which is more fully set forth in the Minutes of Presbytery, 1931, pages 7 to 9 inclusive.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, The Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith.]

1941, p. 47. [See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 104-1.]

2. "When those who deem themselves aggrieved by injurious reports shall ask an investigation", the court is not required to put the person on trial.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. W. Lehmann.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 104-3.

1. Who are the appellant and the appellee.

1889, p. 615. "In an appeal from a lower to a higher court, who is the appellant and who is the appellee?"

Answer: the appellant is the party against whom judgment has been rendered; the appellee is the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

[Cf. Rules of Dis., § 116-1.]

2. Lower courts are not parties to appeal cases.

1883, p. 48. [Exception to the Minutes of the Synod of Georgia:] On page 27, Synod appointed a member to represent it before the General Assembly in an appeal case. Your committee think that our courts are not parties in judicial cases and hence are not entitled to be represented in the superior courts.

[Ed. note: This is true, of course, only of appeals.]

3. Session has discretion in instituting process.

1882, p. 538. The session is not required to bring an accused member to trial merely because charges have been preferred against him.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Second Appeal of W. S. Turner.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 104-9.

A complainant may be censured by the appellate court for intemperate language and spirit.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. W. I. Sinnott, 1910, p. 43;] **1911, p. 62** (Protest); **1912, p. 70a** (Resolution).

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 105-3.

Must be observed.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Charleston Presbytery, 1894, p. 228.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 105-12.

1. The Judicial Committee cannot try a case.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. F. P. Ramsay, 1886, p. 16.]

2. Recommendation of the Judicial Committee of the Assembly "irregularly" made the equivalent of process.

[Ed. note: The following are the only such instances in the Minutes.]

1877, p. 434. [See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of I. W. Canfield.]

1922, p. 55. A communication from a member of the Savannah Presbytery, protesting against the action of the Presbytery in regard to certain matters, as follows:

(a) The action of the Presbytery in requesting and securing one who is not a member of the Southern Presbyterian Church to serve in an advisory capacity on the Presbytery's Committee of Home Missions. In answer to this protest, your Committee recommends that the action of the Presbytery be sustained.

(b) In regard to the listing of gifts to the benevolent causes from a church which does not belong to our communion, we recommend that such gifts be classed as "miscellaneous offerings," in order to avoid confusion and misunderstanding.

(c) Touching the permission granted to a minister to labor without its bounds, your Committee recommends that this matter complained of be referred to the Savannah Presbytery, since it is provided for in the manual of said Presbytery.

(d) As to the complaint concerning the reception by the Presbytery of a candidate for the ministry who is not a member of the Southern Presbyterian Church, your committee recommends that the attention of the Presbytery be called to the rules of our Church, which cover the ground of said complaint.

(See new section in the Book of Church Order, Chapter VI, Section 7, adopted at New Orleans, May, 1919.) [pres. § 24-1 ff.]

[Ed. note: On page 20 of the Minutes this is called an "appeal" and mention is made of the "record of the case." On page 55 it is variously mentioned as "complaint" and "protest". If it was any of the three, it was most irregularly handled, none of the required forms being observed.

It seems probable that this was merely a group of questions a gentleman (by the Minutes variously named "T. D." or "T. S. Clay") wanted to ask the Assembly. (He is mentioned as being "heard in connection with this report", despite the fact that he did not represent his Presbytery.) Were this the case, the answers adopted were irregular in the use of such terms as "sustain". This matter probably should have been settled in judicial form.]

1933, p. 27. [See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. W. A. Stevenson.]

1936, p. 35. [See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. R. W. Jopling.]

1938, p. 37. [See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of W. W. Pippen.]

1953, p. 64. [See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Matter of Rev. J. W. Marshall.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 105-19.

Sound recordings not part of "record of the case".

1965, p. 97. In this case a substantial part of the record consisted of sound tapes. The Committee holds that a written transcript of the Record in all judicial cases shall be required in order that the members of the Commission shall have access to the Record in advance of the hearing thereon. Therefore, any sound tapes accompanying and forming a part of the Record must be transcribed. This is in accordance with Section 105-19, Book of Church Order.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 105-20.

Counsel for the accused.

1879, p. 51. Resolved, That when our Book says that an accused person may, if he desires it, be represented in the superior courts by "any member of the court" (or as the old Book expresses it, "by any minister or elder belonging to the judicatory,") the design, according to the judgment of this Assembly, is not to allow any array of counsel, but the privilege is to be limited to the aid which one advocate can give him.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 106-1.

Accused shall not be compelled to testify.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, The Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith, 1933, p. 57.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 107-1.

Process against a Minister must begin in his Presbytery.

[See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 104-1.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 107-8.

Divesting Minister without censure under this paragraph sustained.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Rev. E. T. Hoge.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 108-2.

1. Contumacy in the presence of the court may be handled as a "case without process".

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. S. Shaw.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 108-3.

Legal force of admonition terminates when inflicted.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, First Appeal of W. S. Turner, 1881, p. 378.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 108-4.

Presbytery may restrain from functions of the ministry a Minister of unsound mind.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Rev. Stuart Robinson, 1878, p. 629; Complaint of I. W. and W. Q. Canfield, 1878, p. 60; Complaint of Rev. Z. B. Graves.]

[Ed. note: The method of restraint in the Canfield case was informal, by resolution without process, yet was sustained by the Assembly. In the Graves case deposition was had, but without judicial proceedings; and the Assembly did not judge upon the legality of such deposing.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 108-5.

A Minister indefinitely suspended should be so reported.

1894, p. 201. [Overture] whether a minister indefinitely suspended from the ministry should be so reported to the Assembly?

[Answer:] Yes.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 108-7.

Presbytery may depose a Minister of unsound mind.

[See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 108-4.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 109-7.

1. Restoration of Minister deposed for unsoundness of mind should be made whenever there is evidence of complete restoration to mental soundness.

[See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 108-4, 111-4.]

2. Cautious restoration of a deposed Minister mandatory.

1880, p. 202. The records of the Synod of Mississippi were approved, with the exception of that part of Synod's action recorded on pages 297, 298, in directing the Presbytery of Louisiana to restore the Rev. S. P. Linn to the exercise of the functions of the ministry in a manner at variance with the rules of discipline in such cases provided. See Book of Discipline, Chap. II, Sec. VII. [pres. § 109-7.]

1881, p. 394. Records of Synods of Mississippi [approved] so far as written, with the following exceptions, viz.: On page 324 of the records it appears that a former action of Synod, in directing a presbytery to restore a deposed minister, had met the disapproval of the General Assembly, and Synod justifies its former action in this case by saying that it regards the language of the Book of Discipline, Chap. II, Sec. VII, as

advisory, whereas it is mandatory, and requires that a presbytery act with great caution, and restore a deposed minister only by degrees.

[Cf. Rules of Dis., § 107-12.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 110-1.

1. "Come forward and make his offence known to the court" requires appearance before the court.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Charleston Presbytery, 1894, p. 228.]

2. Discipline without trial, but where confession has been made to a committee, is illegal.

1870, p. 536. [The following, after debate, was referred to the next Assembly:] The Presbytery of Montgomery beg leave to present the following overture to the General Assembly about to convene in Louisville, Ky.:

May a member of the church, in consistency with the constitutional rules, be suspended or excommunicated from the church without trial for charges brought against him and without being before the court to which he is amenable, but simply upon the report of a committee of the court that he had confessed to it that he was guilty of crimes worthy in their nature of suspension and excommunication?

1871, p. 28. The Committee on Bills and Overtures reported, recommending: Your committee respectfully recommend that this question be answered in the negative, for the following reasons:

1. When an accused person, after due citation, pleads guilty before the court empowered to try him, the necessity of further investigation is, of course, superseded, and the court may proceed at once to pass the appropriate sentence. But it is not safe, in every case, to accept the report of a committee, such as is described in the overture, as conclusive proof that the accused intends deliberately to plead guilty. The committee may misunderstand or misrepresent his contumacy or confession.

2. In Chap. IV, Sec. IX, of the Book of Discipline (Of Actual Process), we find this law: "The judicatory, in many cases, may find it more for edification to send some member to converse in a private manner with the accused person; and, if he confess guilt, to endeavor to bring him to repentance, than to proceed immediately to citation." We have here described the proper action to be taken by just such a committee of the court as the above overture contemplates. The only result aimed at by such private dealing of that committee with the accused confessing his guilt is the bringing of him to repentance; and we hear nothing in this law of a sentence immediately founded on the report of the interview. On the contrary, it seems to be implied that the proper alternative is the citation of the accused, provided he cannot be brought to repentance after confession of guilt.

3. In the same chapter, Sec. XI, it is written that, although the accused shall declare, in writing or otherwise, and to the court itself, his purpose not to obey a citation, "this declaration shall in no case induce the judicatory to deviate from the regular course prescribed for citations. They shall proceed as if no such declaration had been made. The person cited may afterwards alter his mind." The regular course prescribed for such cases is (Sec. X) that he shall be cited a second time before sentence is pronounced. The spirit of this rule evidently requires such second citation, and for the stronger reason, before the court can properly proceed to final sentence against an accused person who has given a weaker evidence of contumacy, by a verbal avowal of guilt in private, "he may afterwards alter his mind;" and, submitting himself to the lawful jurisdiction, he may so explain his fault, or manifest such penitence as ought to modify the penalty.

For these reasons the Assembly decides that sentence may not be lawfully passed on any member or officer of the Presbyterian Church, unless he confess his guilt in the presence of the court itself, or else demonstrate his own contumacy after a second formal citation, as above prescribed in the Constitution.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 112-1.

"Demission" is an act of the church court, not of an individual.

1880, p. 190. Overture from the Synod of Georgia: "Can the office of a ruling elder or deacon, as of a minister, be demitted?"

[Answer:] The word "demit" does not occur in our Standards, and its use produces confusion. A minister of the Gospel cannot demit his office; he can be divested of his office only by act of presbytery.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 113-1.

1. There must be an end to litigation through the appellate court.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 18-6, "The Assembly will not reopen a case already adjudicated by it."]

2. Rights of appeal, complaint and memorial estopped by approval of minutes of a lower court by the higher court.

1913, p. 69. The minutes of the Synod of Alabama for 1909 and 1910 have been reviewed and approved by the General Assemblies of 1910 and 1911. With this approval the rights of appeal, complaint and memorial touching the review of the same are estopped.

[Ed. note: This was in the Sinnott case. Mr. Sinnott was memorializing the Assembly to "require the Synod of Alabama to comply with the Book of Church Order and review" minutes of the Presbytery of North Alabama which had not been reviewed.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 114-2.

1. Higher court may make a judicial decision on a matter coming to it by "general review and control".

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Joseph A. Enslow.]

2. Adjudication upon a matter coming before an appellate court by "review and control" is discretionary.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of W. H. Mills.]

3. Lower court cannot amend or modify its official minutes after they have been examined and approved by the court of review without first gaining the consent of the court of review to do so.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 13-5.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 114-6.

Adjudication upon a memorial to an appellate court is discretionary with that court.

1891, p. 241. [Answer to a] memorial from members of the Third Church, Knoxville, Tennessee:

While there seems to be an unhappy condition of affairs in this church, and an apparent conflict between the action of the Synod of Nashville at its last fall meeting,

and the present course of the Presbytery of Knoxville, and the Third Church, yet as the appeal heretofore taken by the Third Church has been abandoned and their troubles appear to be in course of attempted settlement, we deem it the regular course and more expedient to leave the matter for the present for adjustment by the lower courts, urging upon all these brethren for the good of the church and glory of God that they exercise a spirit of conciliation and brotherly love one towards another..

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 115-1.

Withdrawn reference may or may not become part of the minutes of appellate court as the court determines.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 13-5.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 116-1.

Withdrawn appeal may or may not become part of the minutes of appellate court as the court determines.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 13-5.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 116-2.

Appeal can be taken only in cases where there has been a regular judicial trial.

[See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 117-1; Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. J. J. Cooke, 1875, p. 15; Appeal of W. S. Turner, 1882, p. 538; Complaint of Presbytery of Memphis, 1882, p. 530; Appeal of Charleston Presbytery.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 116-3.

Grounds of appeal should refer to matters in the original case.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Rev. J. E. White, 1880, p. 221.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 116-4.

1. Notice of appeal must be given.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of R. B. Williamson, 1869, p. 395.]

2. Notice must be in writing.

1964, pp. 29, 109. That overture requesting interpretation of [section] 116-4 of the Book of Church Order regarding notice of appeal whether in writing or not, be answered by recommitting this Overture to the Permanent Judicial Commission for study and report to the 1965 General Assembly.

[Ed. note: Assembly of 1965 sent down to Presbyteries a proposed amendment to require the notice written.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 116-5.

An appellate action is based on principles of ecclesiastical law without passing judgment on the merits of the case.

[See this Digest, Complaint of C. A. Baker, 1884, p. 214; Appeal of D. P. Robinson, 1890, p. 34.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 116-9.

Appellant must appear to prosecute appeal, unless there is satisfactory explanation.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Appeal of Rev. J. E. White, 1879, p. 20; 1880, p. 221; Appeal of Rev. E. T. Baird, 1878, p. 646; Appeal of Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., 1938, p. 37.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 117-1.

1. Complaint may be made on matters other than judicial trials.

1883, p. 48. Exception was taken to the Minutes of the Synod of Georgia (page 18) because the Synod dismissed a complaint because it had "not been made the subject of trial." This was, in the judgment of the Assembly, an error.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. W. McKay, 1883, p. 24.]

1889, p. 615. Exception to the Minutes of the Synod of South Georgia and Florida: Objection to the action of the Presbytery of Savannah in dissolving a certain pastoral relation was considered by the Synod of South Georgia and Florida as an appeal from the decision of the Presbytery. This was irregular, inasmuch as Chap. XIII, Sec. III, Par. 2 [pres. § 116-2] shows that appeal can be taken only in cases where there has been a regular judicial trial. The case should have been considered as a complaint.

2. Assembly refuses to take jurisdiction on a complaint not made to the next higher court as specified in this paragraph.

[See this Digest, Judicial cases, Complaint of Rev. R. S. McAllister and Rev. M. B. Shaw, 1878, p. 627; Complaint of F. G. Ruff; Complaint of Rev. J. E. McJunkin; Appeal of Rev. F. W. Gregg (attempted appeal of Rev. R. W. Jopling); Appeal of Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., 1940, p. 39, 1941, p. 46.]

3. Assembly refuses to take jurisdiction on a complaint pending before Synod

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. S. J. Baird, 1877, p. 423; Complaint of E. T. Hoge; Complaint of the Lafayette Church, New Orleans; Complaint of The Church by the Side of the Road.]

4. Complaint must be made against a specific decision of a court.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Lafayette Church, New Orleans, 1912, p. 70-a.]

5. A court may waive irregularity in form of a complaint and hear the matter.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Robert A. Lively; Complaint of Rev. J. S. Shaw.]

6. A so-called "complaint" by a court must show authentication.

1892, p. 429. The Judicial Committee respectfully submit to the General Assembly the following report:

The only paper placed in the hands of your committee is what purports to be a complaint of the Presbytery of Missouri against an action of the Synod of Missouri at its last session.

Upon examination of the paper, however, your committee find not only that it is not authenticated by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery or any other officer of that body but that, in point of fact, it was never before the Presbytery for action, having been drawn by a committee, but never submitted to Presbytery for adoption. The

complainant not being, therefore, by any official action of its own, before the Assembly, there is no proper ground for judicial process; and your committee recommend that for this reason the case be dismissed.

[See also this Digest, section below.]

7. A complaint cannot be made by a court.

1912, p. 70-a. "The Session of the Lafayette Church complains to the Synod of Louisiana against the Presbytery of New Orleans." One church court cannot complain to a superior court against another church court. Sec. 4, Chap. XIII [pres. § 117-1], limits the right of complaint to "any *member* of the church submitting to its authority."

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of the Lafayette Church, New Orleans.]

[Ed. note: The paragraph of the Rules of Discipline cited here was revised in 1925, but not so as to change the applicability of this action. However, the Assembly had entertained "complaints" from courts prior to this action. Four of the five such instances were "complaints" although titled "appeals". Only one (the complaint of The Church by the Side of the Road) has been received and issued since the above cited action. A so-called "appeal" of Bethel Presbytery (see Judicial Cases) was not issued but for reasons other than the above cited principle.

The above deliverance of the Assembly is the proper interpretation of our order, despite practice to the contrary.]

1964, pp. 57 ff. [See Complaint of Rev. W. A. Gamble et al.]

[Ed. note: Assembly treated complaint as if made by Stated Clerk and others of the Presbytery since it was titled complaint "of Presbytery".]

8. A complaint against an agency of the Church is not a "complaint" under the Rules of Discipline.

1909, p. 19. The Judicial Committee returned the papers on the appeal of Rev. H. C. DuBose, touching union in educational work in China, and asked that they be transferred to the Committee on Foreign Missions, which was done.

p. 41. The complaint of H. C. DuBose against the Executive Committee for approving the action of the Mid-China Mission in uniting in certain school work with the Central China Mission, has been carefully read by your Committee. While conceding to Dr. DuBose the best of motives, and willing to allow full weight to his many objections to the action of his fellow-workers in the matter complained of, it seems to your Committee that, without a fuller knowledge of all the interest involved and the way in which these interests are to be affected by the action of the Mid-China Mission, it would not be wise for us to act as judges. We recommend, therefore, that the Assembly decline to sustain the complaint of Dr. DuBose.

[Ed. note: Actually the Assembly declined to hear the complaint.]

9. Withdrawn complaint may or may not become part of the minutes of appellate court as the court determines.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 13-5.]

10. Complaint may be sustained despite irregularities in conduct of trial complained against.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of E. E. Bacon.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 117-4.

Complainant must appear in person, or by counsel, to prosecute complaint, unless there is satisfactory explanation.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Samuel Galloway, 1872, p. 158; Complaint of Rev. James Woodrow, 1887, p. 205; Complaint of J. B. McNeilly and others, 1900, p. 614; Appeal of Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., 1938, p. 37.]
[Ed. note: The 1925 Revision added the phrase "or by counsel".]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 117-5.

It is improper, in the matter of a complaint, for the higher court to set aside the judgment of the lower court, unless such judgment is clearly erroneous or unconstitutional.

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaint of Rev. I. W. Canfield, 1877, p. 434; Complaint of C. A. Baker, 1884, p. 214; Appeal of D. P. Robinson, 1890, p. 34.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 117-6.

May a vote "to sustain in part" be counted as a vote "to sustain"?

[See this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaints of Rev. Wm. Caldwell and others, 1906, p. 38 and Ed. note; protests of Dr. W. E. Boggs and Dr. W. M. McPheeters.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 119-2.

1. A protest must be submitted at the meeting at which the action was taken.

1875, p. 23. [Overture:] Is it regular for a member who was not present to vote at a meeting of a judicatory, to protest against an act of that judicatory at a subsequent meeting?

Should there be any limitation of time, when a protest may be admitted to a record against such action, after the rising of the judicatory?

Is it regular to protest against an act after the records have been approved by a higher judicatory?

[Answer:] A protest should be submitted at the meeting at which the action was taken against which the protest is offered.

2. A protest must be made to the body which took the action.

1933, p. 37. As touching the protest of Rev. H. V. Lofquist of the Synod of Mississippi, addressed to the General Assembly regarding Military Training, your Committee [on Synodical Records] considers this protest out of order in view of the fact that this protest is not made in the body which took the action. Besides, there is no record in the Minutes of the Synod of Mississippi that such a protest was made. (See Book of Church Order, Paragraphs 294-296.) [pres. § 119-2 ff.]

RULES OF DISCIPLINE, § 119-3.

Protest must be entered in the record.

1951, pp. 26, 49. That overture concerning the right of a church court to refuse to admit to record a protest or dissent couched in temperate language, be answered as follows: The language of the Book, "shall be," (paragraphs 299, 301) [§ 119-1, 3], is mandatory.

[See also this Digest, Judicial Cases, Complaints of Rev. James W. Marshall against the Synod of Florida.]

Part IV.

THE DIRECTORY FOR THE WORSHIP AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

The Directory for Worship
Enacted 1861.
Revised 1894.
Revised 1929.

The Directory for the Worship and Work of the Church
Enacted 1963.

Part IV.

THE DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK.

Compliance mandatory.

1964, p. 112. Overture to rule as to whether compliance with the Directory of Worship is suggestive or mandatory; and, if mandatory, what are the interpretations of the terms "should" and "shall"?

Recommendation: That the overture be answered with the following statement: "Compliance with the Directory for the Worship and Work of the Church is mandatory under the authority of section II of the Preface of the Form of Government and section 102-1 of the Rules of Discipline. Consistent with the entirety of the Book of Church Order, the word "shall" is normally to be construed in a mandatory sense, but this meaning shall always be considered in the entire context in which the word appears."

[Ed. note: In the present Book of Church Order, as in its predecessors, "may" is used when the intent is permissive, "should" is used when the intent is advisory, and "shall" is used when the intent is mandatory.]

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 201-2.

The Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

[Ed. note: Topics in the following sections are of necessity very broad in scope. Some will contain statements which it is impractical to separate and place in precise topical subheads. See also this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XXIII, 8.]

1. Permanent Committee on the Sabbath.

1878, p. 626. The report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures in relation to an overture from the Presbytery of Savannah, and a letter from the International Sabbath Association of New York, concerning a concert of Christian effort in promoting the observance of the Sabbath, was adopted, recommending that this subject be referred to a special committee.

p. 641. [This committee reported:]

That they find the evil named wide-spread and formidable, and, accordingly, exceedingly difficult to control. Some enquiry shows that the legislation of the civil commonwealth is in most cases wholesome as it affects private citizens and as, according to the equity and even the letter of the laws, it should affect Sabbath-breaking corporations; but the wealth, power and recklessness of these bodies in all the States except, perhaps, Georgia, practically set at defiance these righteous laws which all other citizens are required to obey. And it seems very obvious that any ordinary protest of any one body of Christians would be slighted by these privileged law-breakers, before whose will the majesty of the commonwealth and the statute law is sometimes effectually palsied and silenced. The sense of power and irresponsibility, the numbers employed and salaried by them, and the greed of the vast commercial interests which these corporations profess to serve as carriers, seemingly mock at a restraining public opinion as at the laws of the land.

The evils of these abuses are wide and deplorable. The consequence which is of least moral weight, but which is most likely to influence the transgressors, is a material one, viz.: that by resolving to desecrate systematically God's holy day, these corporations virtually resolve to banish from their service every man who truly fears God, or whose body and spirit enjoy the healthful and calming influences of home, Sabbath and sanctuary, and to commit their valuable machinery and the property and lives of

their patrons only to such men as are willing to defy the commandments of Almighty God, to forego all the elevating and soothing influences of the domestic Sabbath's rest, and to carry to their tasks a spirit debauched and a set of nerves fevered by this habitual violation of nature's law, and by the spending of the holy hours of rest amidst the clangor of machinery and profanity. The result is easily foreseen in murderous collisions of trains, neglect of official trusts, waste of employers' property, and fierce outbreaks of arson and riot.

But our concern is with the moral results. Among these must be counted the influence of an evil example almost as wide as the land, and the seduction of temptation and opportunity to profane the Sabbath, offered to weak consciences. The armies of officials and servants employed by these corporations are seduced into a common neglect of the sanctuary, and of the duties of the Christian family. The quiet and order to which even the civil law entitles all citizens is, in a multitude of our towns and villages, invaded by noise and turmoil. And last, the pretext of associated and incorporate action sophisticates the consciences of the transgressors, making them bold in actions which as private individuals they would blush to perpetrate. And this is one instance of that tendency attending the growth of such corporations which is one of the gravest dangers of modern civilization.

Seeing that there is no remedy in the reach of Christians except the power of a widely combined and universal public opinion, your committee recommend the following action:

I. That a Permanent Sabbath Committee of three members, residing near enough to each other for concert and vigorous action, be appointed, to serve until the next Assembly and report to it, and to proceed forthwith in the following duties, viz.: to correspond and concert action with all such ecclesiastical and other bodies as are willing to act with them for this good cause; to assist in the production and circulation of suitable publications to instruct the people; and to procure such moneys as may be raised by voluntary contributions to defray this expense.

Beside the prelates, councils, conventions, assemblies, synods and conferences of the different Christian denominations of the land, this committee should enter into correspondence, for this special work only, with such Sabbath associations as may be found in Baltimore, New York and other cities, and with the General Council of the Young Men's Christian Association in the United States, to combine the exertions of these voluntary associations for Sabbath reform under the catholic principles of Christ's Church visible.

II. This Assembly faithfully admonishes all its pastors, officers and people against over breaches of the Sabbath law ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ for all dispensations and times; and especially, that it is their positive and personal duty to clear their own skirts of all complicity with these sins by refraining from all travel upon Sabbath-breaking railroad trains, steamers, etc., and to refrain, as far as their knowledge may enable them, from committing to them any goods or commodities for transport on the Lord's day.

1904, p. 52. [Family Religion added to this committee.]

1923, p. 33. In view of the growth of the work of the Permanent Committee on the Sabbath and Family Religion, and the lack of any means or facilities to promote these great causes, we recommend that the Assembly abolish its Permanent Committee and place the interests of these two causes in the hands of its Executive Committee on Publication and Sabbath School Work.

1927, p. 61. Overture asking for the creation of a Permanent Committee on the Sabbath be answered in the negative.

1928, p. 41. Overtures asking for a restoration of the Permanent Committee on the Sabbath and Family Religion answered in the negative.

1931, pp. 38, 156. [Permanent Sabbath Committee recreated.]

1948, pp. 96, 181. The General Assembly recognizes that in the Reign of Grace our Saviour and King, the Lord Jesus Christ, writes His laws upon our minds and upon our hearts. Thus when our ministers faithfully proclaim the teaching of God's Word upon the Sabbath there is a response in the Christian conscience. In the Ten Commandments we are called to remember the Sabbath by abstaining from our labors and from those things which require others to labor for us. In the prophecy of Isaiah (58:13) God directs His people to abstain from their worldly pleasures that His Holy Day may not be turned into a mere holiday. In Jeremiah 17:19-27, He promises the continuation of those cities which observe this sign of covenant loyalty to God and warns against the destruction of those cities which turn the day into a time of commerce and amusements. In the New Testament our Saviour calls us to use the Lord's Day as a time for worship, for preaching and teaching the Gospel, and for ministering to human needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognizing the importance of this day to our churches, to our homes, to our lives, and to our nation, the General Assembly adopts the following recommendations:

1. That the third Sabbath of September of 1948 be designated and observed as Sabbath Observance Day.

2. That the Assembly adopt and prosecute a much more aggressive program for teaching the duty and privilege of a proper observance of the Sabbath, along the following lines: (a) That a year be set apart for a church-wide study of the Sabbath, and that the Assembly, in cooperation with the Woman's Auxiliary adopt a study-book on the Sabbath to be studied during that year; (b) That lessons on the Sabbath be included each year in our Sunday school literature; (c) That the Executive Committee of Publication be requested to print and distribute leaflets and other literature on the observance of the Sabbath day; (d) That our ministers be urged to speak words of instruction and warning to the people upon this subject, and that their churches do everything possible to provide an adequate and attractive program on the Sabbath day and thus guide those desiring to keep the day in a scriptural and right way as to make it not a burden but a delight.

1949, p. 143. [Permanent Committee on the Sabbath was abolished in the reorganization of Assembly agencies. Its duties were assigned to the Christian Relations Council of the Board of Church Extension. After this council later became a Division of Christian Action in the Board of Christian Education no responsibility for the Sabbath appears to have been exercised.]

2. General Statements indicating our Church's attitude toward the Sabbath.

1893, p. 26. The Assembly reaffirms its former deliverances on the subject of Sabbath observance.

1921, p. 60. The report of the Assembly's Permanent Committee deserves the careful and grateful consideration of this Assembly. It is the most encouraging report ever made by the Committee in the seven years of its existence. For the first time a truly optimistic note is sounded in the record of the year's work. The faithful and intelligent labors of the Committee in the other years are now producing cumulative results. Many family altars have been erected. Three thousand, by signing cards, have now joined the Family Altar League, and certainly there are other thousands of homes not included in this League where prayers are offered daily to God. More interest also is manifested in our homes in family piety and the religious instruction of children. Our crowded church colleges indicate the desire of parents that their children shall have Christian education. Unfortunately, a similar optimistic view of the Sabbath situation is not justified by the facts.

The chairman of your Permanent Committee, together with the members of that Committee, deserves the highest commendation for diligent and effective conduct of the work assigned to them, a work which has been done with most meager aid from the Assembly and often at the Chairman's own expense.

But while we note these signs of a rising tide in the family religion of our own Church, we must realize that little indeed has been attained of all that we desire, and that for the coming year increased vigilance and effort are necessary. Conditions are most distressing in the matter of Sabbath desecration, all too prevalent in our congregations, and so nearly universal in our country at large as to have become a mighty current before which we find ourselves almost helpless. Many evident forces are at work to weaken the foundations of family piety and to neutralize the witness of our pulpits and of consistent Christians. Some of these are:

1. In the Great Wars' aftermath the unwillingness, or tardiness, of communities and individuals to rid themselves of the abnormally free and easy practices which were brought in by the Sunday sports and the recreation halls of War Camps and Communities. It seems to be the interest and intention of irreligious elements to make the excessive conditions and practices of war times the normal practice of peace times.

2. The commercialized amusements of the time, financed in alarming proportion by the avowed enemies of the Godly home and of our Protestant faith, are dependent for the floating of their stocks and the swelling of their dividends on robbing our cities of their quiet and holy Sabbath and on drawing young and old to their amusement places by sensational and depraving allurements. The moral bread of our children is taken to feed the dogs.

3. A general tide of worldiness which came with easy money and with the rise of the irresponsible rich, unfortunately, has drawn into itself a much younger part of our population than ever before. Now the high school boy and girl know all and do all that years ago may have been known and done by their college elders. Illicit traffic in intoxicants makes our young boys the shining marks for its attacks. The public, promiscuous dance is the frequent recreation of our high school children. Just here home and church care seems to be most indifferent. This Assembly would stir up the pure minds of presbyteries and churches to remember the clear and explicit deliverances of other Assemblies on the dangerous drift of worldly amusements.

4. There is an alarming lack of knowledge and of appreciation of what the Sabbath and family religion mean both to our faith and to our land. It is our urgent business speedily to supply this lacking knowledge.

In view of these menacing tendencies and conditions the Assembly enjoins on our presbyteries more serious concern for the threat to Home and Sabbath, and the use of all possible means to overcome the attacks of shrewd, designing and greedy forces which would profiteer in the destruction of vital godliness. In addition to the ordinary aids of pulpit, Sunday School and home instruction, it is earnestly recommended that our churches use the equipped, intelligent and approved service of the Lord's Day Alliance and of the Family Altar League.

Distressed by the amazing increase of divorces and of broken homes, by the pathetic spectacle of tender childhood orphaned, not by death but by parental infidelity and civil law, so that our own land has become a reproach even in pagan lands, the Assembly urges every minister to present often and plead for the mutual duties and the Christian graces of the Bible home, and to exercise exceeding care lest by him persons be joined in holy matrimony unlawfully and contrary to the Word of God.

1934, p. 41. That the General Assembly commend and endorse the whole splendid report of our Permanent Committee.

pp. 90, 91. [Excerpt from report of the Permanent Committee:]

Your Committee would solemnly register before God and His Church this indictment against the modern-day misconceptions, misuse and desecration of the Sabbath Day as appointed by God in creation; as used and upheld by Christ in life and word; as given by grace unto the life of man and of the Church of God for the highest and holiest ends which God, Himself, could conceive—His own glory and man's eternal good:

1. It denies the Bible as the Word and Will of God with the same intensity and infinitely more effect than the most blatant denunciations of the vilest infidel who ever lived;

2. It registers a rebellion against the will of God which vitiates all vows of acceptance of Christ and loyalty to His Love and Life-mission;

3. It takes the holiest thing that God ever entrusted into the hands of men, save only the life of His blessed Son, and besmears it with the utterly callous mire and filth of hopeless selfishness;

4. It denatures the individual Christian, or the Church of Christ which permits it, and brings scorn and reproach upon the word and purpose of God;

5. It nails a question mark upon the Cross itself and shames its sacred burden in the eyes of men;

6. It affirms that the Church has missed the vision of God and that the souls of men stand in no need of spiritual culture and growth in God-likeness;

7. It stamps as insincere in the eyes of the youth of the land the professions of thousands of parents and Church leaders and workers; and leaves these children of the Church an easy prey to disbelief, indifference and sin;

8. It renders impotent the futile efforts of church men and church women to stem the tide of commercialized desecration and destruction of the Christian Sabbath.

In the light of these things and in the hope and prayer that God may quicken our consciences and lead us by His Spirit back into a wholly reverent and loyal acceptance of His will touching the Sabbath Day and our use of its priceless privileges and powers, your Committee would offer for your consideration the following recommendations:

I. We recommend that the General Assembly adopt the following restatement of its conception of God's purpose in the gift of the Christian Sabbath into the lives of men and of their obligation, under the authority of the Scriptures, so to use this gift that God may be glorified; man's spiritual nature may be cultivated; his powers enlarged; his influence broadened; and an adequate and loyal witness be borne by the Church and its membership to its acceptance of His revelation touching the Day:

"Restatement of the Origin and Purpose of the Sabbath."

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States hereby declares to its membership and to the world its belief that the Holy Scriptures teach that the Christian Sabbath is of Divine appointment and to these ends:

1. To bear eternal witness to the creative power, the Divine rights, the omniscient wisdom, the compassionate purpose, the unchanging grace and the infinite love of God—thus ministering to His eternal glory.

2. To meet the needs of the physical, mental, moral and spiritual nature of man in providing a period of rest each week for the recreation and refreshment of the faculties and functions of man's nature and being.

3. To provide a specific time when the divine element of man's nature might have opportunity for special culture and development through a complete separation from the distracting demands of material things, whether of toil or pleasure; and enjoy a meeting together with God at a time and in a way which guarantees a peculiar visitation of the Holy Spirit's power and an outpouring of the Father's blessing.

4. To afford the Church, as the custodian of the Word and the evangelistic arm of Christ in the world, an opportunity to do its work of educating the minds and cultivating the hearts of men in the Truth of God.

The General Assembly further declares:

1. That every minister, officer and member of the Church is obligated in the most sacred way by his vow of allegiance to Christ to study the Scriptural warrant of the Sabbath Day and the divine purpose contained therein and to use the day in his life, his home and his church connection and service as God has given and designed it.

2. That the use of the day for other purposes is unwarranted by the Word of God; is an act of disloyalty in witness-bearing; is hurtful in the highest degree to the spiritual life of the individual Christian; and lends aid and comfort to the enemies of God and His Church.

3. That, to the misuse of the Sabbath Day and its diversion from its divinely appointed purpose in the life of men, there is directly attributable much of the spiritual decay and stagnation so evident in the present day life of many individual Christians and of the Church.

II. We recommend that the General Assembly direct its Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication to publish the foregoing restatement in leaflet form for distribution to all the churches of the Assembly.

[Ed. note: The action of p. 41 *adopted* Recommendation II et. seq., but did not formally *adopt* the *indictment or the Restatement* above given. However, these items were *commended* and *endorsed* and, by Recommendation II, ordered published for the Church; which made them the real—though *officially unofficial*—position of the Assembly.]

1958, pp. 45, 182. Report of the Ad Interim Committee to Study the Biblical Teaching and the Proper Use of The Lord's Day.

Biblical Teaching

In setting forth the Biblical teaching concerning the Lord's day, one must begin with the Old Testament. For while the New Testament gives to the observance of the Lord's day a new interpretation and frees it from the Jewish law, the Christian Sunday is nevertheless a development of the Old Testament Sabbath and cannot be understood apart from it.

1. The Lord's day in the Old Testament.

Whatever its ultimate origins may have been, the Lord's day or the Sabbath assumed its unique position in Israel during the time of Moses. *It is included among the Ten Commandments and was thus one of the cardinal stipulations of the covenant which made Israel a people.* (Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15.) We may assume that it was accorded an importance equal to that of the other commandments of the Decalogue: to worship no other god; to make no images; not to murder, commit adultery, steal, or covet. It is specified that the seventh day is to be kept "holy" (i.e., set apart to God), a day upon which no work is to be done (see also Exodus 23:12). Not even the pressure of plowing time and harvest is sufficient to excuse the breaking of it. (Exodus 34:21.) So seriously was it taken that the penalty provided for its violation was death (Exodus 31:14-16), though there is little evidence (only such an incident as Numbers 15:32-36) that this was exacted in practice. We have little positive knowledge of how the Sabbath was actually observed in pre-exilic Israel, but it was supposed to be a day of rest from all business—though it was often enough disregarded (Amos 8:5)—and a day of religious observance (e.g., II Kings 4:22ff.; Isaiah 1:12; Hosea 2:11). In later times, with the growing importance of the law, it increased vastly

in importance, and the stress continued to fall on abstention from all labor. (E.g., Nehemiah 13:15-22; Isaiah 58:13-14; Jeremiah 17:19-27.)

Of greater importance, however, than the laws concerning it is the *theological basis* with which Sabbath observance is provided. In general, this takes two forms which are best illustrated in the two versions of the Decalogue. In Deuteronomy 5:12-15 after the command that the entire household including animals and servants (slaves) is to rest, the following reason is given: ". . . that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou" (verse 14b). This hints at a humanitarian motive for the Sabbath rest which was no doubt present. (See also Exodus 23:12.) But then it goes on to say, "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day." (Verse 15.) The Sabbath was thus to be *a day of joyous recollection of God's redemptive act* by which He released His people from bondage and summoned them to Himself. The servant is included in the Sabbath rest, therefore, not merely for humanitarian reasons but—as in various passages (e.g., Deuteronomy 12:12; 16:11, 14) which command the entire family to rejoice together before the Lord on feast days—in order that the whole household might participate in the praise of God for what He had done for Israel. The whole community was to rest from work that it might join in the recollection and recitation of God's redemptive acts.

In the other version of the Decalogue (Exodus 20:1-17) the Sabbath is *based in creation itself* (verse 11): As God created all things in six days and rested from His labor on the seventh, so are His people to rest. Reference here is, of course, to the creation story which culminates in Genesis 2:2. Regardless of the interpretation of that story in detail, its apparent aim is to present the Sabbath as the final act of the creative drama. It seeks to tell us that since not even man is the end of creation, still less is creation an end in itself.

From these things we may draw the following conclusions:

(1) The God who was the beginning of creation is also its end, and the goal of creation is the Sabbath day of praise when all creation gives Him glory. The Sabbath is nowhere presented as a cosmic principle, yet it is conceived of as something inherent in God's scheme of things. The earthly Sabbath is to parallel the heavenly rest of God. Its rest is not mere inactivity, but a ceasing from work which allows man to praise his Creator. The Sabbath is thus a reminder, to use the words of the Catechism, that "man's chief end is to glorify God."

(2) In one important passage (Exodus 31:12-17) these two theological explanations of the Sabbath are brought together. Here the Sabbath is based both in creation (verse 17) and in the covenant by which Israel responded to God's redemptive act (verse 16). It is, in fact, a "sign" of Israel's peculiar relationship to God (verse 13) as a people "sanctified" (i.e., "set apart") to Him. Thus, as Israel kept the Sabbath, *she witnessed to the God who was both Creator and Redeemer,* and also *gave evidence of her loyalty to His covenant.* That is, the Sabbath was a sign that Israel was *Israel,* a people set apart for the worship and service of God.

It is clear, then, that in the theology of the Old Testament, the Sabbath was neither an incidental, optional thing nor yet an end in itself, but a constant reminder of what God had done and of Israel's status as His people.

2. The Lord's day in the New Testament.

As the law gained in importance in the postexilic period, and especially in the immediate pre-Christian centuries, the Sabbath received an ever greater stress. Indeed the keeping of it was regarded as a major test of a man's *loyalty* to his religion. Since all work on that day was strictly forbidden, the need became acute for a more precise

definition of what constituted work, in order that the Sabbath might not be broken inadvertently. This definition the scribes provided through an ever-expanding body of rules handed down orally. By the time of Christ literally scores of them had been developed, regulating conduct on the Sabbath to the minutest detail. To these the Pharisees accorded an authority virtually equal to that of Scripture. While godly Jews found a joy in the keeping of them, the result was that the Sabbath was rigidly circumscribed by law, and the spirit tended to sink behind the letter. Our Lord's teaching concerning the Sabbath must be understood in the light of this situation. Virtually all that He said on the subject is in a polemical context as He disputed with scribes and Pharisees. He does not, therefore, present us with a rounded doctrine of the Sabbath, but rather with *a rebuke of legalistic misuse of it.*

Christ certainly did not repudiate the Sabbath as such. On the contrary, it was His custom to worship in the synagogue and frequently to teach there on the Sabbath day. (E.g., Mark 1:21; 6:2; Luke 4:16, 31.) He likewise observed the Passover and the other feasts of His people. Never did He suggest that the Sabbath be abandoned; indeed His word, "the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:28; see also Matthew 12:8; Luke 6:5) affirms both the Sabbath and His lordship over it.

But Christ did reject the oral law by which the scribes sought to regulate the Sabbath and which was to Him no more than the commandments of man. When His disciples were rebuked for plucking grain to eat on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5), He made it quite clear, citing David as an example, that human necessity takes precedence over the Sabbath law. So does the performance of religious duty, as is illustrated by the fact that the priests go about their tasks on the Sabbath and are guiltless. (Matthew 12:5; see also John 7:22-23.) Quoting Hosea 6:6 (Matthew 12:7), He insisted that what matters on the Sabbath is "mercy." The Hebrew word is *hesed*, which properly signified steadfast loyalty to the covenant, not the external form of observance. He sharply rebuked the notion that the Sabbath was an end in itself, as if man was created just to observe it. (Mark 2:27.) His various works of healing on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11; 13:10-17) point in the same direction. His emphasis consistently is that works of mercy for the alleviation of human need take precedence over the Sabbath rest—a thing granted at least in theory by many of the rabbis. He flatly states, "it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days." (Matthew 12:12.)

From the above we can see that while Christ rejected any legalistic attempt to regulate the Sabbath by a set of rules, *He urged its observation in spirit and in truth.* He did not see it as a day of dreary inactivity, but as one for the doing of good works, for teaching and preaching the gospel, a day for man's physical and spiritual restoration.

With Paul's conception of the Sabbath we see grace definitely triumphing over law. He likewise seems to have repudiated the Jewish Sabbath. Though he often took advantage of it to preach in the synagogues, he apparently did not regard the seventh day as sacrosanct, or have patience with a legalistic observance of it. (E.g., Romans 14:5-6; Galatians 4:9-10; Colossians 2:16.) To him, the whole significance of the Sabbath, together with that of the entire Jewish law, had been taken up and fulfilled in Christ. The New Testament as a whole is in agreement with this idea. A classic example is Hebrews 4:1-11, where it is declared that the Sabbath rest of God, the goal both of creation and of the Exodus deliverance, has been given in Christ.

In spite of all this, the Church could not, and did not, dispense with the Sabbath. Partly to break cleanly with the Jewish law, chiefly because that was the day of Christ's resurrection, the first day of the week became the customary time for meeting together, even in New Testament times. (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:2.) The Jewish Sabbath gave way to the Christian Sunday, which gradually prevailed in the Church.

This was no abandonment of the Sabbath, but a transformation of it. Legalistic regulation of the Sabbath was abrogated, but the theology of the Sabbath was given new meaning in Christ. Christ had indeed fulfilled the law of the covenant, but He had not abrogated covenant law. The Ten Commandments remained in force, that of the Sabbath no less than the others, but all were transfigured in the light of what Christ had done.

On the Lord's day the Church remembered and recited God's redemptive act—no longer the Exodus, but the deliverance in Christ from the bondage of sin and death. It was a day for men to cease mundane employment and, recognizing the purpose and goal of all creation as now understood in Christ, to give praise to the God who had made them, and made them a new creation in Christ. It was a day for the people of the new covenant *to assemble themselves as a community* and, *recounting the gracious acts of God, thereby to give witness to the fact that they were the people of God's calling and kingdom.* For the Church, the Jewish law of the Sabbath could never return; but the Sabbath itself, its meaning fulfilled in Christ, gained a new and eternal significance as a foreshadowing of the "Sabbath rest" of the Christian promised by God. (Hebrews 4:1-11.)

Here is freedom—not to do as we please or based upon "thou shalt nots," but founded on the acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God.

Difficulties and Dangers

Christians who seek a wider and more faithful observance of the Lord's day are confronted by numerous temptations and obstacles, some of which appear to be peculiar to our time.

There is the increasing complexity of our technological society, with its utility systems, means of transportation, and other industrial activities requiring continuous operation and consequently the work of large numbers of persons on the Sabbath day. There is also the tremendous competition of present-day business, straining more and more avidly for the quick profit of Sunday sales. To this factor must be added the general rush and tension of modern schedules. In the experience of many, the profit motive takes little or no account of the "one day in seven."

Attention should be called, moreover, to the problem of increased leisure, with an ever larger number of commercial groups making their bid for this extra time. The increasingly longer weekend, in particular, poses a growing threat as it joins with the current predominance of secular interests and a corresponding breakdown of our sense of the stewardship of life. One must have high Christian resolve if one is to keep the Lord's day effectively in the midst of a too-regimented and depersonalized mode of life. Mass culture throws its deadening weight against the interests of the Christian Sabbath. We must have the courage to often go against the stream if we are to remain loyal.

Most disturbing is the widespread indifference and ignorance of church members concerning the importance of the sacredness of the Lord's day—this is true in spite of the fact that Sabbath observance is enjoined upon us by one of the Ten Commandments and kept faithfully in precept and in practice by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. There is a real danger that modern man might weaken and obscure the authority of the whole Decalogue by minimizing God's positive command, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."

Christians need to be reminded of this further danger: Since, under the Gospel, we are freed from absolute and rigorous control of Jewish law, and have in its place a higher motive of conduct, we tend to be afraid of seeming to legislate concerning the Sabbath. The frequent result of this is that we offer no effective standard in place of the "law" and the Pharisaic attitude now dethroned. The impression is given that the Lord's day is optional and unimportant. Actually, there is for us the law of Christ and

the response of grateful love to make us desire to keep His ordinances. The Ten Commandments are not repealed but rather fulfilled in the grace and truth of the New Testament.

How Far Can We Go on the Lord's Day?

To the Pharisee the phrase "a Sabbath day's journey" had a distinctly negative meaning. Dr. Halford E. Luccock has suggested that the same phrase can be used by Christians in a glorious, positive way. How far can we go on the Sabbath? How much nearer to family and friends, how far out in service to others, how much closer to God? Jesus has clearly taught us that we cannot legislate concerning the Sabbath, what we shall do or what we shall not do in specific instances. But there are great guiding principles in the Scriptures that can shape our thinking.

Without thought of any detailed legislation, but rather for the purpose of extending helpful counsel toward a right and Christian observance of the Lord's day, we suggest the following positive steps and attitudes for the people of Christ today:

1. The Sabbath is *a day for the worship of God*. Every day of our lives should include private worship. But this one day in seven is specifically set aside for the public worship of God. It is one time of the week when the congregation assemble themselves together. It is a time when we give public testimony that man does not live by bread alone. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God." (Exodus 20:8-10a, Revised Standard Version. See also I Corinthians 16:2; Hebrews 10:25.)

Anything that detracts from the public worship of God or leaves us less than our best when we come into His presence is to be deplored. We should note that the Jewish Sabbath began at sundown. The hours of Saturday can have important bearing on how we present ourselves for worship. Weekends that leave God out, formal social functions that put pleasure ahead of praise, the failure to prepare our hearts to wait upon God, can prevent the highest fulfillment of the hour of formal worship. As it is the privilege of every Christian to be present at public worship, so it is our obligation not to deprive others of this opportunity, needlessly or thoughtlessly. And it is the responsibility of pastors and leaders of worship faithfully to present themselves as instruments of the Holy Spirit in an attempt to meet the deepest needs of God's people. Many a half-empty church might be filled if people were truly finding the bread of life there.

2. The Sabbath has traditionally been *a day of instruction*. The transmitting of our religious heritage from one generation to another has always been a solemn charge to Christian people. Moses taught the Hebrews: "When your son asks you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances which the Lord our God has commended you?' then you shall say to your son, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.'" (Deuteronomy 6:20-21, R.S.V.) In like manner, we as Christians would instruct our people in the greater wonder of God's *redemptive act in Jesus Christ*. Jesus and Paul both went into the synagogues to teach the people on the Sabbath day. (Luke 4:16; Acts 13:14-15; etc.) We must do the same through the church school, through hymns, through the Scriptures, and through the sermon which is brought forth out of the Word.

3. The Lord's day is likewise *a day of rededication*. It is a day when we give proud witness to the world of the covenant God has made with His people. Each Sunday we make our public profession of faith anew as we stand with the congregation to worship Him, even as "the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." (Exodus 31:12-13.)

4. The Lord's day is *a family day*. The Old Testament puts great stress on the solidarity of the home. "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deuteronomy 6:6-7.) These words suggest a beautiful picture of the family circle, studying God's word together, taking long walks in the great out-of-doors, kneeling for prayer at night. Peter said, "the promise is unto you and unto your children. . . ," and when Paul baptized a Christian he included all his house. The Christian Church through the centuries has regarded the home as the chief teacher of our faith and the Lord's day as a God-given opportunity for such instruction. Many Christians today can remember the teaching of the Catechism, the reading of Bible stories, the singing of hymns, which were a part of every Sunday afternoon.

In these days so full of activity for all the family, the Lord's day provides the best (and often the only) opportunity to have all the family together. These occasions need not, and should not, be occasions of dreary discipline. They can and should be happy occasions. Reading good books, playing games, listening to great music, even serving special refreshments, can be a glad part of the family's day of rest and renewal.

It should be especially noted that the Old Testament carefully included all members of the family in the provisions for the Sabbath and other festive days: sons, daughters, manservants, maidservants, the strangers, the fatherless, the widow. (See Deuteronomy 12:12; 16:11, 14.)

5. The Lord's day is *a day of rest*. Let it be said again that this does not mean a day of physical inactivity. For many, exercise can be a means of rest. The words "sanctify," "hallow," and "holy" convey the thought of setting apart, of making different from all the others. The Sabbath is a time of re-creation, of renewal. Works of necessity and mercy were specifically engaged in by Christ Himself. But the rapid spread of Sunday businesses, apparently engaged only in the mad pursuit of profit, finds no justification in the Christian teaching of the Sabbath. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work . . ." (Exodus 20:9.)

These questions might well be asked of the activities of this day:

Is it good for my body, mind, and soul?
Is it helpful to my fellow man?
Is the purpose more for service than for gain?
Is it worshipful, to the glory of God?

6. The Lord's day is *a day of Christian service*. The example of our Lord has forever established this principle. "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?" (Mark 3:4) God's holy day reaches its highest fulfillment as the love of God which we have experienced in worship, which we have taught our children in the family circle, finds expression in deeds of loving service to our fellow men. Worship services in needy places, visits to those who are sick, letters to the far off—in these and other deeds our rededication achieves reality.

7. The Lord's day is *a day of rejoicing*. The worship of God in both the Old and New Testaments abounds with the note of praise. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118:24.) "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." (Psalm 122:1. See also Deuteronomy 16:11, 14.) This should be the constant theme of the Christian: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." (Philippians 4:4.)

"O day of rest and gladness,
O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness,
Most beautiful, most bright;
On thee the high and lowly,
Through ages joined in tune,
Sing holy, holy, holy,
To the great God Triune."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the General Assembly request the Board of Christian Education to incorporate in all our educational literature, at least annually, appropriate material concerning the right use of Sunday; and that this Board be requested to report their intended procedures to the next General Assembly.

2. That the General Assembly direct the General Council to restore to the Church calendar an annual Sunday of emphasis on Lord's day observance. (We suggest a Sunday as near Rally Day as possible.)

3. That the responsibility for an annual emphasis on the Biblical basis and proper use of the Lord's day, in preparation for this Sunday, be assigned to the Board of Christian Education.

4. That, in accordance with the action of the 1957 General Assembly, this Assembly authorize that this report be printed in attractive, book-style format, in a heavy paperback booklet, and mailed to each pastor in the General Assembly with an explanatory letter.

5. That the Board of Christian Education be requested to design the format and provide for the printing and distribution of this booklet with the understanding that cost of this original distribution will be paid by the office of the General Assembly and thereafter sale of future copies will be arranged between the Stated Clerk and the Secretary of the Board of Christian Education.

6. That in view of the recent improvements in the publications and work of the Lord's Day Alliance your committee recommends that the General Assembly continue its cooperation and support of this organization.

3. Actions indicating our Church's efforts to implement its view of the Sabbath.

[Cf. the following actions with this Digest, Conf. of Faith, XXIII, 4.]

1862, p. 16. [In answer to an overture from the Presbytery of Tuscaloosa the President of the Confederate States was memorialized to have the armies observe the Sabbath, although there is no record of a motion to adopt.]

1863, p. 144. [Minute regarding Sabbath observance, particularly laws requiring transmission of mail. Included is part of a letter from Gen. T. J. Jackson bearing thereupon.]

1881, p. 377. That the Committee be instructed to institute such correspondence with other evangelical churches as will secure their co-operation in bringing the "Sabbath question" to the attention of the civil authorities of all the States.

The Assembly would not recommend any overture, either as citizens or as ecclesiastics, to the Congress of the United States until the co-operation of the great bulk of the evangelical churches of the whole country may be obtained.

1882, p. 552. [Similar action.]

1886, p. 47. The Committee on the Records of the Synod of Alabama report that they have examined the same and recommend their approval, except that the Synod held a business meeting on the Sabbath, November 8, 1885. This the Assembly emphatically disapproves.

1889, p. 621. Resolved, That we favor the signing by our people of the petitions to Congress for a law against Sunday work, except works of necessity and mercy, so far as the jurisdiction of the general government extends, with the usual exceptions in favor of those who observe another day of the week as Sabbath.

1891, p. 253. To the World's Columbian Commission, Chicago, Ill.: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in session at Birmingham, Ala., May, 1891, respectfully, but earnestly, request your honorable body to order that the gates of the Exposition shall not be opened on the Sabbath-day. The Stated Clerk of the Assembly was directed to forward a certified copy of this action to the Directors of the Exposition.

1892, p. 428. The General Assembly directs the Moderator and Stated Clerk, in the name of one hundred and seventy-five thousand members and seven hundred thousand adherents whom it represents, scattered all over the southern portion of our land, to protest again, before the managers of the Columbian Exposition, against the opening on the Lord's day, and also to petition the Congress of the United States to use its authority to the same end.

1893, p. 8. [The Assembly sent the following telegram:]

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern), by unanimous vote, appeals to the National Commissioners of the Columbian Exposition not to permit its opening on the Lord's day; that the celebration, which is not local or sectional, but national and universal, may be a testimony which will honor God by honoring His Sabbath in the eyes of the world.

p. 28. Whereas we believe that our people ought, by their acts, to bear consistent testimony against Sabbath desecration, and if the World's Fair at Chicago should be open on the Lord's day, it will be a national disgrace and productive of great injury to the cause of Christ, therefore,

Resolved, That we advise the members of our churches, if the Fair should be open on the Lord's day, to register their disapprobation and protest in a practical manner by remaining away from the Fair altogether.

p. 40. *Resolved,* That the thanks of this General Assembly are due, and are hereby tendered, to the administration of President Cleveland for legal and prompt measures adopted to suppress the opening of the Columbia Exposition, known as the World's Fair, on the Sabbath-day, and this resolution be telegraphed to President Cleveland.

1895, p. 428. Resolved, That the Assembly adopts the resolutions suggested by the *ad interim* committee as follows:

1. That the Permanent Committee on the Sabbath be instructed to correspond with the highest ecclesiastical bodies, or proper authorities of all the various Christian denominations of our country, for the purpose of securing their co-operation and that of their people, under the auspices of the American Sabbath Union, in which our Assembly is represented and with whose purposes we are in full accord, in a continued, persistent effort to effect a better observance of the Sabbath in all its forms, and especially to check those great national desecrations which can be reached only by the combined efforts of all God's people.

2. That, to accomplish this end, we propose that all the people of God, irrespective of denomination in the various parts of the country, unite in aiding the American Sabbath Union in the formation of "Co-operative Sabbath Associations," not simply in the several states and territories, but in every congressional district, in every city and ward, county and town (or other similar subdivisions of the state), so that these Associations shall reach every nook and corner of our land.

3. The object of these Associations shall be:

(1), To work up a wholesome sentiment among the great mass of the people in regard to Sabbath observance, by the distribution of Sabbath literature, by addresses and sermons, and in other lawful ways.

(2), To bring this wholesome public sentiment to aid in the enforcement of Sunday laws.

(3), To present the subject of Sabbath reform to the individual members of our National and State Legislatures, and secure such legislation as will guarantee to all who are directly or indirectly in the employment of our government their constitutional right to a weekly Sabbath rest.

(4), To promote, by lawful means, any other needed Sabbath reformation.

1895, p. 428. The Assembly commends all wise legislation for the protection of the Sabbath.

1896, p. 614. Inasmuch as it appears, from official statements of the Postmaster-General, that any post-office of the country may be closed on the Sabbath if the people of the town and the postmaster in charge desire it, the General Assembly would urge the members of the Southern Presbyterian Church to do what they legitimately can to procure the proper closing of the post-offices on the Sabbath-day.

1897, p. 31. It is the opinion of your committee that there is little hope of accomplishing anything by petitioning civil authorities as to the closing of post-offices and stopping the transmission of mails on the Sabbath.

Your committee therefore recommends that our pastors and teachers be urged to take pains to instruct the people in regard to the perpetual obligation and sanctity of the Lord's day, and that our people take care to so live in keeping the day holy that their light may so shine that others may be constrained to remember the day to keep it holy.

1896, p. 614. [In answer to an overture the Assembly ordered:]

That the Permanent Committee on the Sabbath be authorized and directed to take such steps as may be necessary to arrange preliminaries for securing a united and simultaneous effort on the part of the different denominations of Christians in the United States to get up a mammoth petition to the civil authorities for the enactment and enforcement of laws to stop all unnecessary state and interstate travel and traffic on the Sabbath day.

1897, p. 31. The Permanent Committee did not carry out this recommendation for the reason that such mammoth petition had already been forwarded to the proper authorities, which petition was signed by many of our people, and for the further reason that they were already in union with the American Sabbath Union.

Your committee recommend that this Assembly approve the action of the Permanent Committee in this matter for the reasons given.

1904, p. 52. Touching the overtures to "appoint a committee to lay before our leading railway corporations our humble petition that a concerted effort be made to abandon the operation of freight and passenger trains on Sunday, and that a similar petition be laid before the appropriate authorities of the United States Government, that the United States mail service be not operated on Sunday, we recommend the following:

The Assembly does not see its way clear to grant the request of this overture. But the Assembly would insist upon the members of our Church abstaining from the use of Sunday mails and railway trains.

1907, p. 36. That our permanent committees on this subject be urged to seek every opportunity to respectfully lay before corporations and employers of every kind, the law of God on the Sabbath, the working man's need of a rest day, and the blessing that has universally followed the keeping of the Fourth Commandment; and

that they endeavor to secure from these employers the liberty for their employees to attend divine worship either upon alternate Sundays or on a part of every Sunday.

1913, p. 69. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in session at Atlanta, Ga., sends greetings to President Woodrow Wilson, and would record its appreciation of his action in securing a better observance of the Sabbath as a day of rest, by closing the White House to pleasure-seekers and discouraging social and state functions on the Lord's Day.

1914, p. 76. The following resolution was adopted:

Whereas, there is much unnecessary secular activity on the Lord's Day and frequent tendency to enlargement of the same in some departments of the Federal Governmnt; and,

Whereas, we believe the Government of the United States should be the ideal employer and consistently uphold the principles of the American Christian Sabbath by the elimination of *all* unnecessary work on the Lord's Day;

Resolved, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, now in session at Kansas City, Missouri, request that the various arms of the Federal Government eliminate all unnecessary Sunday work; and

Resolved, That we approve of the Sunday closing of the first and second class postoffices on Sunday, commend Congress for the Act of August 24, 1912, which closed the postoffices, and urge the maintenance of that law and the enlarging of it for the mutual advantage of the postal department and its scores of thousands of faithful employees.

1918, p. 33. [In answer to an overture the Assembly] earnestly and respectfully request President Woodrow Wilson that he employ his influence in discouraging the use of secular means such as bands of music, speechmaking and needless traveling on the Sabbath, in selling bonds or raising funds for war purposes, because they mar the sanctity of the Sabbath and hinder the worship of Jehovah.

1921, p. 61. [A communication was received from the Conference Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South:]

"As Chairman of Southern Methodist Conferences Committee, we beg your cooperation and endorsement of proposed national Sunday law to stop all Sunday interstate commerce trains, newspapers, mails, securing Sunday as a rest day for all. We must all co-operate to save our Sabbath or our nation will soon go like Israel to Babylon, like Europe to ruins. The cry of Blue Law is like Ahab accusing Elijah. Letter en route. Please don't fail to act. Notify me my expense."

[Answer:] "This Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. reaffirms its hearty sympathy with all proper and lawful efforts to protect the Sabbath, and it is enjoined upon our members constantly to hold for themselves, and to guarantee to all others, their duties and rights in the Sabbath. But it is not the practice of our Church to participate officially in matters of civil legislation; the function of the Church, as the Body of Christ, being, in our belief, spiritual and not civil."

1936, p. 71. Overture [answered:] The Assembly is in the fullest sympathy with the overture, and assures the Presbytery that it is profoundly concerned over the apparent sanctioning, if not even encouraging, by the various agencies of our Government, of certain activities that are undoubtedly contributing to the breakdown of our Christian Sabbath. However, the Assembly feels that it is not in position to protest to the Government as long as many of our members engage in the same regrettable activities. Judgment must begin at the House of God.

1938, p. 66. That we approve the effort now being made by the Lord's Day Alliance to secure from the Post Office Department and from the Congress of the

United States an act by which the cancellation stamp on all United States mail will carry the legend "Observe Sunday" for two weeks preceding Easter Sunday every year.

That we co-operate with the other Churches of Christ in a petition, to be presented to the proper authorities of fairs and expositions, requesting them to close such exhibits on Sunday as would tend to Sabbath desecration—especially to the authorities of the great fairs to be held next year in New York and San Francisco.

1942, pp. 84, 93. Be it Resolved, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., in its Eighty-second General Assembly meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee, on June 2, 1942, instruct the Stated Clerk of the Assembly to address the President of the United States in behalf of the General Assembly and its more than five hundred thousand constituents, as follows:

Whereas, The Presbyterian Church in the United States believes and teaches that Almighty God, Who is the rightful Lord and Creator of all men everywhere, has commanded that we "REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY. SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOR AND DO ALL THY WORK, BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD: IN IT THOU SHALT NOT DO ANY WORK, THOU, NOR THY SON, NOR THY DAUGHTER, THY MANSERVANT, NOR THY MAIDSERVANT, NOR THY CATTLE, NOR THY STRANGER THAT IS WITHIN THY GATES: FOR IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS, AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY: WHEREFORE THE LORD BLESSED THE SABBATH DAY AND HALLOWED IT."

This General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States declares that the historic position of our Church regarding the meaning and claims of the Fourth Commandment involves the preservation of one day in seven as the divine right of man for worship and for rest from all works except such as are involved in deeds of necessity and mercy.

Further, this General Assembly feels that there are two aspects to the observance of such a Day: namely, the aspect of religious sanction which is binding according to the revealed will of God, and the aspect of practical economy whereby men are better able to render effective service through the observance of one day in seven for rest and worship.

In sympathy with the ultimate objectives which the present national emergency has forced upon us, we earnestly petition the President of the United States and all others in authority, to consider that the success of our efforts in this present national emergency demands an economic efficiency and a moral security, neither of which can be fully had apart from an observance of the Sabbath in accordance with the divine purposes for which it was given for the good of man and the glory of Almighty God.

1948, p. 184. There was referred to our Committee the matter of a proposed change of the Gregorian Calendar to a new World Calendar.

As historic Christianity, almost without exception, has held to the continuity of the seven-day week and the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath; and as the proposed World Calendar would violate the weekly cycle of the Sabbath, and thereby eliminate some of the Sabbaths over a course of years, we recommend that the Assembly declare its opposition to the proposed change to the World Calendar, or any other calendar which will not maintain the integrity of the weekly cycle in perpetuity.

4. On Sabbath Recreations.

1890, p. 49. We protest against all profane use of this sacred day in the following of any secular pursuits, or by any excursions merely for pleasure so-called.

1912, p. 69. [After naming] such evils as the habitual patronage of the Sunday newspaper, the railroad trains, picture shows and theatres on the Sabbath day, [that]

the General Assembly condemn these forms of Sabbath desecration and call on all our people to disapprove of them, and abstain from them, as evils which are not only jeopardizing the sanctity of the Sabbath, but also the spiritual life of our beloved Church and the religious life of its members.

p. 69. We recommend that our people continue their efforts to secure the closing of postoffices and carriers' windows on the Sabbath day, and that they use their influence, as Christian citizens, to have enforced all civil laws enacted for the purpose of making the Sabbath a rest day, such as the closing of places of business, drug stores, soda fountains, and ice cream parlors, cigar stands, baseball games, etc., on the Sabbath, that the sanctity of our Sabbath may be preserved.

1919, p. 34. We enjoin upon our people to refrain from all kinds of outdoor recreation as would interfere with their attendance upon the services of the church.

1920, p. 77. [Overture] to reconsider the third recommendation of the report of its Committee on the Sabbath, adopted at the New Orleans Assembly. The language seems very likely to lead many to the inference that the Assembly lends some degree of countenance to outdoor recreation, as boating, automobiling and driving during hours not occupied by public worship. We therefore overture the Assembly to reconsider the above named recommendation and positively affirm anew our strict adherence to the standards prescribed for Sabbath observance in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

In answer to this overture, your Committee recommends that the General Assembly reaffirm its loyal adherence to the time-honored standards of the Church, and that it affectionately remind our people that "the Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and the spending of the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy."

1942, pp. 84, 140. That the use of the Lord's Day merely for business or for pleasure be not only disapproved but also condemned.

5. On Sabbath Travel.

1886, p. 52. Whereas, we, a court of the Lord's house, believe that the Christian religion and Christian civilization rest largely upon the proper observance of the Sabbath day; and whereas, we believe that the running of railway trains and Sunday editions of newspapers are two most potent agencies for destroying the sanctity and proper use of the day; therefore,

Resolved, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States condemns in most emphatic terms the publication and reading of Sunday editions of newspapers and the running of all railway trains on Sunday, and earnestly advises all our people not to read newspapers of Sunday editions, nor to patronize in any way Sunday railway trains.

1887, p. 229. That presbyteries be enjoined to take such steps as to them appear wisest to discourage and put a stop to such riding on Sunday trains and steamboats by church members, and by ministers of the gospel in going to and returning from appointments, as cannot be justified on the grounds of necessity or mercy.

1889, p. 622. We earnestly recommend to the officers and members of our churches everywhere that they refrain from all travel on the Sabbath day except in cases of necessity and mercy.

1890, p. 49. Specially do we protest against the use on the part of God's people of any and all public conveyances for travel on the Lord's day.

We protest against ministers of the gospel, ruling elders and deacons, office-bearers in our own churches, making use of such conveyances as will mar their usefulness as examples to the flocks in which God has set them to govern and serve.

6. On Sabbath Newspapers.

1890, p. 49. As to Sunday newspapers, this General Assembly would occupy no uncertain position. The Sunday newspapers are eminent influences of evil and only evil. They employ their operatives on God's day, thus allowing no rest on the Sabbath; they flood the land with promiscuous literature; they send it forth on the Sabbath and for Sabbath reading. This Assembly protests against the members of Christ's church in any way or to any extent giving countenance or support to these papers.

1893, p. 17. [The Assembly reiterated the deliverance of 1886, p. 52, on this subject.]

[See this Digest, preceding section.]

p. 24. Whereas former General Assemblies have, in emphatic terms, condemned Sunday papers as a great evil in our land, without distinctly singling out all the various phases thereof; and

Whereas it is unquestionably true that multitudes of our church members and officers take and read and advertise in these papers on the Lord's day, and many of our churches have their services advertised in them, and many of our ministers furnish notices of religious services to reporters on the Sabbath, which they are aware will be prepared for the press on Sabbath evening for the Monday papers; therefore,

Resolved, 1. That this Assembly solemnly declares that all the above mentioned acts are wholly inconsistent with our position as avowed friends of Sabbath observance and, unchecked, will inevitably result in lowering more and more the Christian sentiment of our people on this vital question.

2. That we do most earnestly and affectionately warn all of our church officers and members against all complicity in the evils referred to, and entreat them to refuse to countenance or patronize Sunday papers as the only consistent course for Christian people who regard the Lord's day as one great bulwark of our holy religion.

1897, p. 44. [Answer to an overture:] The Assembly urges the officers and members (of the Assembly) to abstain from assisting in any way the desecration of the Sabbath day by offering news or reports for either Sunday or Monday papers, and refers to the past deliverances of the Assembly on Sabbath observance as sufficient.

1919, p. 35. [An overture asked:] Should our churches, under any circumstances, insert their notices, advertise in, or otherwise encourage Sunday newspapers, and thus tempt their members to take it, as is being done in some of our cities? [Answer:] The General Assembly disapproves of such practices.

7. On the Seventh Day Adventists.

1959, pp. 43, 131. *Your Committee* has been seriously concerned at the concerted effort made by those who desire to observe the Seventh Day of the week as the Sabbath, to destroy all encouragements to observing the First Day of the week through the civil statutes marking Sunday as the universal day of rest; lest there be no day in the week for the general cessation of business enterprises and the Lord's Day be largely lost in a confusion of observances or no observance at all.

Your Committee believes that the Assembly was well advised in asking for a clarification of the observance of the First Day because of the strong emphasis the Scriptures place upon a particular day for cessation of work and special creative spiritual experience; and because it has discovered a surprising amount of opposition and attack against this observance of Sunday by Christian groups which one might have supposed to have been the staunchest supporters of God's Holy Day.

Your Committee, again, discovers in the Word of God positive guiding principles that give strong scriptural basis for the Christian's observing the First Day of the week as God's Holy Day because of its particular significance in Christian theology.

I.
REASON FOR THIS STUDY

The request for clarifying the position of our Church for observing the Lord's Day on the First Day of the week, rather than the Seventh Day of the week, came from commissioners from the Mission Field and from our home synods, and was voted by the Ninety-Eighth General Assembly because of the strong attack upon the teaching, customs and laws affecting this observance by the Seventh Day Adventists.

II.
ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

1. Our Church finds no disagreement with the right of the Seventh Day Adventists or any other group to interpret the Scriptures for their own guidance and practice according to the light of their own consciences, so long as their position and their actions therefrom do not deny to others the same privilege. Moreover, while compelled to reject their teaching concerning the Seventh Day as out of line with the New Testament as we understand it, we rejoice sincerely and warmly in their missionary zeal in establishing hospitals, clinics and schools throughout the world; in their Christlike compassion exemplified in their hospitals in our own land; and in their faithfulness in the study and proclamation of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is so much in the Christian character of this group that draws us into fellowship with these fellow-followers of our Lord, that, as we have prayed over the serious differences concerning their conception of the Seventh Day, we could but envision that some day it might be that the Holy Spirit will show us all a way by which all of us who feel the need of a Holy Day of fellowship with our Lord each week, may be able to unite in the observance of a single day in keeping with the teaching of the New Testament, to the glory of God and the larger service of us all.

2. Our Church does not feel that civil legislation protecting Sunday as a day of rest for the majority of the American people is sectarian legislation, or that laws providing for Sunday as a universal day of rest from business activity, except for necessary services, are religious laws. Accordingly, our Church sees no infraction of the constitutional separation of Church and State, which refers only to the establishment of religion and not to any law passed by the State which might at the same time be similar to God's law in the Scriptures.

It is almost inconceivable to imagine any civil law which would not be connected directly, or indirectly, with God's law. By way of illustration, one Seventh Day Adventist contends in substance, that a legislature has no right to enact laws similar to God's law establishing a universal day of rest.*

This appears illogical on its very face, for if that is his conception of the essence of separation of Church and State, then he would also be forced into contending that God's law provides "Thou shalt not kill" and a legislature would be out of bounds in providing a law against murder and all the other vices and crimes. It is obvious that legislative bodies have recognized that the teachings of the Bible are not adhered to by all, and that there are even those who do not subscribe to it, but because it has been found to be good and right, legislatures have found it necessary to enact civil laws to provide for punishment for violation of these laws which are also discovered in the

*Note: *"Why Seventh Day Adventists Oppose Sunday Laws"* by J. W. Buckwalter, *Liberty Magazine,* October, November, and December 1958, Vol. 53, No. 4 pp5 and ff.

Bible, as a restraint upon the offenders who would take unfair advantage of those seeking to live by the laws of God. Certainly the Seventh Day Adventist writer would not want to disallow all laws for the prevention of the exploitation of the weak, child labor, poverty, disease, etc., which are likewise parallel to the laws of God, but have also been found wise restraints, made necessary on account of the acts of a few offenders, for the benefit of the whole of the people. His point, therefore, that laws which make Sunday a rest day are religious laws and, accordingly, unconstitutional, appears to have small merit.

3. Our Church, therefore, encourages all citizens who are really interested in observing the Lord's Day to subscribe to and support all fair, just and legal means whereby that Day can be made more free and open to the observance of all those who seek to keep it as God has commanded, at the same time realizing that the true keeping of the day must come from inner desire and not from outward compulsion. If the real objective is to keep the Lord's Day, the State has not attempted to enact legislation that would prevent one from doing so on a day other than the First Day of the week, and one must, therefore, conclude that where there is objection to such a law, there may be in the heart of some other objective. Such legislation does not require one's observance of a particular day, it simply prevents one's interference with those who would observe it. It is without any logic whatever to say that the enactment of such legislation is wrong on the grounds that it is a compulsion to worship in a sectarian manner, or that the rights of the minority to worship as they please are thereby violated.*

4. Thoughtful Christians, as citizens, should be prepared to defend themselves and their communities against such attacks on proper and logical Sunday laws in their city and state, but on the other hand, the faithful follower of Christ must ever be on his guard against the pharisaical or legalistic interpretation of the reason for observing Sunday as indicated in the original report. The true clarification, therefore, of the position of our Church in regard to the observance of the First Day of the week, rather than the Seventh, as the Lord's Day, is to be found in the following section.

III.
WHY DO CHRISTIANS OBSERVE THE SABBATH (The Lord's Day) ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK?

In essaying an answer to that question we shall not attempt to engage in debate with the Seventh Day Adventists and others who insist that the Sabbath is to be observed on the last day of the week. To attempt to deal fairly with all the various arguments advanced in support of such a position would require a very long paper indeed, far longer, certainly, than is expected of this committee, and one, moreover, which would probably serve no useful purpose.*

A positive statement representing the general Christian position, specifically the Reformed position, on the subject would be more to the point. Readers are referred to the Confession of Faith, Ch. XXIII, Sect. VII, and also to the report of this committee presented last year, which is presupposed here.

1. In stating the case of the observance of the Sabbath on the First Day of the week, the Christian would do well to remember that in doing so he can appeal to no law. This should be freely admitted. The Old Testament law specifically places Sabbath on the Seventh Day; the Jews observed it on that day, and still do. Christ himself kept

*Ibid

*The Seventh Day Adventist position has, of course, been examined; cf. *Seventh Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (Washington, Review and Herald Pub. Ass'n. 1957) esp. chs. 15-17. In spite of the skill with which arguments are presented, the position is neither exegetically nor theoretically valid.

the Jewish Sabbath, and left no directive suggesting that his followers change it to another day. Nor can one find such a directive anywhere in the New Testament. The New Testament, to be sure, contains no assertion that the Jewish Sabbath is encumbent upon the Christian, and indeed much to the contrary. Moreover, it offers evidence that already in apostolic times—and therefore with apostolic sanction—the custom of assembling on the First Day of the week had already established itself (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1f); in Rev. 1:10 the First Day is called the Lord's Day, as it is in various writings of the 2nd Century (e.g. Didache 14:1; Evang. Petri, 35; Ignatius, *Ad Magn.* 9:1). In sub-apostolic times, observance of the Lord's Day on Sunday gained general acceptance in the church, and has been accepted ever since by the virtual unanimity of Christians. But it derives its authority from no specific Biblical injunction.

2. The reasons why the New Testament church began the shift to the First Day are not explicitly stated; but it is fairly clear that these were chiefly two, one positive and one negative. These were suggested in the report of last year. Positively, there was the fact that Sunday was the day of Christ's resurrection, and, therefore, the fitting day on which to worship Him. Negatively, there was the desire, particularly in Paul (e.g. Rom. 14:5f; Gal. 4:9f; Col. 2:16f) to break cleanly with the Jewish law and to make it clear that the Christian was not bound by that law, nor the observance of the Lord's Day by the rules governing the Jewish Sabbath. Both of these reasons are thoroughly valid, for both safeguard points fundamental to the Christian faith. They constitute, indeed, sufficient reason to justify the change.

As was noted in the previous report, the Old Testament gives the Sabbath law two theological explanations; it is a day for the recollection of God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Dt. 5:15); and a day patterned on God's seventh-day rest at Creation on which man might remember his Creator (Exod. 20:11). But this theological rationale of the Sabbath could not, in the light of what Christ had done, without alteration be adequate for the Christian. Though Christ had not abrogated the Sabbath, he had fulfilled its theology and given new meaning. The Christian did not on the Sabbath recall the Exodus from Egypt, but his deliverance from the bondage of sin and death in Christ. Nor did he remember merely the God who had created the earth, but the God whose purpose it was to make all things new and who had, in Christ, made him a new creation. What the Christian celebrated on the Sabbath was not Creation, Exodus and Sinai, but God's new creation and redemption in Christ. For this new theology of Sabbath a new day, the day of Christ's triumph, was fitting. In observing the Lord's Day on Sunday, therefore, the Christian makes it quite clear what it is he most of all praises God for.

The other reason is equally important. In observing the Lord's Day on Sunday the Christian makes it clear precisely that he has been delivered in Christ from the law. Christ, as we said, did not abrogate the Sabbath, but he freed it from the shackles of legalism. The early church, of course, had to resist that influential group among its own number who wished to make the Jewish law in all its details obligatory for Christians. Paul, in particular, combatted this vigorously, declaring that justification was by faith alone, apart from the works of the law. He had no patience with the legalistic observance of the Sabbath. He seems at times (Rom. 14:5f) to take a neutral attitude toward esteeming one day over another, at times to regard meticulous insistence upon particular days as a step backward from the grace of Christ (Gal. 4:9f). He states specifically that feasts and Sabbaths are but a "shadow of what is to come," the substance of which is given in Christ (Col. 2:16f). His point seems to be that to the Christian no day is intrinsically holy by law, as if there were some merit in observing it; he is concerned to insist that whatever day is observed, it is to be observed to Christ, and in freedom from the law. The change from the Seventh Day to the First safeguards this fundamental point.

3. The Christian, therefore, admittedly does not defend the observance of the Lord's Day on the First Day of the week on the basis of law. To the Christian, all days are holy to Christ, and no day intrinsically more holy than another. He can, therefore, quite readily concede that the day on which Sabbath is observed is, in theory, a matter of Christian freedom subject to no law. Had the early church continued to observe the Seventh Day (or changed to Tuesday or Thursday, for that matter) it would have been, in theory, a matter of secondary importance—*provided the Christian theology of the Sabbath described above (i.e. that it be Christ's day, and that it be freed from the law) had been safeguarded.* The Christian does not advocate Sunday as by law a holier day than Saturday, for to insist upon any one day in that manner, *to the extent of making it an essential point of doctrine, is in itself to return to the law.* But this is fundamentally why the claims of Seventh Day Adventists and others are to be rejected, for these are always advanced—whether admitted or not—on the basis of law and legalistic interpretation of Scripture, and in forgetfulness of the function of Christ in giving fulfillment of the law, specifically the Sabbath law. To reply to such arguments by an attempt to validate Sunday from the law would be to sacrifice the Reformed position.

Nevertheless, though it is an error to defend the observance of Sunday by legalistic arguments, the reasons for such observance are entirely valid and require no apology. Though Christ has given the observance of Sabbath an entirely new theological rationale, he has not abrogated the Sabbath itself. It befits us that there be a day of assembly for praising God for his grace, for the preaching and teaching of his Word, for Christian works, meditation and spiritual and physical refreshment. This must be a day commonly agreed on in the Church—lest in the end there be *no* day. It must also be a day in which the Christian theology of the Sabbath (the Lord's Day, not a day of the law) is safeguarded. For these reasons, both theological and practical, the observance of the First Day is legitimate and proper and by all means to be maintained: it is the day which above all days fittingly expresses the Christian theology of Sabbath; its observance began, if not by apostolic directive, at least with apostolic sanction; it has been commonly recognized ever since in all branches of Christendom as the Lord's Day. To return to the Seventh Day would, in the face of all this, be both practically unwise and theologically questionable. It behooves Christians rather to defend the Lord's Day, maintain it and observe it faithfully in Christian freedom.

O DAY OF REST AND GLADNESS

"On thee, at the Creation,
The Light first had its birth;
On thee, for our salvation,
Christ rose from depth of earth;
On thee, our Lord, victorious,
The Spirit sent from heaven;
And thus on thee, most glorious,
A triple light was given."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the General Assembly direct that this report be issued as a supplement to the original report of last year, be mailed out together with it on all future occasions, and be combined with the original in any and all future printings.

2. That this report be adopted and the Committee discharged herewith.

8. Discipline in cases of infraction of the Sabbath law.

1884, p. 210. The Assembly directs the presbyteries to enjoin upon sessions to take notice of infractions of this law and, when necessary, to administer discipline, at least, so far as admonition and reproof are concerned.

1885, p. 413. That sessions take notice of the violation of the Sabbath by members of the church, and admonish and reprove them in the name of Christ; and if they persist in their infractions of the Fourth Commandment, that it be regarded as an offence demanding and justifying suspension. (See Chap. III, Art. I, Rules of Discipline.) [pres. § 102-1.]

1886, p. 52. That sessions take notice of the violation of the Sabbath by members of the church, and admonish and reprove them in the name of Christ, and if they persist in their infractions of the Fourth Commandment, that it be regarded as an offence demanding and justifying discipline.

[Cf. this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 102-1.]

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 201-5.

Who may attend worship.

1964, pp. 26, 79. That Overture in which certain questions concerning the exclusion of persons from public worship on the basis of color, race or class are asked be answered by adoption of the recommendations made by the Permanent Judicial Commission touching these questions, as follows:

(1) Section 3-1 of the Form of Government, the judicial precedent in the Complaint of Joseph A. Enslow against the Synod of South Carolina (see Minutes of General Assembly 1896, pages 579, 606, 611, 616, and 617; or Assembly's Digest, page 298), and the interpretative statement of the Assembly regarding "any new rules of church membership different from those contained in the Constitution" (see Minutes of General Assembly 1865, p. 361, or Assembly's Digest, page 219) preclude any exclusion of persons from communing membership in a congregation solely on the grounds of race or color.

(2) It is the opinion of the General Assembly that the same precedents cited above by implication preclude any exclusion of persons from participation in public worship solely on the basis of race or color.

(3) Through the established processes of review and control and of complaint a presbytery now has the means of ensuring the compliance of sessions and congregations with the Constitution of the Church.

That Overture regarding an amendment to the Directory of Worship which would forbid the exclusion of persons from worship on basis of race, color, or class be answered in the affirmative in order to make unmistakably clear the position which the Presbyterian Church U.S. has held as is implied by its Standards and by specific actions of the General Assembly as early as 1865 and 1896; and that the General Assembly approve the following proposed amendment to the Directory of Worship, by adding it, and numbering it 201-5, and that it be sent down to the presbyteries for advice and consent: "No one shall be excluded from participation in public Worship in the Lord's House on the grounds of race, color or class." [Amendment enacted 1965.]

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 202-2.

Order of worship.

1958, pp. 44, 54. That the communication in regard to the form of public worship in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, be answered as follows:

The Standards of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (Confession of Faith, Chapter 23 and Directory for Worship, Chapters 2-7, 10 and 12) set forth the elements which should be included in public worship, such as reading the Scripture, song, prayer, preaching of the Word, worship by offerings and the sacra-

ments. They do not, however, prescribe any historic liturgical form of fixed order of worship, nor do they prohibit the use of such, as long as it is in keeping with the evangelical faith.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 203-4.

Attendance of children upon public worship.

1875, p. 42. Those having charge of the Sunday school work ought so to regulate the hours of instruction as to interfere the least possible with the children's attendance on the public ordinances of religion on the one hand, and with family instruction at home on the other, both of which ought to be attended to by all on every Lord's day.

1882, p. 533. Your Committee recommend that the Assembly call attention to the importance of training our children to attend the regular services of the sanctuary. We fear that there is a growing idea that the Sabbath school is an all-sufficient agency for the instruction and conversion of our youth. We invoke the aid of parents and teachers in securing an attendance upon the public worship of God and the ministrations of the sanctuary, and lift up our solemn remonstrance against our children being permitted to withdraw from them.

1897, p. 57. We recommend that sessions and parents be urged to see that the children of the church attend regularly upon the preaching of the Word and other services of the sanctuary, and that pastors preach specially to children.

1913, p. 70. That the Executive Committee be directed to investigate and report its findings with recommendations to the next General Assembly on the subject of church attendance by the children and young people of our congregations. Sunday school officers and teachers are urged to emphasize the duty and privilege of attendance on the worship of the sanctuary, and pastors are exhorted to lay this matter on the consciences of parents and to keep the needs of children in view in the public exercises of God's house.

1914, p. 67. The Assembly of 1913 directed the Executive Committee of Publication and Sabbath School Work to investigate and report its findings to this Assembly on the subject of "Church Attendance by the Children and Young People of Our Congregations." This Committee has prepared a special report in leaflet form covering this important question, and we take pleasure in recommending that this leaflet be given the widest circulation; and that this Assembly heartily endorse the recommendations of the Committee touching this matter, to wit:

1. That those who are responsible for the direct conduct of our Sunday schools and Young People's Societies be solemnly exhorted to use every proper means to induce the children and young people to form the habit of church attendance.

2. That our pastors be urged to give the most serious attention to this vital matter, to the end that the children may be fully instructed and mightily drawn to the house of God.

3. That our theological seminaries be respectfully requested to give special attention to the training of their students in the art of speaking attractively to children.

4. That parents be charged in the sigh of God to organize their family life and to govern their children so that the courts of God's house may be filled with their sweet voices in rejoicing and praise.

1919, p. 34. We earnestly call the attention of our people to the ominous absence of the children from the preaching service, and enjoin upon them to rebuild the ancient custom of the whole family sitting together in the family pew. We believe that the habit of the young people going home after Sunday school, instead of staying for service, is a serious menace to the efficiency of the Church and the stability of the

State, and calls for most determined effort at reformation. The backbone of the State is a Sabbath-loving, church-going people, but such people must be trained in childhood.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 204-1.

The use of responsive readings.

1893, p. 35. Overture respecting the responsive readings in the exercises for Children's Day Missionary Festival.

[Answer:] 1. These programs of exercises for the observance of Children's Day are prepared by the Secretaries of the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions by direction of the Assembly, though the form thereof is not submitted to the Assembly; and their use is not obligatory but is left to the discretion of the sessions.

2. The New Testament recognizes the simplest form of worship, and this the Presbyterian Church seeks to maintain. Responsive readings in the exercises prepared for our Sabbath schools in the Missionary Festival for Children's Day, and in *The Earnest Worker* for ordinary use in the school, in which instruction and missionary intelligence are given as by question and answer, are not unsuited to the purpose, nor, as used in our Sunday schools, inconsistent with the spirit of our mode of worship.

1916, p. 71. In answer to the overture from the Presbytery of Concord, touching responsive readings in the opening of the Sabbath schools, etc.:

We recommend that the Assembly sees no danger of introducing ritualism by responsive readings in the Sabbath school.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 205-3.

Professional and hired singers.

1895, p. 390. The Presbytery of Macon overtures the General Assembly to take into consideration the fact that in many of our churches a practice has arisen of using professional and hired singers for the purpose of giving musical performances as a part of the public worship on the Lord's day, and for which no authority or permission is given in the Directory for Worship of our church.

The effects of this innovation are to interfere to a large extent with the privilege of the people in singing the praises of God; to violate the simplicity of the forms of worship which has always characterized our Church; to distract their minds from the true objects for which the people come together in God's house; to introduce the element of entertainment rather than assist in the worship in spirit and in truth; and to lower the tone of the sacred exercises of devotion to the level of worldly and questionable amusements. Besides which, the influence of these practices is to bring discredit upon the preaching of the doctrines of the cross, which is the only divinely prescribed way for the church to win the attention of sinful men, and to place the ministry in a doubtful position as to its adaptation for securing the most important result.

These serious considerations, as well as the waste of money involved, and the trouble and anxiety which many of the pastors and sessions realize in dealing with the developments of this practice, influence this Presbytery to overture your venerable court that you make such deliverance as will tend to correct the evil, either by pastoral letter or otherwise, as in your judgment may seem best.

The committee recommends the following:

Answer: The Assembly directs the attention of our churches to Paragraph 67 of the Book of Church Order (Chap. V, Sec. III) [pres. § 15-6], in which the powers of the church session are defined, and in which the session of each church is specifically charged "to take oversight of the singing in the public worship of God." Recognizing and deploring the existence of the evil complained of in the overture from the Presby-

tery of Macon, the General Assembly hereby enjoins such oversight of this important part of public worship as will conform to the principle laid down in Chapter IV of our Directory for Worship.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 207-2.

1. Pastors should preach to the children.

1871, p. 27. That all the presbyteries be enjoined to urger greater fidelity upon the part of pastors in preaching to the children of their respective charges.

1893, p. 50. Overture asking the Assembly to interpret the meaning of the question in the Assembly's Form of Sessional Report: "Does your pastor preach regularly to the children of the Sabbath school?"

[Answer:] The question seems simply to mean what it says, viz.: "Does your pastor preach sermons specially adapted to the children at regularly recurring periods?"

1897, p. 57. We recommend that sessions and parents be urged to see that the children of the church attend regularly upon the preaching of the Word and other services of the sanctuary, and that pastors preach specially to the children.

2. "Freedom of the Pulpit."

1958, pp. 43, 76, 83, 211. It has come to the attention of the 98th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States that there has been embarrassment to some ministers as well as to church officers concerning the question of the freedom of the pulpit.

In accordance with the action of the General Assembly which took recognition of the need for a clear statement concerning the Protestant heritage and Presbyterian concept of the freedom of the pulpit, this Committee has endeavored to perform its task in light of the teachings of the Scriptures and the Standards of our Church as contained in the Book of Church Order and the Confession of Faith.

As we read the Scriptures of the Old Testament dealing with the lives and teachings of the prophets, we are struck with their sense of divine mission to proclaim, without fear or favor, the whole of God's truth as it was revealed to them. The phrase, "Thus saith the Lord," represented a feeling of their commitment to a command of God. The prophets, convinced that they were commissioned to speak for God, avoided no moral or social problems of their day.

Our Church acknowledges our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to be the true Head of the Church and emphasizes the great commission of our Lord wherein he said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The teachings of our Saviour, so clearly set forth in the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule and the Parables of the Kingdom, apply to all of life and its relationships.

In apostolic times Saint Paul in his letters to the Churches dealt with Christian life and conduct as related to the moral and social structure of his time. He gave to the young ministers, Timothy and Titus, such counsel as "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine," Also ". . . endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." And "These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority."

Our Confession of Faith gives strong support to the point of view that a minister should preach in accordance with the "whole counsel of God," that is, his teaching and preaching must proclaim the relevance of our faith for everyday living. Chapter I, Paragraph VI, states, "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for

His own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture. . . ."

Our Book of Church Order, Chapter IX, discusses and describes in considerable detail the qualifications expected of "the Minister of the Word." In his ordination vows the minister promises to "be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church . . . ." Likewise a congregation assumes the obligation of receiving the word of truth from the minister "with meekness and love," and "promises to submit to him in the due exercise of discipline." Further, the congregation promises to encourage the minister in his labor, "and to assist his endeavors for their instruction and spiritual edification."

Nowhere in the Standards of our Church is there any justification for binding the conscience of either minister or layman. Indeed, it is expressly stated in the Confession of Faith, Chapter XX, "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his word . . ."

According to the Scriptures, we must conclude that a minister is one called and set apart under God to "proclaim the whole counsel of God." If the ministry of our Church is to be anything more than the priestly preservation of tradition, it must involve not only the proclaiming of the "Good News" of the Gospel, but also something of a prophetic nature, in that each minister, feeling the burden of the Lord upon his heart, must speak forth, "Thus saith the Lord."

The Scriptures, the Book of Church Order, and the Confession of Faith do not warrant the dictation by session or congregation to an ordained minister as to how he shall interpret the message of salvation and its application to life. A minister of our Church has the right and obligation to teach and interpret the Scriptures, provided only that his teaching is not out of harmony with the Scriptures or the Standards of the Presbyterian Church. If question is raised as to whether his teaching is out of harmony with these guides, such a question should be raised in the Presbytery of which he is a member, and in accordance with the provision of the Book of Church Order.

While maintaining the right and obligation of the minister to preach and teach the Scriptures, the General Assembly urges its ministers to remember that there are restraints which they should place upon themselves. On an important matter of principle, the minister's position should be unequivocal. However, it is possible to speak boldly yet with humility; to take a position without emphasizing it out of proportion to its proper place; to teach persuasively; to maintain the authority of the Word of God without claiming infallibility in interpreting it. The minister should speak in love. "The Servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves . . ." While seeking to quicken the conscience of church members and to bring light from the Scriptures to the question, the minister should remember that God alone is Lord of the conscience and Judge of our deeds and hearts.

The members of a congregation, and particularly the officers, should avoid taking offense at the faithful preaching of the whole Word of God. The Scriptures contain much to disturb us as well as much to comfort us. Even in the lives of earnest Christians there are areas of thought and conduct that are still not in harmony with the teachings of the Scriptures and the mind of Christ. Instruction and admonition by the minister are used by the Holy Spirit to lead us into "all truth," and to contribute to our growth in grace.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 208-1.

[Material relevant here is to be found under § 220-1.]

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 209-3.

Baptism of infants ought to take place, if possible, in the sanctuary.

1912, p. 70. As an aid to a better observance of the religion which God requires of Christian homes, we recommend that all our pastors and Sessions be urged to require, with more earnestness, that parents present their children for dedication to God in the ordinance of baptism, and that such dedications always take place, if possible, in the sanctuary.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 211-1.

1. The Administration of the Lord's Supper.

[See also this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXXI.]

2. By ordained Minister only.

1964, pp. 111-112. [Overture seeking to allow Ruling Elders to administer the Sacraments.] Answered in the negative.

Explanatory statement: The Commission feels, in answer to reason A of the overture, that the present practice is "biblical" in the sense of the "General Note" on page 9 of the Confession of Faith, and that the limiting of administration of the sacraments to ordained Ministers has always been in Reformed Churches an acknowledgment of the general biblical statements regarding "order" in the Church. The Commission questions, in reply to reason B, whether the need for administration of the sacraments is such as to require the remedy suggested. The Committee notes that the "parity of elder," mentioned in reason C, refers *only to governing* functions (form of Government, section 9-3); that "disturbing the elements" in B.C.O. section 211-5 is not the same thing as "administration of the sacrament"; that hearing professions and admitting to the Lord's Table are Sessional acts (B.C.O. section 210-4) at which a Ruling Elder may properly preside.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 211-8.

1. What elements shall be used in the Lord's Supper.

1898, p. 218. [Overture:] "Is it competent for a church session to elect what elements shall be used to typify the shed blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's supper?"

Answer: No; the Lord has indicated bread and wine as the proper elements.

2. Fermented wine in the Lord's Supper.

1892, p. 451. [Answer to an overture:]

1. In the judgment of this Assembly, the Scriptural element to be used in the Lord's Supper is the fermented grape-juice.

2. This Assembly would not, however, be understood as declaring that the use of unfermented grape-juice, as conscientiously practiced by some of our churches, would necessarily vitiate the validity of the ordinance.

1893, p. 47. In response to an overture, asking that the second part of the deliverance of the Assembly of 1892, concerning the use of wine in the communion, be rescinded, the following answer:

1. The General Assembly declines to rescind the action of the last Assembly, and refers to the action of the General Assembly of 1870, p. 522, which is as follows: "An immediate rescinding of the act of the previous Assembly would consist neither with courtesy of the Assembly, nor with that reverence which the Assembly, by its example should inculcate upon the people, for 'decrees and determinations, of synods and councils, not contrary to the Word of God, not only for their agreement with the Word, but for the power whereby they are made.' (Confession of Faith, Chap. XXXI, Sec. II.) [XXXIII, 2.] And this the more especially when no time has been allowed to test by experience whether the measure is liable to work injuriously or not."

2. As distinctly affirmed by the last Assembly in the first part of their deliverance (Minutes, 1892, p. 451), it is the judgment of this Assembly that "the scriptural element to be used in the Lord's supper," designated in the Scriptures as "the cup" or "this cup," and as "the fruit of the vine," "is the fermented grape-juice."

1911, p. 29. [Preceding deliverances cited, and] "at the same time leave the question of the particular kind of bread and wine to be used to the discretion and judgment of the session of each church."

1914, p. 42. Overture asking replies to the following questions:

1. Has the session of an individual church the right, by a majority vote, to choose between fermented and unfermented wine?

2. Is unfermented wine equally scriptural with the fermented wine, and is the ordinance of the Lord's Supper equally valid when the unfermented wine is used as when the fermented wine is used?

Answer: The Assembly replies in the affirmative to Question 1.

Answer: The Assembly refers the second question to an Ad-Interim Committee.

1916, p. 26. The Ad-Interim Committee to which was referred an overture relating to communion wine reports that, after careful consideration of the whole subject, it is the judgment of the Committee that the actions of previous General Assemblies meet all the needs of the case, providing ample liberty for any session to be guided by its own interpretation of the Scriptures in this matter.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 213-1.

Days of Fasting and of Thanksgiving.

1. Days of fasting and prayer.

1866, p. 39. In view of the manifold sins and dangers of our people, the privations and distress to which many of them have been reduced, and especially in the hope that it may please God, in answer to our prayers, to bestow his blessing on our Church in all her spiritual interests and Christian enterprises.

Resolved, That the last Thursday of February, 1867, be appointed a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to be observed by all the ministers, families and congregations under the General Assembly.

1867, p. 137. Overture in regard to appointing a day of fasting and prayer. The following was adopted:

Resolved, That this Assembly recommend the 24th day of January, 1868, as a day of fasting and prayer, and urge upon all our churches, in view of the extraordinary distress of God's people in this land, to observe said day by suitable religious exercises.

1868, p. 280. In view of the general condition of our Church and country, be it Resolved, That the Thursday before the first Sabbath in August next be appointed and set apart by this Assembly as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to be observed in all our churches.

1902, p. 258. On overtures asking the appointment of a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer, in view of the low state of religion within our bounds, the committee recommend an affirmative answer, and that the last Thursday in June be the day.

1918, p. 23. An appeal from the United States Government, asking for the Observance of Memorial Day.

p. 41. There have been placed in the hands of your committee, certain papers bearing upon the observance of a day of prayer and supplication in behalf of our Nation, that our people may turn with contrite heart to God, seeking His guidance and blessing in the hour.

We recommend that this Assembly call upon its churches and individual members to observe May 30th, 1918, the day set apart by the President of the United States, as a season of "public humiliation, prayer and fasting—with the offering of fervent supplication to Almighty God for the safety and welfare of our cause, His blessing upon our arms, and a speedy restoration of an honorable and lasting peace to the nations of the earth."

1940, p. 72. In answer to communications with reference to a day of repentance and prayer for peace, we recommend that the Assembly petition the President of the United States to call in the near future a Day of Repentance and Prayer for Peace based on righteousness, and

That the Assembly request our churches to set apart June 2nd as a Day of Repentance, Fasting and Prayer for Peace based on righteousness, and that our people be called upon to continue to pray thus until such a peace shall have been established.

1941, p. 42. In answer to overtures the Assembly appointed a special day of prayer and fasting for our Church, upon which day our entire Church shall pray Almighty God that peace with righteousness be brought to the world.

1950, p. 71. That the General Assembly observe a Day of Fasting and Prayer for the conversion of individuals by name, and a genuine revival throughout the Church, on October 22, 1950.

2. Day of thanksgiving and prayer.

1872, p. 166. In response to an overture the Committee of Bills and Overtures recommend that the third Thursday of November next be observed as a day of special thanksgiving to God for His mercies to us as a church, and of humiliation and earnest supplication to God for an abundant outpouring of His Spirit on all our pastors and congregations.

3. Prayer at noon.

1920, p. 79. Overture requests that the Assembly petition the President to designate the noon hour daily as a time of prayer. The Committee recommends the following:

In view of present world-wide unsettled conditions and the growing unrest and distress in our own land, the General Assembly recommends to all our churches that during the month of June our people at the noon hour unitedly join in a five minutes intercessory prayer that God will banish the evils that now threaten and give to us stability and peace, and that our Assembly request all other Christian bodies who are willing to do so to join us in this intercession.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 214-3.

1. The Sabbath School no substitute for parental instruction and family religion.

1892, p. 448. It becomes the solemn and imperative duty of the Assembly most earnestly and emphatically to warn our people of the great danger from this direction, and to use all its agencies and powers to arouse the consciences of God's people to the solemn and indispensable duty of family worship and religious training in the household, and not to suffer even the Sabbath school itself to become a substitute for parental duty and for the religious teaching of their children in the home, inasmuch as God suffers nothing, whether Church or State, to interpose between the parent and child, and to relieve the former of his natural and sacred duty to the latter.

1936, p. 64. [Reaffirmed.]

1885, p. 425. [The following paper was adopted and ordered read in all the churches:]

Whereas the narratives from presbyteriees so uniformly report sad, deplorable, distressing neglect of family worship and catechetical instruction in the household, therefore be it

Resolved, That this Assembly recommends that the presbyteries instruct every minister having the care of souls within our bounds, to preach during the month of October, or as soon thereafter as practicable (and frequently in the future), a sermon on the importance of family worship, to be followed by one on parental responsibility; these sermons to be preached in every congregation, at a time most favorable for a large attendance; and that presbyteries require from every pastor a report as to his diligence in the performing of this duty.

1907, p. 36. [Overture adopted:] "That the General Assembly repeat and emphasize the following extract from the Minutes of 1906: 'That all of our people who are heads of families be earnestly and affectionately exhorted to erect and maintain family altars, where God's richest blessing shall be invoked and vouchsafed to them and to their children. And that our pastors and sessions make a thorough canvass of their congregations to ascertain the number of families that have family altars, and the number that have not, and report the same to their respective presbyteries. And we warn parents against the danger and tendency of delegating the religious training of their children to Sunday schools, Young People's Societies, or any other agencies, all of which should be appreciated and improved as invaluable aids to parents, but not as substitutes for parental training.' "

2. Family Worship.

[See also this Digest, Pastoral Letters.]

1908, p. 44. That all the presbyteries be directed to have a thorough canvass made of all the congregations in their bounds to ascertain how many families observe family worship; secure, as far as possible, its observance, where neglected, and also get any reasons that may be given for its non-observance, and report the results to the Permanent Committee on Sabbath Observance and Family Religion.

1912, p. 70. The General Assembly requests the session of each church within its bounds to appoint the last Sabbath in September as a day of special prayer for a revival of family religion and Sabbath observance, and that on this day a sermon be preached on the vital importance of family worship and Sabbath observance, and how these are linked together by our Heavenly Father for the welfare of His children.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 215-1.

Christian Marriage.

[See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXXI.]

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 217-1.

Evangelizing.

[See also this Digest; Pastoral Letters, and Days of Fasting and Prayer.]

The Missionary Platform of the Church.

1861, p. 17. Finally, the General Assembly desires distinctly and deliberately to inscribe on our Church's banner as she now first unfurls it to the world, in im-

mediate connection with the Headship of her Lord, His last command: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature;" regarding this as the great end of her organization, and obedience to it as the indispensable condition of her Lord's promised presence, and as one great comprehensive object a proper conception of whose vast magnitude and grandeur is the only thing which in connection with the love of Christ can ever sufficiently arouse her energies and develop her resources, so as to cause her to carry on with the vigor and efficiency which true fealty to her Lord demands, those other agencies necessary to her internal growth and home prosperity.

1907, p. 50. We earnestly call upon every individual church of our denomination to adopt the following missionary policy, which we believe to be that laid down for us in the Word of God:

a. Every true church of Christ is, by virtue of its organization as a church of Christ, a missionary society, each member of which is under solemn covenant to the Head of the Church to help in the fulfillment of our commission to give the Gospel to every creature.

b. It is the duty of those who have the proper gifts and qualifications, and who are not providentially hindered, personally to obey the command of the Head of the Church to "go" on this mission. It is the duty of those who may be lacking in necessary qualifications for the work or who are providentially hindered from going, to have a share, by their gifts and prayer, in supporting the work. For this purpose every Christian who does not personally go as a missionary, is scripturally bound to give systematically, proportionately and cheerfully, to the support of the cause.

[Both often reaffirmed, as 1908, 1916, 1935, 1962.]

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 218-1.

The evangelistic purpose of the Sunday school.

1913, p. 70a. That sessions be encouraged to give earnest heed to the fact that the salvation of the soul of every pupil is the primary aim of the Sabbath school and should engage their chief attention; the purely educational features of the school should be made secondary to its evangelistic purpose; while at the same time these educational features are made as perfect as possible.

1916, p. 44. [We recommend] unceasing and devoted labor and prayer on the part of the teacher, officer and pastor for the conversion at the earliest moment of the pupils under their care and guidance.

1917, p. 41. The Presbyterial Reports indicate that in many churches, some of them with large membership, there were no additions on profession of faith. We believe that the real facts are not revealed by these reports, and the Assembly again enjoins church sessions to see that the evangelistic purpose of the Sunday school is always emphasized and that full and accurate reports are made annually to the presbytery as to conversion of pupils and their admission to the church.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 218-2.

Presbyterianism to be taught in the Sunday school.

1870, p. 512. That the presbyteries be directed to urge it upon all their churches, wherever it is practicable, to establish schools directly under the control of the church sessions; and that, in these schools, greater prominence be given to the study of our Catechisms, Confession of Faith, and Form of Government.

1872, p. 174. That the injunction be emphatically reiterated that presbyteries act efficiently in bringing all our Church schools directly under the control of the

church session . . .; and that they see to it that our Catechisms, Confession of Faith, and Form of Government, with the Bible, be the prominent subjects of study.

1877, p. 437. *Resolved*, That in the conduct of the Sabbath schools, no matter what system of lessons may be used, it is earnestly enjoined upon our church sessions to see to it that not only the great truths of the Gospel, about which all evangelical denominations are agreed, but also the distinctive doctrines of the Presbyterian Church, are faithfully taught.

1897, p. 57. We recommend that all the Sabbath schools introduce and use, in connection with the Bible lessons, the *Supplemental Lesson Course*, directed by the last General Assembly, embracing a full course of catechetical study and also upon the government and history of the Church.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 218-5.

Definition of the Sunday school.

1875, p. 42. *Resolved*, 1, That the Sunday school is but the more formal organization of catechetical classes which have been known to the Church in all ages, and should be so conducted as to secure a thorough drill and training in the Scriptures, and in the hymnology and standards of the Church.

2. That the pastor and elders of the Church, with the help of such others as they may select and approve, are the divinely appointed catechists or teachers, and the work should devolve upon them in all well regulated congregations.

3. That the obligation of family training by the parent is in nowise modified by the Sunday school, nor in any way transferred to it; but the additional obligation rests upon the parent to sustain Church officers in this peculiar form of their work, and cooperate, as far as possible, in it. The one is a family, and the other a pastoral, function and each is supplemental to the other.

1880, p. 214. The Sabbath school is not something apart from the Church, but the Church, old and young, studying the Bible.

1881, p. 380; 1886, p. 45. [Similar actions.]

1888, p. 419. The Sabbath school is nothing more nor less than the Church, the whole Church studying the Word of God.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 220-1.

[See also D.W.W., § 208-1.]

1. Opportunity to be afforded every member to give.

1865, p. 368. The committee recommend that it be enjoined upon the church sessions to adopt some plan by which every member of their congregation may have an opportunity and be appealed to, whether poor or rich, young or old, even in these times of trial, to contribute something to the various objects of benevolence which demand their benefactions; that the sessions report to the presbyteries, and that the presbyteries report to the Assembly, the plans they have adopted and their results.

1867, p. 142; 1871, p. 20; 1884, p. 218. [Similar actions.]

2. Pastors to instruct people as to their duty in giving.

1871, p. 20. Resolved, That the presbyteries earnestly recommend all their pastors, stated supplies and missionaries, to give frequent instructions to their respective churches as to their duty in this matter, which is not only of prime importance to the progress, but even indispensable to the continued life and permanent existence of the Church.

1882, p. 547. [Similar action.]

3. The Tithe.

1876, p. 241. Overtures from the Presbytery of Montgomery and the Synod of North Carolina asking the Assembly to determine the question whether the law of the tithe is of universal and perpetual obligation. The committee recommend that this subject be referred to the next General Assembly.

[Ed. note: No further action appears in 1877.]

1890, p. 26. In response to the overture of the last Assembly, sixty-eight presbyteries of the seventy-one on the roll have sent up papers on the law of the tithe as a means of raising the funds of the church. All the shades of opinion expressed could not be presented without giving the papers in full, some of which are quite voluminous. The following summary, however, is substantially correct:

Of the sixty-eight reporting, fifty-one express the opinion that the law of the tithe is not binding under the New Testament dispensation; ten regard it as still binding, either upon the church or the individual, or both; one is not clear enough to be put on either side, six decline to express an opinion.

Of the fifty-one that do not regard the law as binding under the present dispensation, sixteen refer to it as suggestive in the matter of systematic giving, or useful to guide the Christian in determining his duty.

Of the ten that believe the law to be binding, three advise against formal enactment of measures to enforce the law.

The larger number of presbyteries enjoin greater consecration to the Lord, and liberal and systematic giving according to one's ability, and quote, as setting forth the Scripture principles that should guide in the discharge of this duty, such passages as these: "Let everyone lay by him in store as God hath prospered him;" "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver;" "As a man purposeth in his heart, so let him give."

The committee recommend that these facts be spread upon the Minutes, and that no further action be taken upon the subject by the General Assembly.

p. 27. Abingdon Presbytery overtures the General Assembly:

1. Not to let the general subject of giving and of raising funds for the Lord's work drop at this stage, but,

2. That it "make a deliverance as to what are the fundamental principles laid down in the sacred Scriptures for the government and guidance of God's people in the giving of their substance to the advancement of His Kingdom."

Answer: A sufficient answer is found in the action already taken on the papers reported from the presbyteries.

1891, p. 260. The principle of the tithe is recommended as suggestive and useful in all matters of Christian giving, and proportionate giving is binding on the consciences of God's people.

1892, p. 432. An overture from the Presbytery of Nashville in reference to the tithe [was] answered in the negative, for the reason that only two years ago the question was fully discussed by the presbyteries and a decision was reached by the Assembly.

1900, pp. 605, 643. The Assembly [answered in the negative] an overture from the Presbytery of Nashville asking the Assembly to request the ministers and churches to discuss the binding obligation of the tithe law.

1908, p. 26. Resolved, That an ad interim committee of seven, of which the Moderator shall be chairman, be appointed to consider the whole question of the tithe and report to the next General Assembly.

1909, p. 128. [This Committee made the following report, which was adopted:]

1. The General Assembly would by no means discourage the giving of one-tenth of their income by individuals who may conscientiously fix upon this proportion

for themselves. Many who previously had no system have unquestionably found blessings, both temporal and spiritual, in the practice of the tithe. Any definite system of giving is vastly better than the far too common haphazard habit of giving without regard to any system whatever. This is true whether the fraction fixed be one-tenth or one-fourth, or one-half, or any other definite proportion and, other things being equal, the larger proportion will bring the larger blessing, as recorded in the case of the churches of Macedonia, which gave out of "deep poverty," "to their power, yea, and beyond their power," and as verified in the experience of many Christians since.

2. But the Assembly, while encouraging and even enjoining the personal adoption of some definite proportion as a minimum, does not feel authorized to fix that proportion, which, under the Gospel, has been left to the enlightened conscience of the individual in the exercise of "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." The Mosaic Law prescribed rules; the Gospel promulgates principles. Rules are for childhood, principles for maturity; and the Assembly cannot bring into bondage to the letter those who, having received the spirit of adoption, are no longer "under tutors and governors."

3. The Assembly, recognizing the need and duty of a much larger liberality on the part of God's people for the support and extension of the Gospel in response to the enlarged providential opportunities of this, our day, would call attention to the following clear principles of God's Word as bearing on this whole subject:

(a) Christian liberality is a grace of the Spirit, imparted to the churches by the sovereign power of God in answer to prayer. This grace bestowed on the churches of Macedonia caused "the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty to abound unto the riches of their liberality" (2 Cor. 8:1, 2).

(b) As a grace of the Spirit, Christian liberality is to be cultivated, just as other graces are, by the diligent use of the means that God has appointed. "Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also" (2 Cor. 8:7).

(c) It is an important part of the work of the ministry to increase this grace in the hearts of the people. "We desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also" (2 Cor. 8:6).

(d) Ministers of the Word, in seeking to increase the grace of liberality in the hearts of the people, are to remind them of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9), and of the goodness of God "who giveth us all things richly to enjoy," and who gave His only begotten Son for our redemption.

(e) Our recognition of God's claim on what we have depends on our recognition of God's claim on ourselves. The churches of Macedonia abounded in liberality, giving of their own accord, because, says the apostle, "they first gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God." Self-consecration to God and to His work furnishes a perennial fountain, which, even in deep poverty, overflowing in riches and liberality, "not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God" (2 Cor. 9:12).

In the judgment of this Assembly the general recognition and application of these principles would produce a larger liberality than any ecclesiastical deliverance which should bind, even by its moral weight, the conscience or the conduct of God's people in accordance with the Mosaic Law of the tithe, and would have the further advantage of being securely based on the teaching of our Standards and of the Scriptures. The mightiest of all motives is the constraining love of God.

1924, p. 67. [The Assembly endorsed part of the resolutions passed by the Synod of Virginia in regard to the tithe:]

"We believe that the time has come for our General Assembly and subordinate courts to make it plain to all our people that though the Bible makes more than one suggestion as to what and how we should give, it in no case names a smaller proportion than the tithe.

"We believe that the Church will more easily and quickly attain to the New Testament grace of sacrificial giving if it begins with the simple definite standard of the tithe."

1930, p. 66. That the Stewardship Department be instructed to impress with all possible vigor . . . tithing as a privilege, proportionate giving, consecration of substance, and like principles.

1934, p. 52. That more earnestly than ever our ministers and church officers be urged to conduct an active campaign for tithers and proportionate givers in every congregation as the only adequate solution of the financial problems of our congregations today. We recommend that the General Assembly endorse the Belmont Covenant Plan as presented by the Rev. G. L. Whiteley, and commend it for adoption by every church in our Assembly. And that, in view of the many calls coming for the services of Mr. Whiteley to present this plan to individual churches, presbyteries and synods, we urge that the General Assembly request the Belmont Presbyterian Church in Roanoke, Va., to grant their pastor at least a six months' leave of absence in order to give his full time to the work under the guidance and direction of the Committee on Stewardship and Finance, it being understood that this plan will finance itself.

This movement, called the Belmont Covenant plan, in brief, is a covenant between the members of the individual church, in which they mutually agree to give a tenth of their income for a definite period of time to the causes of the Church. Included in these are: Current Expenses, Benevolences and any other local project determined by the congregation itself.

1935, p. 57. That the General Assembly set aside a special period for prayer and thanksgiving for the expression of our heartfelt gratitude to God for the outpouring of His blessing upon us during this past year as demonstrated by the greatly increased receipts of our Church Agencies, and the increased number of churches whose spiritual life has been quickened by the practice of tithing.

[Ed. note: 686 churches were reported enlisted under the Belmont Plan.]

That the Permanent Committee on Stewardship and Finance be asked to promote the Belmont Covenant Plan in the churches.

p. 60. Resolved: That the General Assembly wishes solemnly and deliberately to inscribe upon our Church banner, in immediate connection with its "Declaration of Missionary Purpose," its deep conviction that, in view of the urgency of our world task and God's gracious provision for our spiritual and material needs, each of our members should express his love for Christ and his devotion to the Kingdom of God, by a sacred consecration of at least one-tenth of his income to the Christian enterprise.

1937, p. 50. Overtures from the Presbyteries of Bluestone and Norfolk, respectively, with reference to the Belmont Covenant Plan and other phases of Tithing, answered by reference to recommendations [below].

That the Assembly reaffirm its deep conviction that, in view of the urgency of our world task, and God's gracious provision for our spiritual and material needs, each of our members should express his love for Christ and his devotion to the Kingdom of God, by a sacred consecration of at least one-tenth of his income to the Christian enterprise. We would reaffirm as our conviction that "Christ is either Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all," that the way to a man's heart is not through his pocketbook but rather the way to a man's pocketbook is through his heart.

That the Assembly prayerfully call upon all our people, both as congregations and individuals, to make a careful study of God's Word with the above principles in mind in order that they may discover and accept God's standards for the control of all life.

That in arriving at this desired consummation the General Assembly would call to the prayerful and careful consideration of our people the Belmont Covenant Plan and all other emphases upon tithing. . . .

1943, p. 62. We recommend: That those responsible for stewardship promotion in local congregations, presbyteries and synods be urged to emphasize at least the following factors:

The Bible teaching about giving, beginning with what man is to believe concerning God's sovereign ownership and man's stewardship of all life and things, and continuing through the duty of man to set aside a definite portion of income, beginning with one-tenth, as belonging peculiarly to God, and to use all the remainder of income with the glory of God as the ultimate purpose.

p. 53. That . . . the whole question of tithing be kept in the foreground, not as mandatory, but as a Christian privilege that every Presbyterian is challenged in these days to accept.

1961, pp. 40, 126. Report of the Ad Interim Committee on the Tithe received as information and the summary statements adopted.

1. We are not to give to God for the sake of receiving a reward. The blessings which come when we are restored to fellowship with God are immeasurable. But if we give to God in order that he will give to us, if we expect God to be good to us because we have been good to him, we deny the heart of the Gospel of Grace.
2. We are not to believe that only one-tenth belongs to God. Man is never the owner of anything which God has created. All of it belongs to God, and all of it is to be identified with his purposes. When the Christian sets apart one-tenth of his income to be used in "the Lord's work," and feels then a sense of ownership of and an independence in the use of that which remains, he has misread the meaning of God's creative activity and he is misusing the precious gift of life.
3. We are not to use the tithe as the biblically prescribed formulae for Christian giving. Church members, however, who do not tithe are not to take satisfaction from this statement. For Christians who give less than one-tenth of the substance God has entrusted to them, the tithe stands as a minimum challenge, not yet achieved. But the mature Christian does not ask, "How much should I give?" To do this is like asking with Peter, "How often should I forgive my brother?" God does not call us to give a portion of our commitment. The New Testament picture of stewardship is one in which the believer, aware that all he has is from God, gives freely and increasingly and of abundant joy.
4. We must interpret and use the biblical references to the tithe within the context of the New Testament picture of stewardship. This means that there may be conditions which call for an emphasis upon tithing, but never for the purpose of making tithing an end in itself. Christian giving is the consequence of the grace of God. Many church members, however, have never experienced a vital transformation. They live on the level of "What is my duty?" or "What should I do?" or "How much should I give?" This is evidenced, among other ways, by the token amounts pledged annually to church budgets. Under such conditions, the tithe can be presented as a proper starting point. It then is being used biblically, not being the goal of Christian giving but a means to growth in commitment. But the use of the tithe must never create or encourage a legalistic complacency. We are not called to give a tenth; we are called to give ourselves completely. Whenever the tithe is used in the teaching and preaching of the Gospel, whenever it is used in conducting Every

Member Canvasses and raising capital funds, it must be within the framework of the all-inclusive stewardship relation which man has to God.

5. The chief end of man is "to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." This is made possible only by God, who while we were yet sinners gave his Son to die for us. We are saved by his love. He overcomes sin, he removes our guilt, he puts an end to our alienation from him. We become new beings in Christ. He is our redemption. Being a new creature means that he is at work in us. Our giving then as Christians is God's own *agape*, and we give and give and give, for his love has no end.

4. The Church cannot bind conscience on the distribution of the tithe.

1952, p. 97. That overture 25 requesting the Assembly to clarify that the whole tithe should be given to Christ through His Church and that should disseminate on tithing only literature that teaches tithing as giving to the Lord through His Church, be answered in the negative. This recommendation is made with the conviction that tithing has a Scriptural basis, but that we cannot bind the conscience of individual church members regarding the distribution of the tithe. However, church members should be encouraged to consider the church as the principal recipient of the tithe.

5. Concerts, suppers, etc., for church purposes.

1888, p. 402. Whereas it appears to have become quite common for our people to secure money for church purposes by concerts, suppers, etc., be it—

Resolved, That the General Assembly advise against all such means for securing money to be used in the Master's work. This advice is given because we believe that the Lord has ordained that giving should be an act of worship, and thus a means of grace.

1891, p. 260; 1916, p. 19. [Similar actions.]

1953, p. 60. [Previous actions cited.] Pastors and Sessions are urged to follow consistently the policy which has been approved by the General Assembly and which is set forth in our Book of Church Order [see § 208-1 especially] concerning the motive, means and methods by which money is secured for the Lord's work, and teach the same to their congregations.

6. Support not compelled over conscientious scruples.

1950, p. 83. The 1949 General Assembly referred to the General Council for answer overture 31-b as follows: "If the above overture to withdraw from the Federal Council should be answered in the negative, we respectfully overture the General Assembly to provide a method whereby the Federal Council shall be financially aided without compelling any church to give its support contrary to its conscientious scruples."

We recommend that this overture be answered in the affirmative.

7. Assembly cannot order congregations to use central treasurers of higher courts.

1949, pp. 34, 80. That overture 29 be answered as follows: We recognize that the policy of using Central Treasurers has often proven helpful in certain jurisdictions of the church, but we do not feel that it is in the prerogative of the Assembly to give mandate requiring individual congregations to remit their funds through these treasurers.

[See also this Digest, Form of Govt., § 18-6 (8)—item 8e; and especially § 18-6 (18) re a central treasurer of benevolences for the General Assembly.]

8. Appeals from outside agencies disapproved.

1941, p. 74. That the Assembly adopt a statement as follows:

a. We reiterate the conviction inherent in the Presbyterian Church and constantly proclaimed by her, that the Kingdom of God is world-wide, that worthy activities therein are not confined to any denominational program, and that its progress is dependent on the multiplied efforts of all men who truly accept and love the Lord Jesus Christ and would follow Him and His call to service.

b. Furthermore we are aware that there are outside our Church certain agencies for which we have a measure of responsibility, in that they are coordinating or administrative agencies for work in which many churches, including our own, are united. Our Church shares in the support of several such agencies.

c. Under our General Assembly's plan of operation, even our own benevolent agencies are not free to make Church-wide appeals except at such seasons as may be assigned for them.

d. We cannot look with approval upon a general circularization of our ministry with requests that their congregations be encouraged to give support, financial and otherwise, to outside agencies with which we have no affiliation and in which we have no responsibility or control. Particularly is this the case when, as has been true at times, such appeals carry a definitely implied questioning of the soundness and validity of the work done through out own agencies; and when the work for which appeal is made is one which parallels that of our own benevolent agencies.

Therefore this General Assembly expresses its strong disapproval of unauthorized circularization of our ministers and churches by outside agencies, and particularly of appeals for financial support for work which parallels our own.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 222-2.

1. Homes and Hospitals.

1959, pp. 39, 151. [Report of ad interim committee:]

I. PRESBYTERIAN HOMES FOR THE AGING

1. That the General Assembly give its endorsement as a Christian Ministry to the establishment of Presbyterian Homes for the Aging and recommend to synods, presbyteries and local church groups, increased activity in this field.
2. That the Assembly organize itself to offer professional guidance to the projects already under way and to those who are awaiting counsel before proceeding with their plans.
3. That the Assembly through its proper agency collaborate with synods and presbyteries in setting up standards for the selection of sites and for the construction of Homes for the Aging, and in setting up policies for operation, personnel, programs of entertainment and recreation, and all that may be involved in the physical and spiritual health of the Aging.
4. That the Board of Christian Education and the Board of Women's Work be encouraged to enlarge and strengthen their present programs of education and activity to meet the growing needs of older members of our Church.

II. PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITALS

The Ad Interim Committee finds that while there are a few hospitals within the bounds of our Assembly bearing the designation "Presbyterian," only one of these, a recently acquired and long established private institution, has any official connection with the Church or any of its agencies. Because our Church has no accumulated experience in the growing complexities of hospital erection, because of the high cost of construction and operation which have reached almost astronomical figures, and be-

cause in too many cases poor public relations arise between hospital administration and their constituencies, the Ad Interim Committee believes it is unwise at this time for the Presbyterian Church officially to enter the field of hospital construction and administration.

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 224-1.

1957, pp. 37, 133. [Report of ad interim committee on Education of Lay Leaders adopted.]

1963, pp. 39, 114. [Statement on "Role of the Director of Christian Education" adopted.]

DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP AND WORK, § 224-6.

Commissioning lay workers.

1964, pp. 24, 110. With regard to a letter from the Committee on Certification of Lay Workers, we recommend that the Assembly approve the following interpretation of Section 224-6 of the Directory for Worship and Work (B.C.O.) "Section 224-6, in light of the definition of the Director of Christian Education adopted by the 1963 General Assembly, is to be construed as a strong recommendation that a person commissioned as a Director of Christian Education should first possess the qualifications leading to certification by the General Assembly's Committee on the Certification of Lay Workers. The commissioning may be either as a Director of Christian Education or as an Associate in Christian Education. The Church court or agency commissioning a Director of Christian Education has the final determination as to whom it commissions and may in extraordinary cases commission a person whose training is inadequate, but whose sense of calling, Christian character, and basic ability meet its approval."

And we also recommend that the Assembly approve the following interpretation of Chapter 24 of the Directory for Worship and Work:

"Chapter 24 of the Directory for Worship and Work appears to provide for only one commissioning. The Constitution makes no mention of installation of previously commissioned lay workers. The Constitution gives sufficient general authority to the Church court or agency involved to install under such circumstances if it wishes."

MISCELLANEOUS

1. "The Book of Common Worship."

[The Assembly in 1929 authorized use of this U.S.A. book as "optional forms."]

1946, pp. 26, 75. That the Revised Book of Common Worship [as revised by the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.] be adopted for optional use in our churches and that the flyleaf carry this statement:

"Approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States."

1956, pp. 30, 64. [Overture to work on a] joint Book of Worship with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and the United Presbyterian Church be answered in the affirmative and referred to the Board of Christian Education for action. [The work continues, as yet incomplete, with the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.]

2. Ordination vows in "Book of Common Worship" cannot replace mandatory vows in our Book of Church Order.

1960, pp. 25, 68. Overture requesting an *in thesi* deliverance from the General Assembly on the importance it attaches to the use of the questions required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in the ordination of Church Officers, be answered as follows: "The General Assembly attaches supreme importance to the necessity of using the questions required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States when officers of this church assume the vows of their office and considers them to be mandatory."

Part V.

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY ORDER.

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY ORDER.

[Explanatory note in Book of Church Order: "These rules were adopted by the General Assembly of 1866 for its own guidance. (They), of course, form no part of the Constitution of the Church".]

RULES OF PARL. ORDER, 26.

Unreasonable limitation of debate deplored.

1937, p. 54. [Protest of Rev. R. W. Jopling,] against the action of this Assembly taken last evening, by which it cut me off with only five minutes in which to discuss the Ministers' Annuity Fund on its merits.

p. 60. [Answer to protest:] Attention is directed to the fact that when the limit of five minutes on speeches was recommended to the Assembly, no voice was raised in protest that any commissioner was being deprived of his constitutional rights; the Assembly, therefore, adopted the limit as recommended. The Moderator had no option but to enforce this limit in every case and, in our judgment, the protest came too late.

pp. 54, 58. [Two additional protests by Rev. R. W. Jopling were ruled out of order by the Moderator, and the rulings sustained by the Assembly.]

1940, p. 80. Overture that "the Assembly shall ordinarily sit for a full week" and that "ordinarily no form of 'cloture' shall be used in discussion," [answered] as follows:

A. We feel that the principles set forth in this overture are both timely and wise. Especially in recent years the urge for an early adjournment has definitely caused undue haste in the action taken and in many instances commissioners, vitally interested in matters before the Assembly, have been necessarily absent on committee and commission work of the Assembly.

B. We also declare that any form of "cloture" which unreasonably limits debate is destructive to the fundamental traditions of this body.

C. In view of the fact that it may arise that, with due deliberation, the Assembly may complete its docket in less than a week, we feel that it is unwise to set any definite time which the Assembly shall be required to remain in session.

D. We, however, urge future Assemblies that all undue haste be avoided and that full and free debate on all issues be observed and that restriction thereof be exercised with the greatest care and only under unusual conditions. We further direct the Stated Clerk and the Committee and Commission Chairmen, that all care and foresight possible be used in preparing the docket of the Assembly and that the holding of committee and commission meetings so that a minimum of conflict be had between the general sessions of the Assembly and the meetings of committees and commissions.

RULES OF PARL. ORDER, 28.

"Pending question" defined.

1915, p. 49. It was ordered that the "pending question" in our Parliamentary Rules shall mean the "immediately pending question."

RULES OF PARL. ORDER, 47.

No applauding.

1913, p. 36. The Commissioners were requested to refrain from applauding.

1926, p. 54. Overture answered: The Assembly voices its disapproval of applause during the proceedings of the church courts as being unbecoming, and that this action be brought to the attention of the several courts of the Church.

Part VI.

JUDICIAL CASES.

JUDICIAL CASES.

[Ed. note: These are arranged in chronological order of their first appearance before the General Assembly. Where several separate cases concern the same persons or matters, the sections will be titled: "The matter of———".

Only the portions of Judicial Cases essential to an understanding of their bearing upon the law of the Church will be given.]

1. Complaint of Rev. James Sinclair, against the Synod of North Carolina.

1863, p. 130. The Judicial Committee report that they find the complaint not in order, there appearing no formal complaint as against the Synod in the premises; and the committee beg to be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.

2. Appeal of R. B. Williamson, licentiate, from the Presbytery of Tombeckbee.

1869, p. 395. The Judicial Committee respectfully report that an appeal has been placed in their hands, sent up to this Assembly by a candidate for the ministry of Tombeckbee Presbytery, from a decision of said Presbytery revoking his license to preach the gospel, and praying the Assembly to return his license. It does not appear, by the appeal and other papers before your committee, that the appellant has taken the preliminary steps required by the Discipline of the Church. (Chap. VII, Sec. III, Sub-Sec. 5.) [pres. § 116-4.] Therefore,

Resolved, That this Assembly cannot issue the case presented in this appeal and complaint, and that the appellant have leave to withdraw his papers.

1870, p. 543. The committee to whom was referred the letter of Mr. R. B. Williamson, and other papers touching the refusal of the Presbytery of Tombeckbee to renew the license of said Williamson as a probationer, recommend the adoption of the following minute, viz: As any Presbytery has the right to recall the *license* of a probationer, or to refuse to restore it, as it may think proper, no action is called for on the part of the Assembly.

3. Complaint of Rev. A. W. Miller, D.D., Rev. John Douglas, and others, against the Synod of North Carolina.

1871, p. 15. [Withdrawn without action.]

4. Complaint of Samuel Galloway against the Synod of Georgia.

1872, p. 158. The Judicial Committee respectfully report to the Assembly that the papers put into their hands are those relating to the complaint of Samuel Galloway vs. The Synod of Georgia. As the complainant has not appeared, either in person or by representative, to prosecute his complaint, the committee recommend that the complaint be dismissed and the papers be returned by the Stated Clerk to the complainant.

5. Complaint of Rev. J. J. Cooke, and others, against the Presbytery of Louisville.

1875, p. 15. The Judicial Committee respectfully reports to the General Assembly that the case referred to it for examination purports to be two separate "Protests, appeals, and complaints of Rev. John J. Cooke, for himself and others, against the proceedings and judgments of the Presbytery of Louisville, in the case of the pastor, Session, and congregation of the First Presbyterian church, Louisville, Ky., at two separate meetings of the Presbytery, held November 10-17, 1874, and December 8, 1874."

As these persons are not the parties aggrieved, in the technical sense of that term, as used in our Book of Discipline, it is clear that the case cannot be entertained as an appeal, but only as a complaint. [See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 116-2.]

It is evident, also, that whilst this complaint involves the whole case of the pastor and congregation of the First Presbyterian church, these do not appear as parties before the Assembly; and its decision, whilst settling the question as to the complainants, may fail to reach the heart of this unfortunate dispute, and to heal the breach which has been made.

All parties, however, in this case, seem to desire that it should be issued before this Assembly, and that it should not be remanded to the Synod of Kentucky, over whose head it has been brought directly to this body. On this ground, and without working prejudice to the intervening Synod, the committee advise the Assembly to receive and act upon the complaint. There is, perhaps, a deeper reason for this course. It will be found, upon examination, that the whole difficulty has its rise in a difference of interpretation upon one or two points of constitutional law, and that, in the infirmity of human nature, in the maintenance of conflicting opinions, things have been said and done which are greatly to be deplored.

If, therefore, the case can be reduced to these few but fundamental points, a possible solution of the whole difficulty may be found in an authoritative decision upon them by the Assembly.

In some of its features this judicial case differs from those usually brought before the supreme courts of the Church, which will justify the committee in presenting it in this form to the consideration of the Assembly. It is alleged in the complaint—

1. That the Presbytery of Louisville, in receiving certain memorials, and upon the allegations contained in them, proceeding to exercise its visitorial power in the First Presbyterian church, did, from the nature of the charges, commence what was essentially a judicial investigation, which should therefore have been conducted under judicial forms. The Assembly might probably decide whether or not this point is well taken.

2. From the action of the Presbytery in proceeding to this investigation, Dr. S. R. Wilson took an appeal to a superior court, claiming that this appeal operated an immediate suspension of all the proceedings until it should be finally issued. The Assembly might very properly rule whether the appeal in this case was of the kind to put the arrest on the Presbytery which is claimed.

3. The Assembly might also decide how far, in the further prosecution of the case, the acts of all the parties are irregular and open to censure.

4. If then the Assembly would remand the case to the Presbytery of Louisville, with an injunction to take it up from the beginning under these rulings, a fair opportunity should be afforded all the parties to retrieve any error into which they may have fallen; and the Assembly would, in the most tender way, authoritatively arbitrate between brethren now grievously estranged, and who, for their past fidelity to the truth and kingdom of the Master, are entitled to the confidence and affection of the whole Church.

[This report was adopted; also an order of procedure recommended by the Judicial Committee. After being heard the decision of the Assembly was:]

p. 33. [To sustain in part 38; not to sustain 67.]

p. 46. The [following] paper, explanatory of the vote of the Assembly on this complaint, was adopted: The Assembly, in voting not to sustain the complaint of J. J. Cooke and others against the Presbytery of Louisville, would be understood as passing judgment only upon the constitutional issues involved in said complaint, while at the same time there were, in its opinion, some irregularities in the proceedings of

the Presbytery which it could not approve, but which it did not deem it necessary to pass upon judicially.

The Rev. Dr. B. M. Palmer obtained leave, on behalf of himself and others, to have the following paper admitted to record:

The undersigned, being of the minority who voted to sustain in part the complaint of J. J. Cooke, accord with the minute adopted by the majority, with the exception that, in some of the points termed irregularities in the above named minute, they regard the Presbytery as having transcended the limits of their constitutional power.

(Signed by B. M. Palmer and twenty-six others.)

6. The Matter of Revs. S. J. and E. T. Baird.

6a. Complaint of Rev. S. J. Baird, D.D., against the Presbytery of East Hanover.

1877, p. 423. The Judicial Committee, to which was referred the complaint of the Rev. Dr. S. J. Baird, touching the action of the Presbytery of East Hanover, with the accompanying papers, beg leave to report:

That, in a statement made to the Committee by the complainant, he admitted that he caused to be published in a recent number of the Richmond Dispatch a letter written by the Rev. Dr. E. T. Baird, from which, and the record of the proceedings of said Presbytery, it appears that the subject-matter and person named in said proceedings and in the complaint are the same; and that the Rev. Dr. E. T. Baird has taken an appeal from the action of the Presbytery of East Hanover to the next superior judicatory, the Synod of Virginia, and that the matter of the appeal and of the complaint raise the same questions, and refer to the same cause and the same person.

In the opinion of the Committee, it is not proper for the General Assembly to take jurisdiction of the matter of a complaint, while the same cause, embracing the same matter, is pending in another judicatory, which has jurisdiction, by appeal, at the instance of the person aggrieved. Wherefore the Committee recommend that the complaint be referred to the Synod of Virginia.

[Adopted, with but one dissenting vote, after a minority report had first been voted down by a vote of 6 to 112. (p. 422.)]

6b. Appeal of the Rev. E. T. Baird, from the Synod of Virginia.

1878, p. 646. [Dr. Baird was absent by reason of sickness and could not prosecute the case in person.]

p. 655. [The minority report of the Judicial Committee [was] adopted, and the Assembly proceeded according to the course prescribed in said paper.]

p. 663. Ruling Elder Isaac D. Jones appeared, by request of the appellant, to conduct the appeal in his behalf. [Result:] To sustain, 8; to sustain in part, 19; not to sustain, 42.

p. 665. The committee appointed to bring in a minute expressing the sense of the General Assembly in regard to the appeal of Dr. E. T. Baird against the decision of the Synod of Virginia, respectfully recommend the following as the judgment of the General Assembly, viz:

That, inasmuch as the appeal is not sustained, the natural effect is to remand the case to the Presbytery of East Hanover, to institute proceedings and conduct a new trial according to the order of the Synod of Virginia.

7. Complaint of Rev. I. W. Canfield, against the Synod of Kentucky.

1877, p. 434. The Committee to which was referred the complaint of Rev. I. W. Canfield against certain proceedings of the Synod of Kentucky have considered the same, and beg leave to report that the matter presented by this complaint for the revision of the Assembly arises upon a part of the judgment of the Synod of Kentucky,

rendered upon the consideration of an appeal of complainant from the Presbytery of Louisville. In this complaint, and in the petition which alleges the ground of the complainant's appeal from the proceedings of the Presbytery of Louisville against him, many apparent grievances against the action of the Synod and of the Presbytery, and the conduct of certain members of Presbytery, are set forth.

In the statement of this complaint, and the references which it makes, there is much confusion, and it is difficult to ascertain precisely the object of complainant in coming before this Assembly. This Assembly has no power to render any general relief in the premises, as complainant seems to think, nor would it be proper, in this or any other case, to set aside the judgment of an inferior court, unless there be clear and satisfactory evidence that such judgment is erroneous, or that it ought to be reversed for some reason laid down in the Form of Government.

From an examination of the papers submitted to us, viz: the statements of the complainant and the record of the Synod of Kentucky, it appears that the Synod carefully considered all the matters at issue between the complainant and the Presbytery of Louisville; that the most material part of the sentence, and really the only matter at issue, was in favor of the complainant.

The refusal of the Synod to censure the Presbytery of Louisville was a matter entirely discretionary with the Synod, and we see nothing in it for the Assembly to set aside or disapprove.

The Committee therefore recommend that the complaint be dismissed.

8. The Matter of Rev. I. W. Canfield.

8a. Appeal of Rev. Stuart Robinson, D.D., and others, from the Synod of Kentucky in the Canfield Case.

1878, p. 614. [This appeal was decided by the following vote:] To sustain the complaint, 106, excused from voting, 2.

p. 629. In delivering the judgment sustaining the complaint against the Synod of Kentucky, the Assembly means to declare:

1st. That the Presbytery of Louisville proceeded properly in restraining from the exercise of the functions of the ministry a minister deemed irresponsible for his words and acts, by reason of unsoundness of mind, without the usual forms of judicial process.

2nd. That the Synod of Kentucky erred in rescinding the action of the Presbytery of Louisville so restraining a minister, by mere resolution, without a formal examination of the case, either as a question of appeal, complaint, or of general review and control, it being incompetent for the Synod to interpose its authority to interfere with the right of a Presbytery to judge of the qualifications of its own ministers.

3rd. That in pronouncing this judgment on the action of the Synod of Kentucky, this Assembly does not intend to pass any censure upon that body, or upon any of its members.

1879, p. 57. While it might be competent for one General Assembly, under such rules as the Constitution provides, to grant a new hearing of a case which has been judicially decided by a previous General Assembly, yet inasmuch as this memorial simply asks for a deliverance in a case adjudicated by the Assembly of 1878, this Assembly declines to grant the request of the memorial for the reason that no deliverance *in thesi* can modify or set aside a judicial sentence.

8b. Complaint of I. W. and W. Q. Canfield, against the Synod of Kentucky.

1879, p. 28. [The following, presented by the minority of the Judicial Committee, was adopted:] In the matter of the complaint of Isaac Watts Canfield and W. Q. Canfield against the Synod of Kentucky, the undersigned members, composing a

minority of the Judicial Committee of the General Assembly, regret that they are unable to concur in the report adopted by the committee. The gravity of the questions presented, and the important bearing that their decision herein may possibly have as precedents for future action, render it important, in our judgment, that a minority report should be returned.

The report adopted by the majority recommends that the complaint be dismissed, on the ground that the case presented by the record is not one in which either an appeal or a complaint can be maintained. From this conclusion we respectfully dissent, for the following reasons:

The proceeding in which this complaint originated was a series of written charges of grave nature brought by the complainants against a minister of the Gospel and a member of Louisville Presbytery. These charges were regularly made, and proper notice was given. The Louisville Presbytery did not entertain the charges on their merits, but dismissed them on various grounds stated in the record, but which need not be here stated. Now, while we recognize in full, under our system, the power of a Presbytery, or any other church court of original jurisdiction, to make preliminary inquest and to decide whether charges shall be entertained, yet we are firmly of opinion that such inquest and such decision are in the nature of judicial action, and must therefore be done with reasonable judicial discretion; and therefore such inquest and decision are subject to review in the higher court, by way of appeal or complaint. To deny this, in our humble opinion, is to violate those principles of religious freedom which permeate and inspire our whole system.

From this decision of the Presbytery of Louisville the complainants carried the case to the Synod of Kentucky; and that Synod, without passing upon the reasons alleged by the Louisville Presbytery for dismissing the case, made a decision in substance as follows:

That, as the Louisville Presbytery had, in the exercise of its episcopal and visiting power, decided that the complainant, Isaac W. Canfield, should be restrained from the exercise of all ministerial functions by reason of unsoundness of mind, and as this action of the Presbytery had been affirmed by the General Assembly at Knoxville in 1878, the said complainant, I. W. Canfield, was thereby estopped from bringing or maintaining his proceeding herein.

But it nowhere appears in the record that the said I. W. Canfield is so far unsound in mind as to deprive him of his rights and powers as a private member of the Church. Such rights and powers therefore remain to him.

And no disability whatever exists as to the complainant, W. Q. Canfield.

We are not, therefore, able to say that the said complainants have been deprived of the rights secured to them by our Constitution and Form of Government.

But, as the complaint against the Synod of Kentucky is regular in form, is brought by persons, one of whom is undoubtedly competent, and the other not shown by the records to be incompetent as a private member of the church, and has been seasonably entered for action by the General Assembly, we do not see any mode of proceeding consistent with right and religious liberty, save that of recommending that the complaint be docketed and issued by the Assembly according to our law, as prescribed by the Book of Government.

p. 40. [The Assembly voted on this appeal as follows:] To sustain, 56; not to sustain, 69. [Verdict:] not sustained.

p. 60. [The following explanatory minute was adopted:] The General Assembly, in refusing to sustain the complaint, while recognizing the right of every member of the Presbyterian Church to bring before the courts any matter of personal grievance, or affecting the honor of religion, yet means to affirm, on the other hand, the competency of the court to exercise a sound discretion as to the propriety of considering

any such matter brought before them; and so far as appears from the facts before the Assembly in this case, the Synod of Kentucky and the Presbytery in Louisville did not exercise this discretion improperly. But though the General Assembly approves of the decision of the Synod in dismissing the complaint, it is not to be understood as approving of all the reasons assigned by the Synod for that decision.

9. Complaint of Rev. R. S. McAllister and Rev. M. B. Shaw, against the Presbytery of Louisiana.

1878, p. 627. The report of the Judicial Committee on the complaint of the Rev. Messers. McAllister and Shaw against their Presbytery, on account of certain alleged irregularities in its action on the question of adopting the Book of Church Order, was taken up, and the report was adopted as follows:

The Committee report that the complainants assign no reason for passing by the Synod, and bringing their complaint directly to the General Assembly: and recommend that they have leave to withdraw the complaint and seek their remedy, if any there be, in the Synod of Mississippi.

10. Complaint of Rev. R. K. Smoot, and others, against the Synod of Texas and the Presbytery of Western Texas.

1878, p. 640. To sustain the complaint, 73; to sustain in part, 32; not sustain, 6.

p. 653. The Special Committee appointed to prepare a minute expressing the judgment of the Assembly in the case of the complaint of Rev. R. K. Smoot and others against the action of the Synod of Texas upon the records of the Presbytery of Western Texas in the matter of H. F. Williams, report as follows:

The General Assembly sustains the complaint of Rev. R. K. Smoot and others against the Synod of Texas on these grounds:

First, The Synod of Texas allowed the Presbytery of Western Texas to vote upon the review of their own records, against the decision of the Moderator, and in opposition to the spirit of our Constitution and to the established precedents of our Church; which course we regard as both irregular and unjust.

Second, By refusing to condemn the proceedings of the Presbytery of Western Texas in the matter of H. F. Williams, the Synod did endorse and encourage what is known as "Lay Evangelism," a system which is irregular and contrary to the order of the Church with reference to the Christian ministry, and calculated to produce confusion and many other evils, sooner or later.

In expressing this judgment the Assembly does not mean to impugn the Christian or ministerial character, nor the motives, of any of the members of the Synod, but hereby declares its confidence in them and its sympathy with them in view of the peculiar circumstances of their needy field of labor.

11. Complaint of J. H. Moore, and others, against the Synod of Kentucky.

1879, p. 20. In the case of the complaint of J. H. Moore, A. Davidson, J. H. Huber and Stuart Robinson against the Synod of Kentucky, having been notified by the complainants in person that, while they have no doubt that the complaint, if proceeded with, would be sustained, yet, seeing that the adoption of the revised Book of Church Order will effectually prevent the recurrence of the errors complained of, the complainants deem it unnecessary to trouble the Assembly with the trial of their complaint, we recommend that they be granted leave to withdraw the complaint, and that the papers be returned to the complainants.

12. The Matter of Rev. J. E. White.

12a. Appeal of Rev. J. E. White, from the Synod of South Carolina.

1879, p. 20. In the case of the appeal or complaint of J. E. White against the Synod of South Carolina, we recommend that the appeal or complaint be dismissed, upon the ground that the appellant has not appeared to prosecute his appeal before the Assembly; nor did he make it appear that he was prevented from seasonably prosecuting his appeal by the providence of God. (Book of Discipline, Chap. VII, Sec. III, Art. XI.) [pres. § 116-9.]

1880, p. 221. The Judicial Committee, to which was committed the "appeal of the Rev. J. E. White from the action of the Synod of South Carolina, convened at Spartansburg Courthouse, from October 23d to October 28th, 1878," begs leave to submit the following report:

1. Proper notice of this appeal was given to the Synod of South Carolina in October, 1878, but it was not prosecuted before the last Assembly, and was dismissed for this reason by that body. The appellant, however, has satisfied this committee that "he was prevented by the providence of God from seasonably prosecuting it;" and it therefore recommends that he be reinstated in the rights which he had at the beginning of the General Assembly of 1879.

2. The appellant has conducted his appeal regularly; and it is recommended that it be heard. The 2nd, 3rd and 4th grounds of appeal do not refer to anything included in the action of the Presbytery of Bethel on 16th January, 1878, from which the appellant appealed to the Synod of South Carolina; and therefore it is recommended that, in hearing the appeal, the General Assembly will consider the first ground alone.

To sustain the appeal, 2; not to sustain, 71.

12b. Complaint of J. E. White, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1881, p. 354. The Judicial Committee respectfully report to the Assembly that they have given most careful and patient consideration to the appeal or complaint of J. E. White against the Synod of South Carolina, and find nothing in the paper by which the decision appealed from can be known, whilst the paper on its face appears to re-open the case on which the last Assembly took action. On conference, however, with J. E. White, and also Rev. J. B. Mack, D.D., of the Synod of South Carolina, it was discovered that an application for a new trial had been made to the Presbytery of Bethel, in which the case at first arose, that a new trial was refused, and an appeal taken to the Synod, which sustained the Presbytery. From this decision of the Synod the said J. E. White professed before your committee to be now prosecuting this appeal. Your committee recommend the following action, viz.:

Whereas the paper of J. E. White does not state what decision of the Synod of South Carolina is appealed from or complained of; that it bears on its face the appearance of re-opening of a case already adjudicated in General Assembly, and that it is in fact the old case, without one substantial addition to its *res gestae;* therefore,

Resolved, That the appeal or complaint of J. E. White against the Synod of South Carolina be dismissed.

13. Complaint of E. E. Bacon, against the Synod of Missouri.

1879, p. 42. To sustain, 41; not sustain, 65.

p. 61. The vote of the Assembly in not sustaining the complaint is understood as confirming the sentence of the Session of the First Church of St. Joseph, but it is not to be construed as giving its sanction to the irregularities in the conduct of the trial, but as expressing the sense of the Assembly as to the substantial justice of the sentence pronounced by the Session and confirmed by the Synod.

14. The Matter of W. S. Turner.

14a. First appeal of W. S. Turner, from the Synod of Georgia.

1881, p. 367. To sustain, 90; not to sustain, 22; *non liquet,* 6.

p. 378. This case is an appeal by W. S. Turner from a judicial decision of the Synod of Georgia, which, in effect, sustained the Session of Central church, Atlanta, Ga., in its refusal to grant the appellant a letter of dismission to the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church, upon the ground that the appellant had been judicially admonished by the Session, and was, therefore, when he applied for the letter of dismission, under the judicial censure, and so not entitled to such a letter.

The Assembly is of opinion—

1. That judicial admonition is a censure whose legal force terminates when it is inflicted.

2. That Mr. W. S. Turner was not, therefore, under judicial censure when he applied for a letter of dismission.

3. That he was in "good and regular standing" in the sense that he was not under judicial process or censure.

4. That the said Turner, not being under judicial process or censure, was entitled to a letter of dismission, if he desired it, to a church in connection with this Assembly.

5. That the usage of the Church is to grant a letter of dismission to members in good and regular standing, to churches not connected with this Assembly, but that such a letter cannot be demanded as a matter of legal right.

For these reasons the Assembly sustains the appeal of W. S. Turner, and reverses the decision of the Synod of Georgia.

14b. Second and Third Appeals of W. S. Turner, from the Synod of Georgia.

1882, p. 528. Your committee, in view of the extreme complications of these causes and the absence of all precedents, so far as known to your committee, applicable to some phases thereof, and believing that the best interests of the parties concerned and the highest good of the Church will be conserved by a full investigation, respectfully reports, recommending:

That this Assembly commit the whole matter of the two appeals to a Commission, to be appointed as soon as possible, to try the cases in the manner prescribed by the Rules of Discipline, according to Chap. V, Sec. VII, of Form of Government, which Commission shall report to this Assembly. The committee report further that the appellant has given his consent to such action.

p. 538. [From report of this Commission:]

[The first appeal of W. S. Turner from the judgment of the Synod of Georgia was in a case styled,] "Complaint of W. S. Turner against the Session of the Central Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Ga.," said judgment having been on an appeal from the judgment of the Presbytery of Atlanta in said case.

[The vote of the Commission was:] To confirm the action of the Synod, 26; to reverse the action of the Synod, 0; not voting, 1.

[The following minute, expressing the judgment of the Commission, was adopted:] In the case before us the Commission find that the material facts are these: J. M. Patton was Clerk of Session of the Central church of Atlanta, and as such was charged with the custody of the records of the Session and with the duty of transmitting to the Presbytery of Atlanta certain testimony which had been taken in an appeal case to which W. S. Turner was a party. S. M. Inman, who had been examined as a witness, was permitted by the clerk to examine his testimony as written, and finding his statement had not been correctly taken down, was permitted to make an alteration so as to make the deposition conform to what he said in his examination. The Clerk transmitted the paper thus changed, promptly informing the parties of the fact. For this conduct on the part of Patton, W. S. Turner preferred charges against him before the Session. The Session, on investigation, for reasons which they assigned, refused to put Patton on his trial, and for this Turner filed his complaint in the Presbytery of Atlanta, which complaint was heard by that body and not sustained. From this decision an appeal was taken to the Synod of Georgia, where the decision of the Presbytery was confirmed, and from this an appeal has been prosecuted to the General Assembly.

The Commission are of opinion that it was improper for the Clerk to allow the alteration in the record. The mistake was not without remedy, but the Presbytery, and not the Clerk, should have directed the manner in which it should have been rectified. Inasmuch, however, as it does not appear that any wrong was intended or inflicted, the Session correctly refused to put the Clerk on trial under the accusation. The Session is not required to bring an accused member to trial merely because charges have been preferred against him. It is a matter under their discretion, and in this case their discretion was exercised correctly, and we therefore confirm the action of the Synod of Georgia.

p. 539. [The second appeal was in the case of "The Presbyterian Church in the United States *versus* W. S. Turner."] It was ordered that the only papers to be considered by the Commission were the appeal of Mr. Turner just read, and the records of the Synod of Georgia in the case, including the appeal from the Presbytery of Atlanta.

[The vote upon the appeal was:] To confirm the judgment of Synod, 1; to reverse, 24; absent, 1; excused, 1.

p. 540. The following judgment was ordered to be entered on the record:

The Commission finds—

1st, That W. S. Turner appealed to the Synod of Georgia in a case adjudicated by the Presbytery of Atlanta, styled "The Presbyterian Church in the United States *vs.* W. S. Turner;" the same being a case of appeal to said body from the decision of the Central Presbyterian church of Atlanta.

2nd, That the Synod did not hear nor try the case on its merits, but dismissed the appeal "as presenting no sufficient grounds for such appeal."

3rd, That this judgment of the Synod in summarily dismissing the appeal was erroneous.

4th, That this judgment be, therefore, reversed, and the case remitted to the Synod of Georgia, to be tried on its merits.

The minutes were then read and approved, and ordered to be signed by the chairman and clerk, and presented to the General Assembly.

The Commission then adjourned. Closed with prayer by the chairman.

14c. Fourth appeal of W. S. Turner, from the Synod of Georgia.

1883, p. 17. [The trial of this case was ordered to be had by a Commission. Twenty-seven members of the Assembly were appointed such Commission. Rev. J. J. Bullock, D.D., chairman; and Rev. W. A. Alexander, secretary.]

p. 47. To sustain the appeal, 1; not to sustain, 20.

[The following paper, expressive of this action was adopted:]

The Commission finds—That this case was before the General Assembly at its session held in Atlanta, Ga., last year, and the judgment of the Assembly then was that the Synod of Georgia, having summarily dismissed the appeal from the Presbytery to that body when it should have heard the case on its merits, for this error the said judgment was reversed, and the case remitted to the Synod, "to be tried on its merits."

The Synod thereafter proceeded to the trial of the case by a Commission, appointed on the second day of its session in the absence of the appellant, who, however, did appear before the Commission on the third day of the session of the Synod, and allowed the Commission to go forward through the morning without objection, and seemingly acquiescing in what had been done. But in the afternoon appellant did ob-

ject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, on the ground that, in violation of the Constitution of the Church, it had been appointed without his consent; which objection being overruled—the Synod holding that this error had been waived by the defendant's appearance without objection through the forenoon—the trial proceeded over the appellant's protest; and the judgment of the Commission having been that the appeal be not sustained, appellant again appealed to this body, alleging the unconstitutionality of the Commission by which the case had been tried, and complaining of still other errors and irregularities, all of which are set out in the record.

But, by the concluding paragraph of the appellant's petition for the appeal, he requested that this Assembly will *either adjudicate the case on its merits* or remand it to the Synod of Georgia for a full and fair hearing before a legally and constitutionally constituted court; and it not appearing that additional testimony could be had or is desired by the appellant, and it appearing that the case is fully before this body on its merits, and the Commission holding that on this state of facts it has full jurisdiction of the case, and it appearing to the satisfaction of the Commission from the testimony that the appellant is guilty as charged in the indictment, the judgment of the Court is, that the appeal be not sustained, but that the judgment of the Session of the Central church of Atlanta be affirmed, and it is ordered that this be certified to the said Session and to the Synod of Georgia.

15. Complaint of the Presbytery of Memphis, against the Synod of Memphis in the matter of Rev. Sam. Park.

1882, p. 530. [This case was styled] "The appeal of the Presbytery of Memphis from the decision of the Synod of Memphis, sustaining the complaint of Rev. R. R. Evans and others against the Presbytery in denying the Rev. Sam. Park, colored, the right to vote in said Presbytery."

Your Committee report that they have found the record of the case to be regular in all respects except one, to-wit, that the paper put by the Assembly into the hands of the Committee is called an appeal, and the same word is employed throughout the document. It appears, however, to your committee that the paper is technically a "complaint," and not an appeal. But, as this slight irregularity of terms does not in the least affect the subject-matter, your Committee recommend that the case be taken up as complaint and considered in the following order:

p. 541. [The vote was:] to sustain the complaint, 42; not to sustain, 81.

p. 567. [The following minute was adopted:]

Whereas perfect ministerial parity is an essential and fundamental principle of Presbyterian polity; and

Whereas it is in evidence that the Rev. Sam. Park was duly ordained by the Presbytery of Memphis according to the provisions of our Constitution; and

Whereas, said Presbytery did, at several times, by their formal act, recognize him as a duly ordained minister under their care; therefore,

It is the judgment of this court that Rev. Sam. Park was in full ministerial connection with said Presbytery, and consequently entitled to vote, and that this court do not sustain the complaint of said Presbytery.

We take occasion to declare our full persuasion that the Presbytery of Memphis, in denying to Rev. Sam. Park the exercise of his right as a presbyter, were not at all influenced by race prejudice, but simply desired to carry out strictly the recommendation of the General Assembly of 1869. [1869, p. 389.]

16. Complaint of Rev. W. McKay, against the Synod of Georgia.

1883, p. 24. The facts of the case are that the Presbytery of Macon, of which the complainant was a member, at a regular session thereof held at Fort Gaines, Georgia, on the 14th of April, 1881, adopted a resolution on the subject of the observance of the Sabbath, in these words: "Resolved, That from this time Presbytery will regard any use of Sabbath railway trains by its members to fill preaching appointment, or for any other purpose, or on any other plea, as an infraction of the Fourth Commandment, and will deal with it accordingly."

Of this resolution Mr. McKay complained to his Synod, alleging that there is no Scriptural warrant for it, and that, in his circumstances which are set out at length, it denies him an unquestionable right, and works a great hardship upon him. This complaint came before the Synod, at a regular session thereof held at Milledgeville, in November last, and was dismissed by that body "for the reason that it is not 'a complaint' in the sense in which the term is used in the Rules of Discipline, Chap. XIII, Sec. IV." [pres. § 117-1.]

Your committee is of the opinion that in this action the Synod erred; they believe that the complaint is one in the sense in which the term is used in that Section of the Rules of Discipline referred to by the Synod, and which is in these words: "Any member of the Church, submitting to its authority, may complain against every species of decision, except where a party against whom a decision is rendered takes his appeal against it."

For this error it is recommended that the judgment of the Synod be reversed and the case remanded, with directions to the Synod to decide upon its merits the question which it involves.

17. Complaint of C. A. Baker, and others, against the Synod of Alabama.

1884, p. 203. The history of the case in brief is this: A member of the Presbyterian church of Opelika, Ala., was tried by its Session for profanity, was found guilty, and a sentence of suspension was passed. On application a new trial was granted. While this trial was pending, the accused, on the ground of a conviction of prejudice in the court, asked a reference of the whole matter, with the records, to the Presbytery of East Alabama. This request was also granted, and the case referred. The Presbytery of East Alabama decided that "the charge was sustained, but as the offense was committed at a time of great excitement, that the accused be affectionately admonished by the pastor and retained in the communion and fellowship of the Church." Against this action of Presbytery, "as a censure disproportionate and inadequate to the offense," complaint was made by certain parties, including the pastor and ruling elders of the Opelika church, to the Synod of Alabama. The Synod sustained the complaint, but decided that "it appearing to Synod that the admonition having been administered, and the sentence of Presbytery executed (pending the complaint), no further action be taken in the case." Against this action of Synod "as working serious injury through error contained both in its judgment and in the ground on which that judgment is based," the same parties, with two additional names, complain to this General Assembly.

This complaint having been placed in the hands of its Moderator within ten days after the adjournment of Synod, and being regular in form, your committee bring it before the Assembly for trial, presenting with it the records of the case as contained in the Minutes of the inferior courts, and the complaints to both the Presbytery and Synod.

p. 208. Vote: To sustain, 21; to sustain in part, 6; not to sustain, 94.

p. 214. In declining to sustain the complaint against the Synod of Alabama, the Assembly bases its action solely upon principles of ecclesiastical law, and must not be understood as having passed any judgment upon the merits of the case adjudicated by the Session of the church at Opelika and by the Presbytery of East Alabama.

18. Complaint of Rev. F. P. Ramsay, against the Synod of Virginia.

1886, p. 16. The minority report of the Judicial Committee was adopted:

The undersigned members of the Judicial Committee concur in the report of the Committee in the matter of Rev. F. P. Ramsay, complainant, against the Synod of Virginia, respondent, in so far as said report states that the complaint is regular *pro forma;* but we do not concur in the conclusions or findings of the Committee, because, in making said report, the Committee has usurped the powers of the Assembly, sitting as a court of the Lord Jesus Christ, in this, that said report is a final judgment of the case on its merits, submitted to the Assembly for its concurrence. In lieu of said report, we submit the statement that the complaint is regular and in form, and herewith return the record. . . . We ask that the case be docketed and set for trial.

p. 17. The complaint was not sustained.

p. 54. [Explanatory minute of this action:] the General Assembly refused to sustain the said complaint of the Rev. F. P. Ramsay, for the reason that no law of the Church had been violated in his case, either by the Synod or the Presbytery.

19. Complaint of Rev. James Woodrow, against the Synod of Georgia.

1887, p. 205. [A letter was received from the complainant, informing the Assembly that by reason of sickness he could not be present to prosecute his complaint before the Assembly, and asking that steps be taken to protect his right to prosecute his complaint before the next Assembly. This letter was ordered to be spread on the record.]

1888, p. 388. [There were a majority report and a minority report on this complaint from the Judiciary Committee. The majority report was adopted, which found that while the complaint was not presented by the second day of the General Assembly of 1887, yet the complainant had brought himself within the exception as provided by Chapter XIII, Section III, Paragraph 9, of our Rules of Discipline (pres. § 116-9) by showing that he was prevented by the providence of God from seasonably prosecuting it. The report recommended that the complaint be heard in the order prescribed by our Rules of Discipline.]

p. 399. [The complaint having been regularly heard, was not sustained.] To sustain, 34; not to sustain, 109; to sustain in part, 2; excused from voting, 4; absent or not answering, 5.

p. 401. A committee, consisting of Wm. Brown, D.D., J. R. Graham, D.D., R. K. Smoot, D.D., Rev. A. B Curry, and ruling elders S P. Greene and C. A. Bridewell, was appointed to prepare a minute expressive of the mind of the Assembly in its action on the complaint of Dr. Woodrow.

Rev. W. C. Clark was given leave to record the following in explanation of his vote in the Woodrow complaint:

"On the first charge I voted, *Not to sustain* Dr. Woodrow's complaint. The second charge I believe to be excluded by the definition of 'an offense', as given in our Rules of Discipline, Chap. III, Sec. I." [pres. § 102-1.]

p. 408. The committee appointed to bring in a paper expressing the judgment of the General Assembly in the case of the Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., vs. the Synod of Georgia, recommend the following as the judgment therein:

Whereas the Presbytery of Augusta did find Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., not guilty of the charge preferred against him by the Rev. Wm. Adams, D.D., wherein he was charged with teaching and formulating opinions and doctrines in conflict with the sacred Scriptures, as interpreted in our Standards, the Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly; that he did on divers occasions, mentioned in said charge, teach and promulgate that the body of Adam was probably the product of evolution from the body of some lower animal; and,

Whereas the Synod of Georgia did, upon the complaint of the Rev. Wm. Adams, D.D., annul said action of the Presbytery of Augusta, which judgment of the Synod of Georgia is brought to this General Assembly by the complaint of the Rev. James Woodrow, D.D.;

Now, therefore, it is the judgment of this General Assembly that Adam's body was directly fashioned by Almighty God of the dust of the ground, without any natural animal parentage of any kind. The wisdom of God prompted him to reveal the fact, while the inscrutable *mode* of his action therein he has not revealed.

Therefore the Church does not propose to touch, handle or conclude any question of science which belongs to God's kingdom of nature. She must, by her divine constitution, see that these questions are not thrust upon her to break the silence of Scripture and supplement it by any scientific hypothesis concerning the mode of God's being or acts in creation which are inscrutable to us. It is, therefore, ordered that this complaint in this case be not sustained, and the judgment of the Synod of Georgia be, and the same is hereby, in all things affirmed.

p. 409. [The following protest was admitted to record without answer:]

We, whose names are undersigned, desire to enter our solemn protest against the decision of this General Assembly refusing to sustain the complaint of the Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., against the Synod of Georgia, for the following reasons:

1. The second specification in the indictment against the Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., is expressly excluded by the Constitution of the church, inasmuch as "nothing ought to be considered by any court as an offense or admitted as a matter of accusation which cannot be proved to be such from Scripture as interpreted in these Standards."

2. In the view of your protestants, the Holy Bible does not reveal the form of the matter out of which, the time in which, or the mode by which God created the body of Adam, and therefore the hypothesis of evolution as believed by Rev. James Woodrow, D.D., cannot be regarded as in conflict with the teachings of the sacred Scriptures.

3. The Westminster Standards simply reproduce, with interpretation, the statements of the Scriptures in reference to the creation of Adam's body; and as the views of the complainant are not in conflict with the statements of the Scriptures, so neither can they be with the teachings of the Standards.

4. The action of the Assembly in refusing to sustain this complaint is equivalent to pronouncing as certainly false the theory of evolution as applied by Dr. Woodrow to Adam's body, which is a purely scientific question, entirely foreign to the legitimate sphere of ecclesiastical action. Your protestants, therefore, are unwilling that this General Assembly should express any opinion whatever respecting the hypothesis of evolution, or any other scientific question. [Signed by T. C. Whaling and 17 others.]

[See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Chap. IV, Par. II; Form of Govt., § 18-6, 116-9.]

20. The Matter of Rev. D. P. Robinson.

20a. Appeal of Rev. D. P. Robinson, from the Synod of North Carolina.

1887, p. 243. [This case was heard before a Commission. Rev. J. A. Wallace, Chairman; Rev. A. A. Pfanstiehl, clerk. To sustain, 10; to sustain in part, 4; not to sustain, 9.]

It appearing from the papers in the case that Rev. D. P. Robinson was suspended from the ministry for the mere *fact* of disobedience to and contempt of the civil magis-

trate, without accusing him in the indictment of moral turpitude in the mode of that disobedience, your Commission report the following verdict: The appeal is sustained on the ground that the infliction and continuance of an ecclesiastical censure may not be conditioned solely on disobedience to or contempt of a civil court.

The finding of the Commission was approved by the Assembly.

[The following protest, signed by A. M. McPheeters and ten others, was admitted to record without answer:]

We, the undersigned, respectfully enter our protest against the action of the Assembly in approving the finding of the Commission in the case of the appeal of Rev. D. P. Robinson against the Synod of North Carolina, on the following grounds:

1. That the Commission refused to entertain evidence that was before the Synod, on which the representatives of the Synod stated that the verdict of the Synod was based, and that without hearing said evidence.

[Ed. note: The record of the Commission contains the following:

Resolved, That this Commission explain that what is germane to the case before us includes testimony only as to the *fact* that the appellant refused to submit to the civil court.

The appellant having confessed (1) that suit was brought against him; (2) that the summons was served; (3) that judgment was rendered by default; (4) that he did not comply with the order of the court, the reading of testimony to establish these facts was omitted by consent of parties. The appellant further waived the question as to the jurisdiction of the court.]

And for the further reason that the verdict mistakes the indictment in asserting that it did not charge moral turpitude in the mode of disobedience.

B. M. Palmer and two others dissent from the action of the Assembly in confirming the report of the Commission on the second ground.

p. 245. [The complaint of Mecklenburg Presbytery against the Synod of North Carolina, connected with and growing out of the above case of Mr. Robinson, was referred to the next Assembly.]

20b. Complaint of the Presbytery of Mecklenburg, against the Synod of North Carolina.

1887, p. 245. [Referred to next Assembly.]

1888, pp. 402, 429. [Passed on to next Assembly.]

1889, pp. 576, 623. [The Commission by a vote of 15 to 7, sustained the complaint, and entered the following as its judgment]

Resolved, That the complaint of the Presbytery of Mecklenburg against the Synod of North Carolina, in the case of Rev. D. P. Robinson, be sustained upon the second and fifth grounds of complaint therein assigned, and that the case be remanded to the Synod of North Carolina, with instructions to correct its decision and sentence accordingly.

The Minutes of the Commission were approved by the Assembly.

The following protest was admitted to record without answer:

We, the undersigned, respectfully protest against the action of the Assembly in approving the finding of the Commission in the case of the complaint of Mecklenburg Presbyery against the Synod of North Carolina upon the following grounds:

1. That, while the Assembly at St. Louis declared that the complaint of Mecklenburg Presbytery involved moral issues, and the complaint itself intimated the same, the Commission ruled that no moral question was involved, but only irregularities in the proceedings of the Synod of North Carolina, and therefore would not hear any of the testimony upon which the decision of the Synod was based.

2. That a court commits no irregularity, and violates no written law of the church when, in interpreting its own vote, it declines to add the votes to confirm in part to confirm in whole, so as to make a majority of votes to confirm in whole, when a larger number of votes has been cast to reverse in whole than were given to confirm in whole.

3. That an appellate court, in exercising its constitutional authority to reverse or modify the sentence of a lower court, commits no irregularity, and has the right, as was done by the Synod of North Carolina, to pronounce a new sentence, to state how long it shall rest on the accused, and to prescribe the conditions upon which it shall be removed.

[Signed by H. G. Hill and seven others.]

For the further reason, that the report of the Commission is irregular, in that it does not state the points decided sufficiently clearly to enable the court to understand what it decided.

WM. BLACK
R. F. MCCASLAN

20c. Appeal of D. P. Robinson, against the Synod of North Carolina.

1890, p. 34. The Judicial Committee, to which were referred the appeal of Rev. D. P. Robinson against the Synod of North Carolina, and other papers from the Stated Clerk, relative to the matter, beg leave to report:

1. We find the appeal in order, so far as its mere form is concerned, but the act of the Synod appealed from is only the carrying out of the finding of the General Assembly of 1889, as admitted by the appellant himself. Such an appeal, therefore, is virtually an appeal from the last Assembly to this. Also the grounds of appeal as stated contemplate the reopening of the entire case on its merits, which cannot be done at this stage of final adjudication. For these reasons we are of opinion that the appeal cannot be entertained.

2. We find among the papers a petition from the Rev. D. P. Robinson to this Assembly, setting forth that he occupies an anomalous position by reason of the fact that the findings of the Assemblies of 1887 and 1889, in his case, are, at the least, inconsistent with each other, in that the finding of 1887 restored him to the ministry, while the finding of 1889 suspended him from the communion of the church. He, therefore, prays that if by reason of any obstacle his case cannot come before this Assembly on its original merits, that this Assembly will, at least, relieve his anomalous position by restoring him to the communion of the church.

3. We find that the petitioner is entitled to a definition of his position in the church, which he virtually asks for in his petition. We also think that the effect of the finding of 1887 is to restore him to the ministry, while the effect of the finding of 1889 is to bar him from the communion of the church from which he was not barred up to that date. We find these two decisions inconsistent and conflicting, in that a minister in the full exercise of all his functions, including the administration of the sacraments, is barred from the communion.

4. Without attempting in any way to correct or to harmonize these two conflicting findings of the General Assembly, we think that this Assembly ought to relieve the conflict and anomaly by granting the petitioner's request and restoring him to the communion of the church. We base this recommendation on the logical conditions of the case, and also on the fact that in the finding of 1889 it was confessedly "ruled that no moral issue was involved, but only irregularities in the proceedings of the Synod of North Carolina."

5. This case has been so long before the courts of the church, and has been so variously and partially presented at various stages of its progress, and so often handled

by courts of various and varying personnel, and from so many points of appeal and complaint, that your committee are not surprised at the confusion and tangle into which it has fallen, and which has been so hard to unravel. It is not surprising that a wide diversity of views should be sharply held and maintained in Presbytery, Synod and Assembly in all these years. Your committee desire, therefore, to emphasize this fact: we express no opinion on the merits of the original case. We venture also to suggest that the Rev. D. P. Robinson's plea, that his case has never been heard on its merits before the Assembly, seems to be confirmed by a careful examination of the findings of 1887 and 1889. There is, however, no constitutional way by which this body can take up the case anew, or even order it to be done.

6. Your committee also deems it proper to say to the Presbytery of Mecklenburg, to whose roll this action restores Rev. D. P. Robinson, in full communion and fellowship, that this Assembly knows absolutely nothing of the merits of the case and the original findings of that Presbytery, nor the grounds thereof, but only seeks to determine the present legal status of the case.

In so restoring him to full communion, this Assembly does not, by implication even, debar nor discourage the Presbytery from faithful discipline in this or any other case, provided the honor, purity, peace and edification of Christ's kingdom may seem to demand it.

1891, p. 256. Your committee, to which was referred the overture of Mecklenburg Presbytery, calling in question the constitutionality of the action taken by the Assembly of 1890 in the case of Rev. D. P. Robinson, would respectfully report as follows:

1. That so far as the merits of that particular case are concerned, this Assembly is not constitutionally authorized to take action thereon, as *that case* is not now before it in any mode recognized by our law for adjudication.

2. Treating the overture, however, as calling for an interpretation of the general rule of the law of the church, we hold that where a concrete case is brought judicially before a higher court of the Church from a lower court by appeal or complaint, when such appeal or complaint is disposed of by final judgment entered therein and sent down, that is an end of the constitutional authority of the higher court to deal with that particular case, unless it be again regularly brought before the higher court for adjudication in one of the recognized modes provided for by our Book of Church Order.

[Ed. note: In the action of 1890 above, point 4, is a misquotation of the Assembly in 1889. Instead of being the action of 1889, that cited is of 1887.]

21. Complaint of W. T. Russel, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1888, p. 427. [The Commission in its report, which was approved by the Assembly, submitted the following statement of the case:]

On account of certain difficulties that had arisen in the church, and more especially in the Session of the church, of Spartanburg, in the spring of 1887, a petition was sent up to the Presbytery of Enoree, signed by forty-one of its members, asking for the appointment of a commission to visit the church and divide it, organizing a second church. The Presbytery appointed the commission, the *record* of the appointment naming as its business the dividing of the church, if the way should be found to be clear. But the understanding in the body at the time, as determined and recorded at the next stated meeting, was that a division of the congregation and the organization of a second church was to be the *last resort*, after all other means of reconciling the differences had failed. The Commission met at Spartanburg and, upon investigation into the state of things, concluded that the best thing to do would be to obtain the resignation of the members of the Session, and to have an entirely new bench of elders chosen. This

was done. According to the report of the Commission, approved by the Presbytery, all the elders consented to retire (the complainant, however, it is admitted, reluctantly), and a new bench of elders was chosen and installed. Thereupon Dr. W. T. Russel complained to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting (1), That the Commission had transcended its power, in doing what had not been petitioned for, and what it had not been appointed to do; (2), That in other respects the Commission had not acted according to the Constitution; and (3), That he, the said complainant, had not voluntarily resigned his office.

The Presbytery overruled the complaint, approving of the action of the Commission, and holding that although the record, through an inadvertence, did not so specify, the declared and well-understood intention of the body at the time of the appointment of the Commission was to clothe it with power to settle the difficulties in the church, resorting to a division only in case of necessity, and that the complainant had in fact resigned.

Of this action complaint was made to Synod, as follows:

"1. That Presbytery approved the action of the Commission, which was outside and beyond the instruction which the Presbytery at Nazareth had put into the hands of the Commission.

"2. That the Presbytery at Union revised the action of the Presbytery at Nazareth so as to make it essentially different from that shown in the record.

"3. That the Presbytery based its approval upon the assumption that we had voluntarily resigned, which we affirmed that we had not.

"4. That the Presbytery approved the proceedings of the Commission, which, by the Presbytery's own admission, were in violation of the Constitution of the Church (Form of Government, p. 113), which proceedings we further deny to have been wise or for the good of the church.

"5. That the Presbytery justified its approval of a proceeding which it confessed to be illegal by the end claimed to have been attained.

"6. That by this action we have in effect been degraded from office without charges, without trial, and because we were endeavoring to perform the duties which the Presbytery and other superior courts had imposed upon us."

The Synod refused to sustain the complaint, holding as follows:

"1. Synod has been satisfied, from *statements made on the floor* of Synod, and from Presbytery's subsequent record, that it was the undoubted intention of said Presbytery, when said resolution was adopted, to empower said Commission not merely to divide the said church, if found needful, but also and particularly *to do everything it lawfully could to heal* the disorders in said church and restore harmony among its members, and that, by an inadvertence, the record of the Presbytery's action failed to exhibit its full intention.

"2. In this view of the authority of the Commission, Synod declares that said Commission did not transcend its lawful sphere in earnestly advising and requesting all the elders in said church to resign and in accepting their resignations, in order to the peace and welfare of said church, or in advising the church to elect new elders.

"3. Synod is satisfied, from the evidence before it, that the complainant (Dr. Russel) was not in any proper sense forced to tender his resignation as elder in said church, but that, after being duly informed by the Commission that it had no power to compel his resignation, he reluctantly agreed, *of his own will, to follow the advice of the Commission, and resigned his office.*"

Against this action on the part of the Synod, complaint was made to the General Assembly on the following grounds, viz.:

1. Because, at the hearing of the cause, Synod violated Sec. XVIII, Chap. VI, of the Book of Discipline, by allowing the introduction, and basing its decision upon the

consideration, of "new testimony in the shape of personal statements of alleged facts which do not appear in the record" of the cause, which testimony Synod itself defines as "outside parole evidence," and which was admitted deliberately and despite protest.

2. Because Synod in said decision endorsed an action of the Commission to Spartanburg Church, which action was illegal, according to "the written records of the Presbytery," and so confessed by Synod itself.

3. Because the Synod, upon evidence outside the record, which I (the complainant) had no opportunity to rebut, decided that I had voluntarily resigned by office as a ruling elder, which I solemnly and positively denied, and do still deny, having never for one moment entertained the slightest idea of resigning.

The Commission having, as above set forth in the records of its proceedings, fully heard the complainant and respondent, decided, by a vote of 13 to 8, and does hereby declare its decision to be, that *the complaint be not sustained.*

The report was adopted, and ordered to be reported to the General Assembly as the "presentation of the case" and as the finding of the Commission.

22. Appeal of Ouachita Presbytery, against the Synod of Arkansas.

1893, p. 32. [By a vote of 19 to 5, the Commission sustained the appeal, and adopted the following minute:]

That inasmuch as Mr. George Lacy was a candidate for the ministry under the care of Ouachita Presbytery; that inasmuch as he was expressly put under the care and direction of the Home Mission Committee of the Presbytery to do such work as the General Assembly has enjoined upon the presbyteries as desirable and proper for our candidates to perform; and that inasmuch as there is nothing in our Standards prohibiting such work on the part of our candidates, therefore our judgment is that the Presbytery of Ouachita did not err in granting permission to the church of Mount Holly to engage Mr. Lacy to perform such services.

We would, therefore, reverse the decision of the Synod of Arkansas, and grant the appeal of the Presbytery of Ouachita.

The following protest was offered by five members of the Commission, who voted to sustain the action of the Synod of Arkansas, and ordered to be spread on the Minutes and made a part of our report to the General Assembly:

As members of the Commission appointed to try the case of Ouachita Presbytery against the Synod of Arkansas, we, the undersigned, solemnly and most emphatically protest against the finding of the Commission for the following reasons, viz.:

1. It assumes that deliverances *in thesi* of the General Assembly are of higher authority, as interpretations of the "infallible Word" than the Book of Church Order.

2. It is clearly contrary to our Book of Church Order (Chap. VI, Sec. VI.), inasmuch as it empowers every presbytery to authorize any candidate under its care to try his gifts as a probationer without any examination of his qualifications for expounding the Scriptures, or any proof of his having studied any theology, either under an "approved divine" or in a Theological Seminary. [This 2. is obsolete. See Form of Government, § 24-6.]

3. It indirectly—furtively—but certainly "lets down the gap" of educational qualifications for the ministry, and thus surrenders the principle for which the Presbyterian Church has been illustrious in all the ages of its history. Signed by C. A. Munroe and 4 others.

p. 46. The following protest was admitted to record without answer:

Believing that the action whereby the Assembly reverses the decision of the Synod of Arkansas, and sustains the action of the Presbytery of Ouachita in granting permission to a church to employ as supply an unlicensed candidate, and directing him to labor under the direction of the Committee of Home Missions is contrary to

our law and dangerous to the best interests of our church; we, the undersigned, do hereby enter our solemn protest against this action. Signed by D. M. Currie and 23 others.

23. Appeal of Charleston Presbytery, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1894, pp. 189, 204. The Judicial Committee respectfully reports to the General Assembly that the only papers coming into its hands are those connected with a case entitled, "An Appeal of Charleston vs. Synod of South Carolina." The case originated in the decision of the Session of the Second Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, suspending Miss Sadie M. Means from the communion of the church, which went by complaint of Ainsley H. Monteith and Emma M. Monteith to Charleston Presbytery, and by complaint of same complainants to the Synod of South Carolina. Having examined the papers in the case and found them regular, the committee recommends that it be heard and decided as an appeal [as provided in the Rules of Discipline.]

p. 220. Unto the Venerable General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States:

The Charleston Presbytery, a court of the Church, within the jurisdiction of the Synod of South Carolina, and also under your jurisdiction, being aggrieved by a certain judgment rendered by said Synod on or about the fourth day of November, 1893, at its sitting in the town of Clinton, South Carolina, in the cause of a complaint of A. H. & E. M. Monteith *vs.* Charleston Presbytery, for refusing to sustain a complaint of A. H. & E. M. Monteith *vs.* the Session of the Second Church, Columbia, South Carolina, for its judgment, suspending indefinitely from the communion of the church Miss Sadie M. Means, on her confession of habitually violating the Sabbath-day, does hereby appeal to your venerable court to grant it such relief in the premises as in your judgment is wise and lawful. It does so pray you for the following reasons:

I. The proceedings of said Synod, whereby said judgment was reached, were irregular and unconstitutional:

1. Because, under the Rules of Discipline, the complainants were not entitled to complain.

2. Because the complaint contained reasons for the complaint irrelevant in themselves, and not deducible from "the record of the cause," to wit: all of that part of reason third, after the words, "confession of offense," and all of reason fourth.

3. Because the Synod did not try the cause upon "the record of the cause" furnished by the Presbytery, but upon "a record of the cause" made by itself.

4. Because the Synod, it its trial of the cause upon "the record of the cause" thus made, considered as a part of the "records" certain papers which were not before the Presbytery in the trial of the cause complained against, to-wit: a complaint against A. H. and E. M. Monteith *vs.* the Session of the Second Church, Columbia, South Carolina, based upon an amended notice of complaint served upon the Session eighteen days before the judgment complained against had been rendered; also a protest against J. Wm. Flinn and Samuel M. Smith, with the answer thereto, filed after the judgment of the Presbytery had been rendered; also a preamble and resolution offered by Wm. R. Atkinson after the judgment complained against had been rendered.

5. Because the Synod permitted new testimony to be introduced in its trial of the cause.

II. The judgment of Synod was not according to the law and the evidence.

1. Because work, as an avocation, in a telephone office on the Sabbath-day is a disciplinable offense under the Standards of the church.

2. Because the evidence that such an offense had been committed by Miss Sadie M. Means was conclusive.

3. Because the proceedings of the Charleston Presbytery and of the Session of the Second Church, Columbia, South Carolina, in their trial of the cause had been regular and constitutional.

Therefore the Presbytery prays your venerable court to reverse the said judgment of the Synod of South Carolina, or to remand said cause to the Synod for a new trial. If in the judgment of the General Assembly the Presbytery is not such a party, or has not submitted to such a regular trial as Paragraph 256 of Rules of Discipline [pres. § 116-2] contemplates, and therefore is not entitled to seek relief by an appeal, the Presbytery does pray your venerable court to consider this as a complaint, and issue said cause in accordance therewith.

G. A. BLACKBURN,
F. L. LEEPER,
Representatives of Charleston Presbytery.

The Judicial Committee respectfully report, that the Presbytery adopt the appeal and make it its own, and approve the reasons on which it is grounded.

Adopted by Presbytery, April 11, 1894. HENRY G. GILLAND, *Moderator.*

JOHN R. DOW, *Stated Clerk.*

p. 223. The vote was taken after the parties had been heard and resulted: To sustain the appeal, 47; to sustain in part, 8; not to sustain, 77.

p. 228. The Assembly finds:

1. That the record of the cause does not clearly show that the aforesaid Sadie Means came before the Session of the Second Presbyterian Church of Columbia, S. C., to make known to the court, as provided in Paragraph 234, [pres. § 110-1] that she was guilty of violating the Sabbath by working in a telephone office on the Lord's day, and therefore the record lacks the statements which authorize a judgment without process.

2. The decision of the Session was reached without trial, as provided in Paragraph 174 [pres. § 105-3], and these two Paragraphs, 234 and 174, limit the Session's power.

3. The decision was made in undue haste, and at the first and only sitting of the court, so far as the record shows.

4. The sentence of suspension from the communion was of excessive severity.

Premises considered, it is the judgment of the Assembly that the appeal be not sustained, and that the decision of the Synod of South Carolina be affirmed. In connection with this judgment, the Assembly deems it wise to reaffirm its immutable conviction as to the universal and perpetual obligation to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.

24. The Matter of Rev. B. D. D. Greer.

24a. Appeal of the Presbytery of Western Texas, against the Synod of Texas.

1895, p. 387. [The appeal was found regular and in order, and both parties consenting, it was ordered that it be heard by Commission.]

p. 430. The following papers were laid before the Commission as constituting the complete record of the case:

1. A paper presented to the Presbytery of Western Texas by the Rev. B. D. D. Greer, being a voluntary statement of his views upon certain doctrinal points, which views, he states, are not in harmony with the Standards of the church.

2. A paper containing extracts from the Minutes of the Presbytery of Western Texas, showing its action in treating the case as one without process (see Paragraphs 234, 236) [pres. § 110-1], and proceeding to divest him of his office as a minister of the gospel.

3. The appeal and complaint of Rev. B. D. D. Greer from this action of Presbytery to the Synod of Texas.

4. The action of the Synod in remitting the case to Presbytery for a new trial.

5. The appeal of the Presbytery of Western Texas from this decision of the Synod to the General Assembly.

[After the parties had been heard the vote was taken with the following result:] To sustain, 18; to sustain in part, 1; not to sustain, 7.

[The following minute, as expressing its judgment, was adopted by the Commission:]

There are only two questions—one of law and one of fact—revealed to your Judicial Commission, by the records placed in their hands, that require statement preliminary to the rendering of final judgment. The question of law is: Is this case one coming under the head of cases that may be issued without process? The question of fact is: Did the Presbytery of Western Texas have evidence before it on which it could at once proceed, and finally pronounce judgment in the case?

Your Commission has decided the question of law in the affirmative. The question of fact depends altogether upon the contents of a paper already laid before this Assembly and constituting a part of the record. This paper was originally laid voluntarily before the Presbytery of Western Texas by Rev. B. D. D. Greer, one of its members, and it professedly and strongly states Rev. B. D. D. Greer's views of the doctrines taught in the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of our church, which views he rejects with abhorrence. The record also states that he, by verbal statement before Presbytery, declared his want of harmony with the doctrines of our Standards. There is not the least evidence in the records of the case that he has changed his views. Your Commission has decided this question, too, in the affirmative—that is, that the paper voluntarily laid before Presbytery by Rev. B. D. D. Greer, and his verbal statements in court, were evidence on which Presbytery could proceed to pronounce its judgment. The Synod of Texas decided both these questions in the negative. All other questions of law and fact appearing in the records are merely *pro forma*, and are such as appear in every case of appeal, and such as have been already decided by this Assembly in appointing the Judicial Commission with the consent of both appellant and appellee; therefore, it is the judgment of the Judicial Commission of the General Assembly in sustaining the appeal of the Presbytery of Western Texas from the decision of the Synod of Texas, in the case of the appeal of the Rev. B. D. D. Greer from the decision of the Presbytery of Western Texas, that the Presbytery of Western Texas correctly regarded this unprecedented case as coming under the class of cases without process; and that the Synod of Texas erred in remitting the case for a new trial, and requiring the Presbytery of Western Texas to prefer charges and specifications; and that the decision of the Synod of Texas be, and hereby is, reversed, and that the decision of the Presbytery of Western Texas be, and hereby is, affirmed.

Rev. J. H. Nall desired to record his dissent from the judgment rendered.

p. 431. [The findings and the minutes of the Commission were approved by the Assembly: Yeas, 73; nays, 28.]

p. 434. [The following protest was admitted to record without answer:]

We respectfully protest against the decision of the General Assembly in the appeal of the Presbytery of Western Texas against the action of the Synod of Texas in the appeal of Rev. B. D. D. Greer against said Presbytery.

1. Because the Presbytery of Western Texas was not a party against whom a judgment was rendered, and could not appeal.

2. Because the judgment of the Commission finally concluded the judgment in the case of Mr. Greer, although he was not a party to the proceedings of this court, thus annulling his constitutional right of appeal.

[Signed by W. H. Ferguson and twenty others.]

24b. Appeal of Baxter D. D. Greer, against the Synod of Texas.

1895, p. 432. The following was adopted:

Your Judicial Committee would respectfully report to the Genueral Assembly that the following papers have been placed in our hands, viz.: An appeal of Rev. Baxter D. D. Greer, appellant, vs. Synod of Texas, appellee, together with the records of the case, and we find that the appeal is regular, and that the appellant, on his part, has conducted it regularly as prescribed by the Rules of Discipline.

The decision appealed from is expressed in these words: "It is the sense of this Synod that its action in remitting the case of Rev. Baxter D. D. Greer to the Presbytery of Western Texas does not restore him to his office." It is against this decision that brother Greer appeals. Your committee would report that, inasmuch as this case virtually has been before this court on appeal from the Presbytery of Western Texas vs. Synod of Texas, and has been decided by Commission, and its judgment entered up as the judgment of this Assembly, we recommend that this appeal be dismissed without any decision as to the wisdom of the action of the Synod.

25. Appeal or complaint of Indian Presbytery, against the Synod of Texas.

1896, p. 579. [The commissioners from that Presbytery having informed the Judicial Committee that it is not desired to prosecute this case, the Presbytery was granted leave to withdraw the papers in the case.]

26. Complaint of Joseph A. Enslow, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1896, p. 579. The complaint of Mr. Joseph A. Enslow, a ruling elder in the Charleston Presbytery, against the Synod of South Carolina for excepting to the action of Charleston Presbytery in refusing to receive under its care as a candidate for the ministry an applicant simply on the ground that he was colored, and in directing the Presbytery to review its action in this matter and correct the error as far as possible.

The committee has ascertained that this complaint is regular, and recommends that it be heard by the General Assembly in the usual order.

p. 606. The vote: Not to sustain, 120; to sustain, 20; to sustain in part, 9; not voting, 26.

p. 616. [The following minute was adopted:]

From the "Record" in the case, it appears that Charleston Presbytery "refused to receive under its care as a candidate for the ministry an applicant simply on the ground that he was colored; and that the Synod of South Carolina excepted to this and directed the Presbytery to review its action in the matter, and to correct the error as far as possible."

In refusing to sustain this complaint the General Assembly, without expressing any opinion as to the extent of the general discretionary power of a Presbytery in receiving candidates, confirms the action of the Synod solely on the ground that the reason given by the Presbytery for not receiving the applicant as a candidate, namely, that he was colored, is contrary to the law and constitution of the church.

p. 617. [The following paper was admitted to record:]

We who voted "to sustain in part" in the complaint of J. A. Enslow against the Synod of South Carolina, desire to have recorded the following explanation of our vote:

1. We voted to sustain in part Charleston Presbytery, because it acted within its constitutional rights.

2. We voted to sustain in part the Synod of South Carolina, because Charleston Presbytery, in the exercise of its constitutional rights, used its discretionary power unwisely in drawing the anti-scriptural color line in the rejection of the candidate. Signed by T. S. Clyce and 7 others.

p. 611. The undersigned begs leave to put upon record the following explanation of his vote to sustain the complaint, viz.: That whilst entirely out of sympathy with the Presbytery for declining to take a young colored man under their care as a candidate for the ministry solely because of his color, he yet believes that the Synod has no authority, under our Standards, for making a judicial decision in a matter which came before it simply in the way of review, and not by way of complaint or appeal.

27. Complaint of E. M. Richardson, and others, against the Synod of Memphis.

1896, p. 579. The committee has ascertained that the complaint is regular as far as the complainants, Rev. Dr. N. M. Woods and Rev. Dr. E. A. Ramsey, are concerned; that the record has been correctly prepared except that it contains a protest which does not rightly form part of it, and recommends that it be heard by the General Assembly in the usual order.

pp. 611, 612. The complainants were heard by E. A. Ramsey and N. M. Woods; the Synod, by T. W. Raymond and W. McF. Alexander.

p. 617. The vote on being taken was: To sustain, 18; not to sustain, 74.

[The record in the Minutes of the Assembly is so incomplete as not even to give an intimation of the nature of this complaint, or what was decided. From the records of the lower courts and from unofficial sources, the following is gathered as setting forth the question at issue:

The facts of the case are that on the request of the Session a Commission was appointed (September 10, 1894), to visit the church at E———, Tenn., and look into difficulties. On November 7, 1894, the Commission reported that it had met September 18, 1894, and sought to solve the difficulties growing out of the proposed removal of the church building. The Commission reached a conclusion.

But the Presbytery, at a subsequent meeting, allowed a discussion *of the merits* of the questions settled by the Commission in the Presbytery. And the Presbytery decided not to put the records of the Commission upon the Minutes of the Presbytery, but to take a different action. Against this, the complaint is taken.

The records are as follows:

The request of the Session was for the Presbytery—

To appoint a Commission to fully investigate this matter, and that your body adjourn to meet in Memphis sometime in November next, thereby giving the Commission full time to investigate.

The record of Presbytery is as follows:

The record of the Commission concerning the E——— church, was then taken from the docket and read, and a resolution was offered by Rev. E. M. Richardson to approve it and spread the findings upon the Minutes. After prolonged discussion, the following resolution, offered by Rev. J. H. Lumpkin as a substitute, was adopted, viz.:

Resolved, That, while appreciating the work of the Commission, and commending their diligence and fidelity, the Presbytery feels that the course taken by the Commission does not meet the necessities of the E——— church, and it does, therefore, decline to place the records of the Commission on its Minutes.

The matter was carried up to Synod, and the Synod decided thus:

1. There appears no evidence in "the record" of the case that the Presbytery went outside of the Minutes of the Commission to obtain evidence upon which to base its judgment.

2. That the power accorded to a Commission "to conclude the business submitted to it" (see Book of Church Order, Par. 92) [pres. § 19-2] can only be temporary and provisional, because the power of a court to annul the decision of a Commission, when the action of the Commission appears irregular and unconstitutional, has never been questioned, hence, the power of the Commission to conclude the business submitted to it is in some cases at least only provisional and temporary.

3. The Book of Church Order, Par. 92, provides that the action of the Commission is "subject to the review of the court appointing it." The meaning of "review" is defined by the Book of Church, Par. 241 [pres. § 114-2], to mean not only the power to examine whether the proceedings have been constitutional and regular, but whether they have been *wise* and *equitable*, and, while this has a direct reference to the power of a higher court to review the records of a lower court, it seems plainly to define the meaning of the term "review," as used in our Standards. If this be true, then a court may change or annul the finding of a Commission when the action of the Commission seems unwise to the court appointing it.

4. That the provision of Par. 92, which reads :"To this end, full records of its proceedings shall be submitted to the court appointing it," seems expressly to make a provision for such full information of the subject as would enable the court to judge of the wisdom and equity of the case.

5. The expression, "if approved," also occurring in Par. 92, seems to indicate still further the power of the court to judge, not only of the constitutionality and regularity of the judgment of the Commission, but also of its wisdom and equity.

6. From Baird's *Digest*, pages 233, 234, etc., it will be seen that, even before the passage of any law on this subject, the action of the Commission was always regarded as temporary and provisional, and subject to review of the court appointing it; and that this right of review carried with it the right to judge of the wisdom and equity of the decision of the Commission. Hence we believe that this historical custom of review defines the meaning of the term as used in our present Book of Church Order.

From this a complaint was taken to the Assembly as follows:

The undersigned would hereby respectfully make complaint to the General Assembly to the action of the Synod of Memphis, recently taken at Trenton, Tenn., in the matter of the complaint of Rev. Dr. E. M. Richardson and others against the finding of the Presbytery of Memphis in the case of the Commission to the E——— Church. Said action of Synod was, in the humble judgment of complainants, unconstitutional and unwise.

1. Said action is in violation of the evident meaning and intent of Par. 92 of the Book of Church Order, which *characterizes a Commission as fundamentally different in nature and powers from an ordinary committee*, in that it has full authority to conclude the business intrusted to it, and therefore its verdicts are entitled to stand unless the mode of procedure has been clearly unconstitutional and disorderly.

2. Said action of Synod, sustaining said finding of Presbytery, is unwise and hurtful in that it tends to destroy the moral weight of every decision of a Commission in such cases, with any persons not pleased therewith, and practically puts the Presbytery to going into the merits of a controversy in the absence of the necessary witnesses, thereby doing injustice to some of the parties at variance, and rendering the work of a Commission nugatory.

3. The unfairness of said action appears in the fact that the Presbytery, in refusing to approve of the Commission's finding, assigned a reason for said refusal, which was based, not wholly on the report of the Commission, but in part on *ex parte* statements made on the floor of the Presbytery at the time.

A motion in the Assembly to formulate the opinion of the court was lost. A.]

28. Complaint of Rev. S. S. Laws, D.D., against the Synod of South Carolina.

1898, p. 198. The Judicial Committee reported that they have had in their hand the complaint of S. S. Laws against the Synod of South Carolina, and that they find no ground for judicial action, and recommend that the complaint be referred to the Standing Committee on Theological Seminaries.

p. 234. In the matter of the complaint of the Rev. S. S. Laws, D.D., against the action of the Synod of South Carolina, your Committee recommends the following:

Whereas, It is provided in the Constitution of the Columbia Theological Seminary that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States has "the right of general supervision over the interest of this Seminary" and "can advise and recommend measures for its welfare" (Constitution, Sec. 1, Art. 2); and,

Whereas, It is likewise provided in the same Constitution that, "should the Assembly see reason, at any time, to object to any of the acts of the Directors or other authorities of the institution, it shall send down in writing to the Synods its opinion in the premises, but shall have no controlling negative, nor the right to originate any measures for the management of the Seminary;" and,

Whereas, The so-called age rule, Section 3, Art. 12, Par. 33 (p. 8), is deemed harmful to the Seminary and to the Church and its ministry, and seems plainly to be founded on the false principle that a definite age may be set as a limitation of service in said Seminary of the church, therefore,

Resolved, 1. That this General Assembly advises and would approve the action were the Synods in charge of this Seminary to do away with said age rule (Constitution, Par. 33).

2. In earnestly and affectionately giving this advice, the General Assembly would, in doing so, make mention, as was done by the Synods of Georgia and Alabama in their actions for the repeal of the aforesaid age rule, of the understood fact that Par. 15 (Art. 12, Sec. 2) of the "Plan of Government," would still remain in full force as "a sufficient provision of authority for the Board of Directors in the matter of retiring professors."

3. That, as is provided in the Constitution of the Seminary, the Clerk of this General Assembly is directed to send down in writing this advisory deliverance to the four charter Synods, with the assurance that it is expressive of our sincere, fraternal and abiding interest in the welfare of this venerable institution of our church, for whose prosperity and extended usefulness we will ever pray.

29. Complaint of Rev. Wm. M. McPheeters, and others, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1898, p. 198. The Judicial Committee reported that they have had in their hand a complaint of Wm. M. McPheeters and others against the Synod of South Carolina concerning its action in addressing an official communication to the civil government in regard to Sunday mails:

pp. 207, 208. The roll was called for the vote, which resulted as follows: To sustain, 19; to sustain in part, 6; not to sustain, 145; excused, 3; absent or not voting, 9.

p. 214. The committee to formulate the judgment of the Assembly made a report, which was amended and adopted as follows:

The General Assembly refuses to sustain the complaint against the Synod of South Carolina, upon the ground that the action complained of is legally based upon Chap. XXXI, Sec. 4 [pres. XXXIII, 4], of the Confession of Faith.

30. Complaint of Rev. J. S. Shaw, against the Synod of Memphis.

1900, pp. 597, 603. [From report of Judicial Committee:]

This complaint is found in order, except that it is addressed to the General Assembly, not directly, but through the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Memphis. Your committee recommend that this irregularity be overlooked, and that the complaint be heard.

p. 610. The vote: to sustain, 26; not to sustain, 142.

p. 615. Your committee recommend the following minute:

That from the record in the complaint it appears that Rev. R. J. Shaw was deposed from the ministry for contumacy without process; that this contumacy was committed in the presence of the court. It was, therefore, not a case requiring process, and it is ordered that the judgment of this General Assembly be, and is, that the complaint of Rev. J. S. Shaw be not sustained, and that the action of the Synod of Memphis complained of be, and is hereby, affirmed as constitutional and regular.

p. 614. A memorial from R. J. Shaw and a memorial from Josie A. Shaw and Josie C. Shaw were placed in the hands of your [Judicial] Committee. The answer to the prayer of these memorialists was granted by the Assembly in hearing the complaint of Rev. J. S. Shaw against the Synod of Memphis. Your Committee recommend, therefore, that no further notice be taken of the memorial.

31. Complaint of J. B. McNeilly, and others, against the Synod of Memphis.

1900, p. 598. The Stated Clerk announced the reception of a memorial from R. J. Shaw and a complaint from J. B. McNeilly and others, officers of the Presbyterian Church in Panola County, Miss., vs. the Synod of Memphis. These papers were referred to the Judicial Committee.

p. 614. Your committee have had placed in their hands a complaint against the Synod of Memphis . . .

Your Committee find the complaint in order, but the complainants are not here to prosecute the case. A communication from them to the Assembly has been placed in the hands of your Committee. This communication might be construed as a prosecution of their case in writing; but if so construed, an examination of it shows that it deals almost exclusively with matters that lie outside of the "record of the case."

Your Committee, therefore, recommend that the complaint be dismissed on the ground that the complainants are not here to properly prosecute their case.

32. The Matter of Rev. E. T. Hoge.

32a. Complaint of E. T. Hoge, against the Presbytery of Abingdon.

1901, p. 26. Your Judicial Committee would make the following report on the paper placed in its hands, purporting to be a complaint of E. T. Hoge against the Presbytery of Abingdon: As an appellant cannot also complain, even to the next higher court, and as he can do this with even still less propriety to the court second above, and as it appears from the Minutes of the Synod of Virginia, sitting in Newport News, in October, 1900 (see p. 162, Min. Synod of Virginia, 1900), that the appeal of E. T. Hoge against the judgment of the Presbytery of Abingdon, divesting him of the office of the ministry, was found to be regular, and put upon the docket for action at the

next meeting of Synod, your committee would report that there is no formal complaint from the said E. T. Hoge before this body.

32b. Appeal of Rev. E. T. Hoge, against the Synod of Virginia.

1902, p. 257. Your Judicial Committee would report that we find the appeal of Rev. E. T. Hoge against the action of the Synod of Virginia, in its approval of the action of the Presbytery of Abingdon, in divesting him of the office of the ministry, on the ground that he had habitually failed to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions, and that such neglect proceeded only from his want of acceptability to the church, in order.

p. 260. The roll was called for the expression of opinion. The appeal was not sustained.

p. 272. The committee to report a minute formulating the judgment of the Assembly . . . presented the following which was adopted:

It is the judgment of the General Assembly that the appeal of Rev. E. T. Hoge be not sustained in any particular, and the decision of the Synod of Virginia be affirmed.

Ruling Elder T. W. Coleman presented a protest, which was admitted to record without answer.

p. 274. The following paper was adopted:

Whereas, the record in the appeal of the Rev. E. T. Hoge against the Synod of Virginia does not show that he was assigned membership in any church, the attention of the Presbytery of Abingdon is called to this matter, and should it be true that the Presbytery failed to complete its action, it is hereby directed to assign Mr. Hoge membership in some particular church.

33. Complaint of Rev. E. W. Bedinger, D.D., against the Synod of Kentucky.

1901, p. 37. [The Judicial Committee reported:]

On the complaint of Rev. E. W. Bedinger, D.D., against the Synod of Kentucky, the committee would report that at the request of the Committee Dr. Bedinger appeared before it, and that, after conference, he, in view of the ventilation of the kindred matter now being made in the discussion of the consolidation of the Louisville and Danville Seminaries, expressed himself as not inclined to press the complaint, and left its disposition with the discretion of the Committee. Your Committee, therefore, recommend that the complaint be not heard.

34. Complaint of Rev. Z. B. Graves, against the Synod of Louisiana.

1902, p. 256. The Judicial Committee, to whom were referred the appeal of the Rev. Z. B. Graves, from the Synod of Louisiana, and the appeal of the Rev. E. T. Hoge, from the Synod of Virginia, made the following report, which was adopted:

Your Committee would report that in the case of the appeal of Rev. Z. B. Graves we find that it is termed an appeal against the action of the Synod of Louisiana, but it is more properly a complaint in which Rev. Z. B. Graves complains against the judgment of the Synod of Louisiana, which approved the action of the Presbytery of New Orleans, deposing the complainant from the ministry without judicial proceedings, on the ground of unsoundness of mind.

We find the complaint in order, and also find the record of the cause properly made out and certified by the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Louisiana. In view of the fact that Rev. Z. B. Graves has been adjudged of unsound mind, your Committee would suggest that the Assembly appoint one of its members, as he may elect, to represent the complainant, and that the cause be heard by the Assembly in the following manner, to-wit:

1. That the record of the cause be read.

2. To hear the parties, first the complainant, by his counsel, then the respondent, represented by Rev. W. McF. Alexander, D.D., and the complainant, through his counsel, shall close.

3. To call the roll, that the members may express their opinion in the cause.

4. To take the vote.

p. 260. E. B. Witherspoon, counsel for Z. B. Graves and W. McF. Alexander, for the Synod of Louisiana, united in presenting the following agreement in disposition of the appeal of Mr. Graves, which agreement was sanctioned by the Assembly.

Prof. Z. B. Graves hereby withdraws his complaint against the Synod of Louisiana, and agrees, within a reasonable time after the arrangement of his business, to enter some retreat for those of unsound mind, and to remain there till completely restored, provided that—

1. The Assembly will grant to him the sum of $150 per annum through the Invalid Committee, while he remains in the retreat, to purchase necessary delicacies for one in his physical condition.

2. The Assembly hereby enjoins the Synod of Louisiana to enjoin the Presbytery of New Orleans to restore him to the active work of the ministry whenever there is sufficient evidence of his complete restoration to mental soundness.

[See this Digest, Ed. note under Rules of Dis., § 108-4.]

35. Complaint of Rev. J. M. Wells, and others, against the Synod of North Carolina.

1905, pp. 18, 28. The Commission to hear the complaint of J. M. Wells and others against the Synod of North Carolina presented its report, which was approved.

[Excerpt:] The vote was taken: to sustain, 12; not to sustain, 7; excused, 1.

The Committee to formulate the judgment of the Commission made the following report: "The Judgment of the Commission . . . is that the complaint is sustained on the second ground therein assigned."

[Note: explanation given by Stated Clerk:

The second ground of complaint above sustained was against the action of the Synod in failing to sustain the complaint of J. M. Wells and R. M. Mann against the action of Wilmington Presbytery. The complainants alleged that the Synod erred in failing to sustain said complaint:

1. Because the action of Wilmington Presbytery in granting evangelistic powers under certain conditions was unconstitutional. 2. Because the action of Wilmington Presbytery in invading the jurisdiction of the local Session was unconstitutional. 3. Because the action of Wilmington Presbytery in receiving members into the Church at large within the settled Church State is ultra constitutional and dangerous. 4. Because the action of Wilmington Presbytery in making color a test of membership is unconstitutional.

The action of Wilmington Presbytery against which J. M. Wells and R. M. Mann complained was the adoption of the following: "Where any of our ministers find colored persons desirous of becoming Presbyterians, and the way is not open for them to join any of our white churches, resolved, that said minister acting as evangelist be authorized to receive such colored persons into the Church, and to recommend them for membership through our General Assembly's Agent for Colored Evangelization to any of our colored churches willing to receive them."]

36. Complaint of N. D. Thurmond, against the Synod of Missouri.

1905, pp. 18, 46. [From the report of the Commission in the case:]

The vote: To sustain, 1; to sustain in part, 3; not to sustain, 18.

The judgment of the Commission:

The Commission to which the complaint of N. D. Thurmond vs. the Synod of Missouri was referred for trial, reports as follows:

1. Under the fifth section of the call of January 19, 1904, for a meeting of the Presbytery of Missouri, "to consider a petition of certain members of the Fulton Church, asking Presbytery to assume original jurisdiction over said church and to make such investigations into the present condition of the church as Presbytery may deem necessary, in order to make all such orders as may be necessary to restore peace and harmony and to secure the future spiritual edification of the said church," it is the judgment of the Assembly that said Presbytery properly took original jurisdiction under Section 77 of the Book of Church Order [pres. § 16-7], and had jurisdiction to "demit without prejudice the official functions" of the elders of said church, which action amounted to no more than a dissolution of the official relation. (Assembly 1894, p. 196.)

2. That the action of the Synod of Missouri in not sustaining the complaint of said N. D. Thurmond was correct; and

3. That said N. D. Thurmond's complaint to this Assembly be not sustained.

37. Complaints of Rev. Wm. Caldwell, and others, against the Synod of Texas.

1906, p. 12. To the [Judicial] Committee were referred an appeal and a complaint on the part of Rev. Wm. Caldwell, against the Synod of Texas, and complaints on the part of members of the Session of the First Church, Fort Worth, against the Synod of Texas and against the Presbytery of Fort Worth.

p. 27. The report of the Committee on Judicial Business relating to the complaint of members of the First Church, Fort Worth, against the Synod of Texas, was taken from the docket and adopted as follows:

The Judicial Committee begs leave to report that there have been placed in its hands papers relating to one general matter as follows:

1. The Appeal of the Rev. Wm. Caldwell against the action of the Synod of Texas.

2. The Complaint of the Rev. Wm. Caldwell against the action of the Synod of Texas.

3. The Complaint of members of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth, Texas, against the action of the Synod of Texas.

4. The Complaint of members of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth, Texas, against the Presbytery of Fort Worth.

5. The record of the case.

6. The certificate from the Synod of Texas appointing Rev. Josephus Johnson, D.D., and John V. McCall, its representatives, and

Certificate from the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth appointing Rev. W. H. Leavell and Rev. C. P. Bridewell as their representatives.

7. Extracts from the Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth.

The Committee finds that the issues of most consequence are presented in the Complaint of the Rev. Wm. Caldwell against the Synod of Texas, and in the Complaint of the members of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth against the Synod of Texas, and it further finds the issues raised in the two complaints to be the same. Inasmuch as one of these issues is the status of the Rev. Wm. Caldwell in relation to the Presbytery of Fort Worth and consequently his right to enter a complaint before this Assembly is in question, and the Committee does not desire to appear to pre-judge these questions, the Committe passes over for the present the complaint of the Rev. Wm. Caldwell, and makes its report on the complaint of the members of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth.

Your Committee further recommends that the Rev. Wm. Caldwell be granted the privilege of the floor during the trial of this case.

p. 38. The vote was taken: to sustain, 79; not to sustain, 89; to sustain in part, 11; absent and not voting, 18.

The second part of the Complaint, as to whether the judgment of the Synod was mistaken and unjustly severe, was withdrawn by the complainants, with consent of the Assembly.

p. 44. The Committee appointed to formulate the judgment of the Court in the complaint . . .find:

1. That in sustaining the Complaint of members of the Session of the First Church of Fort Worth the action of the Synod of Texas, November 22nd, 1905, is thereby set aside.

2. The effect of this judgment is: that the Rev. William Caldwell has been, since the day of his reception into Fort Worth Presbytery, and is now, a member of that Presbytery; and that the Rev. William Caldwell since the date of his installation, November 30th, 1904, as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, of Fort Worth, has been and is now, the pastor of said church.

[Ed. note: The counting of votes "to sustain in part" as votes "to sustain" (see below protest of Dr. W. E. Boggs and others) gave a majority of one to sustain the complaint.]

p. 45. The Rev. J. V. McCall, for himself and others, presented the following protest:

We, the undersigned, respectfully, but solemnly, protest against the proceedings of the General Assembly in the case known as the complaint of certain members of the First Church of Fort Worth against the Synod of Texas, for the following reasons:

(1) The Assembly admitted as part of the record of the cause "a decision of the Synod which was rendered in October, 1904, when as a matter of fact the complainants filed no notice of complaint against any decision until December 5th, 1905. We protest because the Assembly accepted, as part of the record in this cause and consequently as part of the material to be used in forming its judgment, a decision of the lower court, which was not only not complained against within the constitutional limit of ten days (Book of Church Order, Paragraphs 258 and 268) [pres. § 116-4, 117-4], but was never complained against at all, which was not sent up by the Synod as part of the record of this cause. We deem it unconstitutional in the court to have permitted its judicial committee to obtain and insert this decision in the record because our law in Paragraph 189 [pres. § 105-19], declares that "nothing which is not contained" in the record sent up by the lower court "shall be taken into consideration in the higher court," and we deem it unjust because it permitted a decision, which no one had a right to complain against at this stage, and which was not objected to by the complainants, to be employed in their effort to secure the reversal of another and a different decision which had been rendered a year afterwards. And the Presbytery did not object to it, but again proceeded with the examination of the brother, with a view to his reception, who did not plead that he was already a member of the Presbytery.

(2) The Assembly ignored our rules of procedure in allowing men that were not members of the court to represent the complainants in this cause. This was in plain contravention of our law in Paragraph 190 [pres. § 105-20], which provides that they can be represented only by a "member of the court."

(3) In its decision of the case, as we believe, the court has set aside the explicit directions of the Constitution on a mere technicality, which in this case did not apply. Dr. Caldwell had never possessed unquestioned standing in our ministry. The mandatory instructions in Paragraph 75 [pres. § 16-7], to "examine" applicants for admission clearly show that presbyteries are required to pass upon their soundness in the faith and consequent eligibility to membership, and when a presbytery has met any application with either a favorable or unfavorable decision it is clear that the minority has a right to complain. In fact, it is said in Paragraph 267 [pres. § 117-1] that "any member of the church submitting to its authority may complain against *every species of decision.*" It is also clear from Paragraph 270 [pres. § 117-5] that when a cause has been so taken up by complaint, "The superior court has *discretionary* power either to annul any portion or the whole of the decision complained of." We count it as a matter of very great practical importance, because your denial, in this case, of higher court's right to entertain such a complaint and to annul the decision complained of where the interests of the Master's kingdom appear to demand it, renders it vastly more difficult for the Church to protect herself against the introduction of error, it being more trying to institute process against one who is an accepted minister than to oppose his reception, and vastly more difficult to secure the necessary evidence and obtain his expulsion than to prevent his admission.

J. P. Robertson, Josephus Johnson, Brooks I. Dickey, Oliver G. Jones, E. P. Penick, Jno. V. McCall, A. H. P. McCurdy, D. D. Peden. W. S. Red, R. D. Campbell, R. N. Abraham, W. W. Killough, A. C. Hopkins.

In addition to signing the above the undersigned protest against the judgment of the Assembly since it leaves Dr. Wm. Caldwell charged in the minds of his brethren of the Synod of Texas with being out of harmony with the Standards of the Presbyterian Church, thereby creating a "scandal," which the Assembly should order "removed." The judgment is unjust to Dr. Caldwell.

W. S. Red, D. D. Peden, A. H. P. McCurdy, A. W. Wilson.

Rev. D. W. E. Boggs, for himself and others, presented the following protest, which was admitted to record:

The undersigned, voting "To sustain in part" in the case of "Members of the Fort Worth First Church vs. the Synod of Texas," ask leave to spread upon the Assembly's Minutes this respectful protest:

(1) In voting as we did we by no means questioned the legal right of the Synod to take up and issue the Complaint, as a matter entirely within its jurisdiction, according to our Law (see Rules of Disc. Par. 267-272) [pres. § 117-1 ff.].

(2) That we were not moved by any approval whatever of the views of Rev. Dr. Caldwell.

(3) But we so voted because of certain irregularities in the handling of the case, which, in our opinion, so far obscured the justice of the decision as to warrant the Assembly to remand the case to the Synod for a new hearing, that all irregularities might be avoided and especially that the merciful provisions of our Law for the recovery of any who may go astray might be brought into use. (See Rules of Disc., Par. 145, 146, and 172.) [pres. § 101-1 ff.]

(4) Furthermore, in ordering that our votes "To sustain in part" be counted with the vote "to sustain" simply and without qualification, we humbly conceive that our votes were in effect taken away from us, without color of law and contrary to fact. (Signed by seven.)

p. 57. Rev. Dr. W. H. Leavell, acting for the parties, asked and obtained leave to withdraw the appeal and the complaint of Wm. Caldwell, vs. the Synod of Texas, and the complaint of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth vs. the Presbytery of Fort Worth.

Rev. Dr. W. M. McPheeters presented the following Dissent and Protest, which was admitted to record:

The undersigned desire to enter our dissent from and protest against the findings of the General Assembly in the Complaint of the First Presbyterian Church of Fort

Worth, Texas, against the decision of the Synod of Texas, meeting in Austin, Oct. 19, 1905, in the matter of the Complaint of J. V. McCall and others against the action of the Fort Worth Presbytery, meeting at Weatherford, Texas, Nov. 22, 1904, in the receiving and enrolling the Rev. Wm. Caldwell, Ph.D., as a member of said Presbytery.

We feel justified in entering this formal dissent and protest, and asking that it go upon record:

1. Because of the gravity of the principles involved.

2. Because of the far-reaching and disastrous character of the effects that are likely to follow if these erroneous principles go absolutely unchallenged.

3. Because owing to the shortness of the time allowed by the Assembly for deliberating upon this case, it was impossible for the Assembly to give the principles involved that consideration that their importance and the gravity of the case demand. Hence we are entitled to hope that with the facts before them our courts will in the future refuse to regard this action of the Assembly as a precedent.

The material facts of the case are the following:

1. At a meeting of Fort Worth Presbytery held at Venus, Texas, Oct. 19, 1904, the Rev. Wm. Caldwell presented a letter.

Without going into a full review and analysis of the case, for which there is not time, we content ourselves with pointing out the positions underlying the action of the Assembly, and from which we dissent.

A. One of these is that the presbytery is the sole, the absolute and the final judge as to whether a minister possesses the qualifications which our Constitution demands for admission to presbytery. Plausible as this view may be made to appear, we dissent from its soundness, and for the following reasons:

1. It is admitted that the presbytery must subject every applicant to a series of examinations, but it is held that the presbytery alone is judge as to whether the showing made by the person subjected to them is satisfactory in the sense of meeting the requirements of the Constitution. This view derives whatever plausibility it possesses from the fact that ordinarily the presbytery does not make the answer given by applicants for admission a matter of record. But clearly a presbytery might make these examinations a matter of record, and when recorded they would, along with the other acts of the presbytery, become subject to review by the synod and the latter body would be called upon to pass upon their conformity to the Constitution. Again, it will hardly be denied that a minority might demand that the examination of an applicant be reduced to writing, and that for the express purpose of enabling the synod to judge of how far an examination which the majority had voted to sustain really revealed the possession, by the applicant for admission to the body, of the qualifications required by the Constitution. The fact that ordinarily only a verbal and general report is demanded of a trusted agent by his principal does not forbid the principal from requiring from said agent a written and detailed report. And it would certainly be competent, if the interests of the truth demanded it, for a synod to instruct its presbyteries to report in writing the examinations of those applying to it for membership. In a word, an examination for admission to membership and the presbytery's vote to sustain said examination is as much an action of presbytery as the election of a moderator. Now a presbytery might elect a woman as moderator—and it would be a completed act in the sense that it would be an act that had gone into history before the meeting of the synod. But who doubts that one of our synods would have a right to pass upon the constitutionality of this act and to pronounce the proceedings held under such moderatorship to be null and void?

2. It will doubtless be admitted that should it appear to synod that a presbytery had failed to subject an applicant for admission to the examination required in the Form of Government, the synod would be warranted in pronouncing his reception

unconstitutional, and so null and void. Clearly, then, should the synod become satisfied that the examination of said applicant had clearly revealed that he did not possess the constitutional qualifications for admission to our ministry, it would be equally warranted in pronouncing his reception unconstitutional and so null and void. Did time permit, and were it necessary, other reasons might be given.

B. Another position underlying the finding of the Assembly and from which we dissent, is that the act of a presbytery in receiving an applicant for membership is final, even though notice of complaint against such action is duly filed.

1. On the contrary we affirm that no act of any lower judicatory is final, even though not complained of, until said act has been ratified by the approval of the superior court having the right to review the proceedings of the court taking said action.

2. More particularly we affirm that the very purpose of a complaint is to put all concerned on notice that the act complained of is invested with merely a provisional validity, until said act has been ratified by the court with whom the complaint is lodged.

3. Again, the very purpose of a complaint is preventive. It aims to prevent an evil from getting a solid footing in the ecclesiastical body. It meets it at its very entrance and challenges its right to a place in the body. It is designed to prevent the necessity of having to eradicate an injurious person, principle or practice from the ecclesiastical body by preventing it from taking root in the body. This is no less true in the case of an attempt to admit a person into membership in one of our presbyteries than it is in any other case.

C. Another position underlying the finding of the Assembly, or at least receiving abundant expression in the speeches made by those who voted for that finding, was that one who applies for admission to a presbytery is mistreated if the presbytery declines to receive him, or if after he has been received by the presbytery, synod annuls the act by which he was received on the ground that it was unconstitutional, unwise, or not for the edification of the Church.

From this position we must wholly dissent. No presbytery is under any obligation to receive any minister into its membership, nor does it do him any injustice or put any stigma upon him by declining to receive. Nor when for constitutional reasons it annuls the act by which a minister was received into a presbytery, does synod do the minister, thus refused permanent position in its ministry, any injustice or put any stigma upon him. In all such cases where any stigma attaches, it is in consequence of the views held, and not of the act of the presbytery or synod protecting itself against responsibility for those views.

From all these positions involved in the finding of the Assembly we dissent, and against them all we protest. And against the finding itself we protest:

1. As against the constitutional rights of the Synod of Texas and of those in this Assembly who voted in the minority.

2. As tending to discourage those who with much pain to themselves were seeking to promote the peace and purity of the Church.

3. As tending to make it easy for error to find entrance into our Church and difficult to eradicate it.

4. As tending to give cause for mourning to those who love God's truth and to give countenance and encouragement to the enemies of that truth. [Signed by 27.]

1907, p. 56. An overture from the Presbytery of Paris, protesting against the action of the last Assembly in sustaining the complaint against the action of the Synod of Texas, and asking that this Assembly remedy the injustice done by the said action. [Answer:] It is recommended that this Assembly take no action.

38. Complaint of Dr. S. S. Laws, against the Synod of Virginia.

1906, pp. 50, 51. The Complaint was found to relate to a certain overture to the General Assembly relative to Polygamy, the Complaint being that the action of the Synod was that it "be not sent down for further inquiry," whereas the ad interim Committee reported without dissent in favor of farther inquiry, either by the Synod or the General Assembly. 2. That the Synod in its action gave its endorsement and approval to the deliverance of the Assembly of 1904, which is alleged by the Complainants, was "in derogation of the Constitutional power and duty of the Assembly, and imperils the purity, peace and prosperity of our Church in Christian as well as in heathen lands."

The vote: to sustain, 2; not to sustain, 23.

The verdict of the Commission was presented by the Chairman, adopted, and is as follows:

The Commission finds—1. That the Synod of Virginia acted within its rights as to both items of the Complaint. 2. The Complaint is dismissed.

39. The Matter of the Presbytery of Lafayette.

39a. Appeal of the Presbytery of Lafayette, against the Synod of Missouri.

1907, p. 18. The Judicial Committee would respectfully report that there has been placed in its hands an appeal of the Presbytery of Lafayette, from the decision of the Synod of Missouri, sustaining the complaint of H. B. Boude and Xenophon Ryland against the said Presbytery.

Your Committee, having examined the appeal and found it in order, recommends that the Assembly make this appeal the next order of the day.

The vote: to sustain, 86; not to sustain, 74; to sustain in part, 2.

p. 65. Your committee, appointed to formulate the judgment of the Court in the appeal case . . . would respectfully submit the following as the judgment of the General Assembly:

The effect of this decision and the judgment of the Assembly is, that the Presbytery was not guilty of a disobedience of a lawful injunction of the General Assembly.

39b. Complaint of Rev. J. M. Chaney, against the Synod of Missouri.

1907, p. 18. There has also been placed in the hands of your (Judicial) Committee a complaint from Rev. James M. Chaney, touching the same action of the Missouri Synod against which the Lafayette Presbytery makes the above appeal, which complaint is thereby superseded and nullified according to the Book of Church Order, Article 267 [pres. § 117-1].

40. The Matter of the Synod of Kentucky and Central University.

40a. Complaint of Bennett H. Young, and others, against the Synod of Kentucky.

1908, p. 23. Your Judicial Committee would report that we find the complaint of Bennett H. Young and others vs. the Synod of Kentucky, at its meeting at Midway, October 16, 1907, in reference to the control of Central University, in order. And we recommend that the cause be issued.

p. 28. It was resolved that, in voting this case, a member voting to sustain in part shall distinctly designate that part which he desires to sustain. The complainant, Col. Bennett H. Young, was heard in support of the complaint forty-five minutes. Col. T. W. Bullitt, representing the respondent, was heard seventy-five minutes; and Col. Young in reply thirty minutes.

It was resolved that no further argument be heard from persons outside the court, and that the speeches of members on this case be limited to two minutes each.

The roll was called, that each member might express his views. After which the vote was taken and resulted as follows: To sustain, 92; to sustain in part, 19; not to sustain, 45.

p. 61. The Committee appointed to formulate the judgment in the complaint of Bennett H. Young, R. S. Veech and E. W. Bedinger against the Synod of Kentucky, would respectfully report as follows:

The action, against which complaint is made, is the following:

Resolved, That the Synod of Kentucky, in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, hereby consents and agrees that the present Board of Trustees of Central University of Kentucky may alter and amend the agreement for consolidation of Centre College and Central University under the name of Central University of Kentucky, in the manner provided by law for the amendment of Articles and Association of Incorporated Companies, and that said Board may repeal Section 8 of said Agreement, and adopt in lieu thereof the following:

"The government of Central University of Kentucky and the management and control of its affairs shall be vested in and conducted by a Board to be known as 'The Board of Trustees of Central University of Kentucky,' which shall be a self-perpetuating body, and shall be divided into four classes, and each class shall consist of six trustees. The first class shall hold office for one year, the second class for two years, the third class for three years and the fourth class for four years, and the successors of the members of the class whose terms are about to expire, during the year of said expiration, shall be eletced for four years, but no person shall be declared elected who fails to receive sixteen affirmative votes. All persons who are elected Trustees, and accept said trust and qualify, shall continue in office until their successors are elected and qualify.

Resolved, second, That said Board may repeal Section 12 of said Agreement, and adopt in lieu thereof the following:

"The Agreement for Consolidation of Centre College and Central University of Kentucky may be altered or amended in the manner provided for by law for the amendment of Articles of Association of Incorporated Companies."

The judgment of the General Assembly is, that the complaint is sustained, and that the whole matter is hereby sent back to the Synod of Kentucky with instructions for a new hearing.

p. 62. Mr. W. A. Clark, for himself and others, presented the following protest, which was admitted to record without answer:

We, the undersigned members of the General Assembly now sitting in Greensboro, N. C., protest against the judgment of the General Assembly in the matter of the complaint of Bennett H. Young, R. S. Veech and E. W. Bedinger against the Synod of Kentucky, and would respectfully state our reasons therefor as follows:

(1) That this court has not jurisdiction of the subject matter of the complaint.

(2) That the General Assembly has no property in nor control over Central University, the subject matter of the complaint.

(3) That the action complained of, to-wit: the Resolutions of the Synod of Kentucky in reference to Central University, in no way affects the interest of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

(4) That the control which the Synod of Kentucky exercised over Central University was a power conferred by the Legislature of the State of Kentucky, and not by any act of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, nor anyone connected therewith. If, therefore, in the Resolutions complained of, the Synod of Kentucky has erred, it is answerable to the Legislature of the State of Kentucky and not to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

(5) That in the Resolutions complained of the Synod of Kentucky exercised no ecclesiastical function, but acted merely as the trustee of property. The act complained of was in the exercise of a purely ministerial function conferred by the Legislature of the State of Kentucky, and whether right or wrong is not subject to review by this court.

(6) That it does not appear from the record that "said action was in violation of the pledges and assurances of the said Synod at the time given to those who on various occasions made donations and subscriptions to the fund and to the support of said Central University."

(7) That it does not appear from the record that "said action was a diversion of the funds of Central University from the purposes for which they were given;" nor that by said action "the said funds would be forever removed from the control of those to whom the donors had given them for specific purposes and in trust for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky."

(8) That it appears from the record that the Resolutions complained of were introduced, considered and adopted in the regular course of the business of the Synod of Kentucky, and it has not been shown that there exists any law requiring that notice should be given of the introduction of said Resolutions.

(9) That it does not appear that the Synod of Kentucky in adopting the Resolutions complained of exceeded its authority nor acted in violation of any trust reposed in it.

(10) Because the matters complained of have been consummated and it is now beyond the power of the Synod of Kentucky to alter or annul what has been done, and the judgment of this court remanding the case to the Synod of Kentucky with "instructions for a new hearing," would be vain and without force or effect. [Signed by 13.]

p. 64. The Committee on the Records of the Synod of Kentucky made the following report, which was adopted:

Your Committee on the Records of the Synod of Kentucky have examined and found them correct, and recommend their approval, except the action of the Synod consenting to an amendment of Charter of Central University complained of by Bennett H. Young, page 605, printed Minutes of Synod.

40b. Appeal of Rev. G. C. Overstreet, against the Synod of Kentucky.

1908, p. 64. Your Judicial Committee would report that Col. B. H. Young appeared before your committee and asked to withdraw the appeal of Rev. G. C. Overstreet vs. the Synod of Kentucky. As this appeal is identical with the complaint of Col. B. H. Young vs. the Synod of Kentucky, even if an appeal would lie, we recommend that the request be granted and that the appeal be dismissed.

40c. Complaint of Bennett H. Young, and others, against the Synod of Kentucky.

1909, pp. 22, 23. Resolved, that the report of the majority of the Judicial Committee be adopted, but this action shall not be construed as determining that the General Assembly has jurisdiction of the complaint involved, but that the question of the merits of the complaint and the question of jurisdiction shall be argued together within the time and order set forth in the majority report.

The majority report: On the complaint of B. H. Young and others the committee is not unanimous; the majority report as follows:

We find said complaint in order, and the parties not being willing for the case to be tried by Commissions, we recommend that it be tried by the Assembly.

p. 33. It was resolved that in voting upon the complaint, those who vote to sustain

in part shall be required when voting to state what item or items of the complaint they desire to sustain.

The vote: to sustain, 80; to sustain in part, 2; not to sustain, 99. So the complaint was not sustained, and the Moderator announced the case dismissed.

40d. Reply to the Synod of Kentucky.

1909, p. 68. The following report of the Select Committee on paper touching the reply of the Synod of Kentucky and other papers was adopted:

The following communication was presented to the General Assembly:

"The Synod of Kentucky reserves the question of the jurisdiction of the General Assembly in this matter, but desires to show all possible deference and respect to this venerable body, and after giving the whole matter a new hearing, reaches the conclusion that the matter has passed beyond the control of the Synod. Authentic information is given the Synod that the Amendments to the Charter of the Central University of Kentucky, to which the Synod gave consent in October last, received the consent of the other two parties named in the Charter, to-wit: The Synod of Kentucky is connected with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., and the Board of Trustees of the Central University of Kentucky; that the Charter has been amended in accordance with the laws of Kentucky, to which the Secretary of State has duly certified, and that the University is now, and for nearly a year has been, operating under the amended Charter. . . In the judgment of the Synod it is not in our power to affect the existing conditions, brought about by the concurrent action of the three parties to the Charter. Furthermore, any effort on the part of the Synod to withdraw from or to modify the action taken last October might be construed as bad faith toward the other two parties concerned."

To this communication the Assembly responds that having not sustained the complaint of Bennett H. Young and others, we recognize that the administration of the affairs of Central University of Kentucky has passed beyond the control of the Synod of Kentucky and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

In the matter of review and control, we call the attention of the Synod to the language of the Book of Church Order, Paragraph 62 [pres. par. 60]; "Although each court exercises exclusive original jurisdiction over all matters especially belonging to it, the lower courts are subject to the review and control of the higher courts in regular gradation."

2. The Assembly assures the Synod of Kentucky of the deepest interest in its educational work and expresses the hope that Central University may continue to be a source of great blessing to the Church.

3. That the Stated Clerk forward the same to the Synod of Kentucky.

The Assembly, with great pleasure, attaches to this paper the following communication from the Trustees of Central University to the Synod of Kentucky.

"*Resolved*, 1. The Trustees of Central University, in assuming the charge thus committed to them by the Synods of Kentucky, hereby expresses their full realization of the trust reposed in them by the Synods, and their obligation to a faithful and wise discharge of their duties in the government of the institution.

"2. They further desire to express their full appreciation of the history and traditions of the institution, its long life of service in connection with the Presbyterian Church, and its devotion to the maintenance and propagation of the truths of the Christian religion, and in this connection to pledge themselves to the perpetuation of these traditions, relations and fundamental principles in the future of the institution. It is our earnest purpose and determination to guard the religious life and character of the institution and to develop its influence with the fundamental purpose of fidelity to

the principles of Christian education and in a relation of complete and vital sympathy with the Presbyterian Church. To accomplish this, the Trustees will spare no pains in the molding of its future, so that, with the highest conceptions of educational progress, there shall go hand in hand provision for true Christian culture under the influence of Christian teachers and officers devoted to the progress of the kingdom of God. In order to do this, the Bible will always have a place of honor in the curriculum, as it has today, and the administration of the University will be specially charged to realize the Christian ideals of its founders in the securing of definite results in terms of Christian life and service among its students."

In addition to the above, your Committee recommend that the Assembly adopt the following resolution:

This Assembly instructs all our lower courts to take no action that will tend to lessen the Church's direct control and ownership of any of our educational institutions.

41. Complaint of W. A. Gillon, and others, against the Synod of Texas.

1908, p. 24. The Committee on Judicial Business reported that W. A. Gillon and others had formally withdrawn their complaint against the Synod of Texas; and the Committee was discharged from the further consideration of this case.

42. Complaint of Rev. J. W. McLeod, against the Synod of Texas.

1908, p. 31. . . . The complaint of Rev. J. W. McLeod vs. the action of the Synod of Texas at its October session, 1907, in reference to the transfer of the Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville, Texas, to Trinity Presbytery, U. S. A., in order.

We recommend that the same be tried by a commission . . . the complainant and the respondent . . . having consented thereto.

pp. 34, 53. [Excerpt from report of decision of the Judicial Commission which the Assembly approved, making the decision its own:

The vote to sustain, 18; to sustain in part, 3; not to sustain, 5.

The Commission voted to reconsider its action sustaining the complaint.

The Commission voted not to sustain the complaint by 12 to 11, while two expressed themselves as not ready to vote, but desired more light.

Judgment:

In this cause the General Assembly having heard the cause by a Commission duly appointed and having fully considered the same, does hereby dismiss the complaint; but fearing that its action should be misunderstood, now here declares that this judgment in no way affects the action of the Synod of Texas in regard to the affairs of the Jacksonville Church, found on its Minutes of 1906, p. 43, which is in the following words:

"As the records of the case are not full and complete and Synod is advised that they do not correctly show what was done in the congregational meeting; and inasmuch as some thirty-three persons represent that they have not had their just and constitutional rights, and that a majority did not vote to be dismissed to the Northern Presbyterian Church, and inasmuch as there is conflicting evidence as to what was done, and so it is impossible for Synod to reach a just and impartial decision; therefore, we refer the matter back to the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, with instructions to send a Commission to this church, and by careful investigation find out the real wishes of the members as to uniting with Northern Presbyterian Church."

On the contrary, said action is commended as wise and proper, and if the Presbytery of Eastern Texas has not complied with said order, the Assembly recommends that Synod take steps to enforce said action.

p. 59. Your committee to whom was referred the judgment of the Commission in the matter of the Complaint of J. W. McLeod against the Synod of Texas, with instructions to inquire and report if there be any conflict between this judgment and the action of the General Assembly at Birmingham, Ala., May, 1907, in the report of the Committee on the Minutes of the Synod of Texas, as found on page 64 of the Minutes of the General Assembly, would report that they have carefully compared the same and find no conflict between the judgment of this Assembly in the matter of the Complaint of J. W. McLeod against the Synod of Texas and the action of the Assembly of 1907 in the Minutes of the Synod of Texas, as reported on page 64 of the Minutes.

[Following is the action referred to:]

1907, p. 64. The Committee on the Records of the Synod of Texas reported as follows, which report was adopted:

Your Committee on the Records of the Synod of Texas, to whom was also referred a communication from the Session of the First Presbyterian Church, of Jacksonville, Texas, touching the action of the Synod of Texas, recorded on pages 44 and 45 of its printed Minutes, Vol. III, No. 1, reversing the action of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas in dismissing the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville to the Presbytery of Trinity, U. S. A., beg leave to report, that the records of the Synod and also said communication have been carefully examined, and that we recommend the approval of the Minutes with the exception:

First, that, as recorded on p. 44, the Synod denies the constitutional right of the Presbytery to dismiss one of its churches to another denomination.

Second, that, as recorded on the same page, the Synod directs the Presbytery of Eastern Texas to restore the First Presbyterian Church of Jacksonville to its roll after said church, having been dismissed by the Presbytery, had been received by another denomination.

Third, that similar action was taken in case of the Port Arthur Church, as recorded on page 59.

[See also this Digest, Judicial Cases, 44.]

43. Appeal of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, against the Synod of Texas; also appeal of Rev. F. E. Robbins, and Complaint of Rev. J. W. McLeod.

1908, p. 31. Complaint of Rev. J. W. McLeod vs. the Synod of Texas, an appeal of Rev. F. E. Robbins vs. the Synod of Texas, and an appeal of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas vs. the Synod of Texas, involving the same subject matter, to-wit: the action of the Synod of Texas at its session in October, 1907, in approving the judgment of its Commission, which judgment is in the words and figures following, to-wit: "The judgment of the commission is, that the effect of this vote, four (4) not to sustain and ten (10) to sustain in part, is to dissolve the pastoral relation betwen Rev. F. E. Robbins and the First Church of Beaumont, Texas, and that the dissolution shall take effect January 1, 1908," and all the parties by themselves and through their accredited representatives, Dr. W. S. Red deferring to the judgment of Rev. J. P. Robertson, principal counsel for Synod of Texas, agreed that your committee should issue the case of the appeal of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas vs. the Synod of Texas, and that the judgment of the Assembly in the last mentioned cause shall be accepted as the judgment of the Assembly in each of the other cases.

pp. 44, 47, 48. The vote: to sustain, 99; to sustain in part, 5; not to sustain, 27.

p. 65. In the case of the appeal of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas against the Synod of Texas touching the affairs of the church of Beaumont, Texas, this court does hereby sustain the appeal of the Presbytery of Eastern, Texas, and reverse the action of said Synod of Texas in this case.

The following Protest was admitted to record without answer, and the Rev. J. P. Robertson, representing the appellee in this case, was allowed to sign the same:

The undersigned desire to respectfully present and have recorded our protest against the action of this Assembly, in sustaining the appeal of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, for the following reasons, to-wit:

(1) In leaving undissolved and in taking no steps looking to the dissolution of the pastoral relation between Rev. F. E. Robbins and the Beaumont church, the Assembly overlooks the fact that the prosperity of a church and the highest usefulness of a minister cannot be promoted where his services so clearly are and for so long have been unacceptable to a majority of his church officers and people.

(2) In refusing to grant the wishes of the majority of the congregation, the Assembly aimed a blow at the vitals of the doctrine of the right of the ruled to choose their own rulers—a principle which our fathers baptized with their blood.

(3) In declaring that a presbytery alone can dissolve pastoral relations, either the right of appellate jurisdiction was denied to the higher courts or the principle was asserted that the higher courts can only order and the lower courts must comply; which would involve the duty of the latter to really and formally act contrary to their already announced judgment and conscientious convictions, which itself is contrary to the prime principle of all Protestant faiths that the conscience of no man or court shall be in bondage to another.

(4) In sustaining the appeal on the technical grounds which were pleaded and which were due to the omissions or dereliction in duty of the appellants themselves, and which were clearly shown to involve the breach of no principle of justice or right, the Assembly did injustice to the Synod, because the failure (to formally state the purpose of the congregational meeting when it was called and to call upon Rev. F. E. Robbins, who was present in the Presbytery, to personally state his objections to the dissolution of the pastoral relation, which he could have done on his own option if he had so desired, and which was done for him by his supporters), constitutes a charge to be laid, if anywhere, at the door of the appellants themselves, yet was used by them in achieving their victory.

(5) And the Assembly sustained the charge that the First Church of Beaumont really desired, in seeking to be relieved of its pastor, to pave the way for going into the Northern Presbyterian Assembly, in support of which charge no one claimed the existence of any evidence or were reference in the record of the cause, and against the past or present existence of any such desire in Beaumont, nineteen Presbyterian men of that city—seventeen being officers and members of the First Church and two being elders of the Royal Street Church—sought in vain from the court, the permission to present their formal and emphatic denial.

All of the points in this protest can be justly advanced against this Assembly, because every contention or specification of this appeal was sustained by the votes of a large majority of its members.

[Signed by 12.]

44. Complaint of W. H. Sory and J. B. Long, against the Presbytery of Eastern Texas.

1909, p. 17. We find that the complaint . . . is regular; and we recommend that the case be tried by Commission, the parties having given their consent.

pp. 20, 50. The Commission reported that it had sustained the Complaint.

Judgment:

"In the matter of the complaint of W. H. Sory and J. B. Long vs. the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, the Commission sustains the complaint for the following reason: A presbytery has the constitutional right to dismiss a church to another presbytery, and when the Presbytery of Eastern Texas dismissed the Jacksonville Church to the Presbytery of Trinity, U. S. A., and received notice of its reception and enrollment from the

Stated Clerk of Trinity Presbytery, U. S. A., the said church became a member of the Trinity Presbytery, U. S. A.

"The effect of this judgment is that the church of Jacksonville is and has been since the acceptance of its letter by the Presbytery of Trinity, U. S. A., a member of the Trinity Presbytery, U. S. A. and therefore not within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas, U. S."

Twenty-five members voted for, and one against, the above action.

After reading the minutes of the Commission the body adjourned with prayer.

Mr. T. E. Hammock was allowed to record his dissent from the decision.

45. Complaint of Rev. W. H. Mills, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1909, p. 17. The Judicial Committee report:

We find the complaint of Rev. W. H. Mills against the Synod of South Carolina in order; and the parties thereto having given their consent, we recommend that the complaint be tried by Commission.

p. 66. The Commission reported its finding in the case, which was not to sustain the complaint. The decision of the Commission was made the judgment of the Assembly in the case.

Vote: to sustain, 8; not to sustain, 14.

Judgment: "The Commission does not sustain the complaint. In declining to sustain the complaint of the Rev. William H. Mills, against the Synod of South Carolina, it is the judgment of this Commission that the Synod of South Carolina in sustaining the action of the South Carolina Presbytery, was acting strictly within its constitutional rights, and did not offend against Paragraphs 173, 174, 241, 244 and 245 [pres. § 105-2, 3; 114-2, 6.] of the Book of Church Order, in refusing to require the said South Carolina Presbytery to "review and correct" its alleged unconstitutional and irregular proceedings."

Ten of the Commission dissented from this judgment.

46. The Matter of Rev. W. I. Sinnott.

1910, p. 16. A complaint of Rev. W. I. Sinnott against the presbytery of North Alabama was referred, without reading to the Judicial Committee.

p. 25. Your Judicial Committee would respectfully report that the only matter referred to us was the complaint of the Rev. W. I. Sinnott against the Presbytery of North Alabama.

We have examined the records of this case and find them in order. We have also heard a statement of the representative of the Presbytery, and our conclusion is that, owing to the nature of the case and the probability that it would produce a lengthy and unprofitable discussion if tried by the Assembly in open session, we recommend that the complaint be referred to a Commission to be appointed by the Moderator, who shall adjudicate the matter and report its findings to this Assembly.

p. 43. The Commission made a report:

The full statement of the case, as contained in this report was read before the Assembly, which approved the same and made its own the decision of the Commission.

It appears from the statement and argument of the complaint, and from the statements of the representatives of the Presbytery, that the complainant, a member of that body, during a heated campaign on the question of the adoption of a Constitutional Amendment Prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors in the State of Alabama printed, or allowed to be printed, communications over his name in the daily press of the State opposing the principle of prohibition in general and the provisions of the Constitutional Amendment in particular. These communications, being seized on by the opponents of the Amendment and scattered broadcast over the State,

with the statements that they were written by the Stated Clerk of the Synod of Alabama and of the Presbytery of North Alabama, in the opinion of the Presbytery greatly prejudiced the standing of the Presbytery and the Church in the estimation of the people of the State.

Under these circumstances, the Presbytery of North Alabama, in session at Anniston, on October 28, 1909, passed a series of resolutions, as follows:

"1. That we heartily endorse this amendment to the Constitution of the State and urge our people to give it their support so that in the event of its adoption prohibition of the liquor traffic will be the permanent policy of the State.

"2. That we view it as a non-partisan and non-political moral measure and we approve the action of the Legislature in authorizing a special election thereon thus presenting to the people the bare issue of constitutional prohibition without entangling it with any party, factional, or personal politics.

"3. That we believe the adoption of the amendment will greatly strengthen the cause of temperance, promote the purest and best interests of our homes and redound to the welfare and prosperity of our people."

Against this action W. I. Sinnott complained to the Synod of Alabama. The records of that Synod show that "with the consent of the complainant the complaint was referred to the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in accordance with the Book of Church Order, Paragraph No. 248, [pres. § 115-2], on account of the tense and divided feeling in the Synod on the proposed amendment."

Opportunity having been given for the members of the Commission to express their opinion, the roll was called on the question of sustaining or not sustaining the complaint. The vote was as follows:

To sustain, 7; not to sustain, 14.

Absent and not voting: D. F. Wilkinson, W. T. Matthews, W. D. Johns, L. L. Prince, H. W. Shannon—5.

The Chairman not voting.

The Chairman thereupon declared the complaint not sustained, and a committee was appointed to formulate the judgment of the Commission. The report of this committee was adopted, as follows: Your Commission in voting "not to sustain" did not mean to recede from or compromise the principle of non-intrusion into civil affairs or affairs which concern the Commonwealth, but to leave our courts free as to the mode of dealing with a gigantic moral evil, which mode, in this case, was the urging upon our people in the State of Alabama to vote for constitutional prohibition.

The Presbytery of North Alabama did not originate, or advise the State to adopt, this mode, but, in accordance with the oft-repeated instruction of our General Assembly to "use all legitimate means" to banish the liquor traffic from our land, after the State provided this means, urged upon its constituency to use this means, and did so expressly on moral and non-political grounds.

On the other hand, the Commission condemns the action, language, and spirit of the complainant as highly unbecoming in a minister of the gospel.

To this decision the following protest was ordered entered on the record:

Under a deep sense of duty, and actuated by loyalty to the Constitution of our Church, the undersigned minority members of the Commission appointed to adjudicate the complaint of W. I. Sinnott against the act of the Presbytery of North Alabama desire to protest against the finding of the Commission in said case.

We emphatically disclaim all sympathy with the position taken by the complainant, which led to the action against which he makes complaint; we appreciate thoroughly the delicate and embarrassing position in which the Presbytery was placed through no fault of its own; we greatly admire the spirit which actuated that body and which caused it, as we think, to err; but the fact remains that the Presbytery, instead of disavowing the views of the complainant and condemning his manner of expressing them, did officially, while sitting as a court of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, recommend the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Alabama, and this in direct contradiction, as we hold, of the Constitution of said Church, and its steadfast maintenance of this fundamental principle laid down in that instrument.

Under these circumstances it was our painful duty to vote to sustain the complaint, and we consider it no less our duty now to enter this, our solemn and respectful protest, against the decision of the majority in this case.

(Signed) J. H. Patton, L. F. Ross, T. C. Barrett, Melton Clark, T. R. Sampson, W. D. Hooper, Jacob Bates.

1911, p. 33. The Standing Committee on Judicial Business made the following report on the petition of Rev. W. I. Sinnott for a re-hearing of his complaint before the last Assembly, which was adopted:

1. Upon consideration of the petition of the Rev. W. I. Sinnott, your committee submit that the same should be disallowed, and denied on the ground that the judicial deliverances of the General Assembly, of Lewisburg, W. Va., are not reviewable by a subsequent General Assembly, upon petition to rehear the case, decided by the former court.

2. In response to the overtures from the Presbyteries of Transylvania, Kings Mountain, Lexington, Asheville, Holston, Lafayette, New Orleans, and Savannah, touching the judgment of the General Assembly at Lewisburg, in 1910, in the case of Rev. W. I. Sinnott, your committee recommends that the General Assembly re-affirm with emphasis its adherence to our Confession of Faith as set forth in Paragraph 4, Chapter 31.

And further that "cases extraordinary" are to be decided according to nature of each case, and when the General Assembly has determined that question in any concrete case, it is not competent for any subsequent Assembly to question such decision by a re-hearing of the same case.

p. 62. The following protest [with four signatures] relating to the Sinnott complaint case, was presented and admitted to record without answer:

We would respectfully enter our solemn protest against the action of this Assembly in refusing to grant the petition of Rev. W. I. Sinnott for a rehearing in the matter of his complaint against the Presbytery of North Alabama, for the following reasons:

1. Because precedents for the re-opening of a case by the court of last resort are not wanting either in civil or ecclesiastical procedures. Not to cite others, we would refer the Assembly to the decision of the old school Assembly of 1864, found in Moore's Digest, page 652. In that decision the Assembly asserts its power to reverse the judicial act of a former Assembly "in cases of such palpable error as would manifestly tend to interfere with the substantial administration of justice."

A similar decision of a civil court is found in seventieth Alabama Reports, page 401, in which Chief Justice Brickell, speaking for the Supreme Court of Alabama, says:

> "When a court has rendered a judgment or decree void on its face, either from a want of jurisdiction of the subject matter, or of the parties, a due regard to its own dignity, the protection of its officers, the prevention of the abuse of its process, and the preservation of the sanctity of the judgments it may rightfully render, demand that it should, on a proper application, coming from a party having rights and interests immediately involved, at any time subsequent to its rendition, vacate such judgment or decree."

Your protestants would respectfully urge that both these decisions apply to the case which this Assembly has declined to reconsider.

2. Because in this case the judgment of the last Assembly is void on its face by reason of the following errors and irregularities:

(1) The complainant was subjected to a sentence of censure when he was not on trial and not in court.

(2) Had the Assembly proceeded formally to try him in his absence its procedure would have been void for want of jurisdiction. (See Par. 161-196 of Book of Church Order.) [pres. § 104-1 ff.]

(3) The complaint was tried by a commission without his consent, whereas our law gives no authority for trial by a commission of the Assembly save with consent of the appellant or complainant. (See Par. 94, Book of Church Order.) [This par. not now in B. C. O.]

(4) The commission erred grievously in traveling outside of the record, as appears from their own statement of the case.

(5) The commission's own statement show error on the face of it, in that it omits a vital part of the action complained of. But for such commission a grave mistake would have appeared plainly in their rehearsal of the facts. The omitted part of the preamble to the resolutions complained of sets forth in part the ground on which Presbytery based its deliverance, namely, its previous action in endorsing the principle of prohibition, and its advising the Legislature to submit a constitutional amendment to the vote of the people of Alabama. Notwithstanding this, the commission says that the Presbytery did not give such advice.

(6) The grave injustice in this case is the more apparent when we remember that the complainant was not accusing his brethren of any unchristian conduct, but merely of an error of judgment, and was honestly seeking, with all the decisions of the General Assembly behind him, to bring the Presbytery back to obedience to our Constitution.

3. Finally, we protest because this decision is a palpable violation of a solemn covenant, implicitly entered into by our Church with the Synod of Kentucky, namely, the agreement under which that body united with our Assembly. If this Assembly may assume jurisdiction over a minister, and without process sentence him for "action, language and spirit highly unbecoming a minister of the Gospel," it may on the same principle, in the same summary fashion, and with equal reason, hear *ex-parte* accusations as to grievous sin and proceed to excommunicate any member or depose any minister in our bounds.

1912, p. 70a. The Judicial Committee in the matter of the memorial of sundry persons, and the overtures from the Synod of Virginia and sundry presbyteries for a re-hearing of the complaint of Rev. W. I. Sinnott against the Presbytery of North Alabama, recommends:

(1) That the prayers of said memorial and overtures be denied, on the ground that the case of W. I. Sinnott against the Presbytery of North Alabama was finally adjudicated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States sitting in Lewisburg, West Virginia, May, 1910, and the judicial deliverances of that Assembly are not reviewable by a subsequent General Assembly on memorial and overtures to re-hear the case decided by the former court; and on the further ground that the General Assembly sitting in Louisville, Kentucky, May, 1911, after consideration of the petition of Rev. W. I. Sinnott for a re-hearing of said complaint, disallowed the petition and denied its prayer for that "the judicial deliverances of the General Assembly of Lewisburg, West Virginia, are not reviewable by a subsequent General Assembly upon petition to re-hear the case decided by the former court."

(2) That in response to the overtures from sundry presbyteries touching the judgment of the General Assembly at Lewisburg, West Virginia, 1910, the General Assembly re-affirm its adherence to our Confession of Faith, as set forth in Paragraph 4, Chapter XXXI [XXXIII].

(3) That the General Assembly approve and re-affirm the deliverances of the General Assembly at Louisville, Kentucky, May, 1911, touching the petition of the Rev. W. I. Sinnott for a re-hearing of his complaint against the Presbytery of North Alabama.

The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, By the General Assembly sitting in Bristol, Tenn., May 21, 1912, in the matter of the memorial of sundry persons and overtures from the Synod of Virginia and sundry presbyteries, asking for a re-opening of the case of Rev. W. I. Sinnott vs. the Presbytery of North Alabama, that it approves the finding of the Judicial Committee as to the re-opening of said case, but feels that this Assembly can with propriety express the opinion that the reference in the judgment of the Assembly at Lewisburg to the "action, language, and spirit of the complainant" was unwise and appears to have been informal. This Assembly disclaims any intention to criticise the Lewisburg Assembly, or to disturb in any way its judgment.

p. 70b. The following resolution was offered by Rev. E. M. Green, D.D., and referred to a select committee consisting of Rev. D. M. McIver, Rev. J. B. Ficklen and Elder R. W. Daily:

Resolved, That it is the judgment of this Assembly that no church court can constitutionally either recommend political measures for adoption by the state legislature, or attempt to control the votes of the citizen.

p. 70g. The Select Committee, to whom was referred the resolution of Dr. E. M. Green, presented majority and minority reports.

The minority report was adopted, and is as follows:

In reference to the resolution proposed concerning political deliverances by church courts, your committee would report as follows:

Inasmuch as the General Assembly is on record, having already made numerous deliverances on this subject, we would refer this Assembly to these deliverances.

1913, p. 68. Your committee respectfully reports that a memorial from Rev. W. I. Sinnott to this venerable body was placed in their hands. The memorialist recites that the Minutes of the General Assembly of 1910 contain statements erroneous as to facts; and asks this General Assembly to "adopt a paper or pass an act that will correct these errors as to facts."

Your Committee recommends that the General Assembly decline the request of the memorialist, on the ground that this General Assembly is not in a position to judge of the facts complained of by the Rev. W. I. Sinnott.

The memorialist further recites that the Synod of Alabama has for three successive annual meetings failed to review the minutes of the Presbytery of North Alabama for the Fall Meeting of 1909 and the Spring Meeting of 1910; and asks that the General Assembly "require the Synod of Alabama to comply with the Book of Church Order and review said minutes."

We recommend that a negative answer be given, because the minutes of the Synod of Alabama for 1909 and 1910 have been reviewed and approved by the General Assemblies of 1910 and 1911. With this approval the rights of appeal, complaint and memorial touching the review of the same are estopped.

1914, p. 21. The Judicial Committee would respectfully report that we have had brought before us a memorial from Reverend W. I. Sinnott, asking that this Assembly vacate the judgment of the Assembly of 1910 against himself. We recommend that no action be taken except to refer him to the Minutes of the General Assembly for 1913, pages 68 and 69.

1920, p. 73. The only matter before the Committee is the memorial of Rev. W. I. Sinnott, complaining of certain language used by the General Assembly of 1910, when his case was before it.

The question to be considered in this case is that of jurisdiction and law. Has the Assembly any power to pass upon the merit of this case?

It appears from the memorial of Mr. Sinnott and the Assembly records of 1910 that this case was decided by the highest court of the Church, and the statements by which Mr. Sinnott feels he has been injured are embodied in said decision.

It is a principle of law, held in the highest courts of the State, and by the Supreme Court of the United States, that public policy requires that there shall be an end of litigation, and this is as true in the government of the Church as in the government of the State and Nation. We think that this is the correct position, and express the opinion that the conclusion of the case has been reached by the General Assembly of the Church, which your Committee regards as final.

Your Committee therefore recommends that the memorial of Rev. W. I. Sinnott be denied. At the same time we desire to express the opinion that Mr. Sinnott is a minister and a man of the highest Christian character.

1921, p. 71. After considering the memorial of Rev. W. I. Sinnott, with regard to action by the Assembly of 1912, and after several conferences with him, we are pleased to report that he has withdrawn the memorial and this whole matter is happily ended.

47. Complaint of Rev. J. F. Cannon, and others, against the Synod of Missouri.

1911, p. 45. The complaint case of Rev. J. F. Cannon and others against the Synod of Missouri was resumed. The roll was called and each member was given the opportunity to speak one minute.

Rev. J. E. Abbott and Rev. R. S. Eskridge were excused from voting. The complaint was then read and the vote was taken, resulting as follows: To sustain, 84; to sustain in part, 14; not to sustain, 23.

p. 62. The committee appointed to formulate the judgment of the Assembly in the complaint of J. F. Cannon and others, against the Synod of Missouri, make the following report:

First, That the votes of the Rev. R. S. Brank and Rev. C. H. Talbot, who had been dismissed by the Presbytery of St. Louis to the Presbyteries respectively of Savannah and Louisville, and who had not been received by said Presbyteries at the time of said vote, were legal and valid, in accordance with Book of Church Order, Chapter 15, Paragraph 280 [pres. § 16-11].

Second, That the Synod of Missouri erred in pronouncing judgment that the action of St. Louis Presbytery complained of was unwise and unjust, and therefore the action of the Synod be, and the same is hereby, annulled, and that of the Presbytery of St. Louis is hereby affirmed.

Third, The General Assembly furthermore expresses its conviction that presbyteries have jurisdiction in matters pertaining to the location of church buildings.

p. 68. Rev. J. V. McCall presented the following protest against the action of the Assembly in the complaint case of Rev. J. F. Cannon and others against the Synod of Missouri. It was admitted to record without answer:

With respect to the action of the Assembly in the complaint of Rev. John F. Cannon and others against the Synod of Missouri, I do most respectfully and most earnestly protest against said action by reason of the fact that after the close of the argument in said cause, and when the Assembly adjourned for noon recess on May 24, 1911, before voting upon said complaint, complainant caused to be distributed among the members of the Assembly a printed pamphlet containing a large number of alleged facts

which constituted no part of the record in said cause, together with complainant's argument thereon.

I protest against the action, because it was an introduction of new and additional matter, outside of the record in the cause, contrary to the provisions of Paragraph 189, Book of Church Order [pres. § 105-19]; and, further, because it brought to the individual members of the court, not in open court, arguments which had not been introduced in open court, in the presence of representatives of respondent.

48. Complaint of J. K. Dowman, and others, against the Synod of Virginia.

1911, p. 38. The Commission to try the complaint of J. K. Dowman and others against the Synod of Virginia made a report, which was recommitted.

p. 51. The Commission to try the complaint of J. K. Dowman and others against the Synod of Virginia was read and approved, and the minutes ordered spread upon the minutes of the Assembly.

[Excerpt:]

The vote was then taken to sustain, to sustain in part or not to sustain.

The roll was called and the vote stood to sustain 20, not to sustain 2.

The minutes of last night's session were read and approved. The committee appointed to formulate the judgment of the Commission submitted the following, which was adopted:

The Commission appointed to adjudicate the complaint of certain members of the Synod of Virginia against the action of that Synod in disapproving of the standing rule of the Kanawha Presbytery as to the election of commissioners to the General Assembly, decides to sustain the plea of complainants on the following ground:

That the Presbytery acted within its constitutional rights, under the Book of Church Order.

The minutes of today's session were read and approved. The minutes adopted as a whole. The Commission adjourned.

By order of the General Assembly the Commission met again in one of the class rooms of the Second Presbyterian Church, May 24, 1911, at 2:30 p.m., to put its judgment in a more complete form. The roll was called showing a quorum present. The following was adopted as the judgment of the Commission:

The Commission appointed to try the complaint of J. K. Dowman and others of the Synod of Virginia against the action of the Synod of Virginia, in disapproving of the standing rule of Kanawha Presbytery as to the election of commissioners to the General Assembly which rule reads thus: "That it be made a standing rule of this Presbytery that the minister who is the oldest member of the Presbytery, shall be the ministerial commissioner to the General Assembly, unless the Presbytery shall, by a two-third majority, determine otherwise," sustain the plea of the complainants on the ground that the Presbytery acted within its constitutional rights under the Book of Church Order. The minutes of today's session were read and adopted. The Commission adjourned.

1912, p. 26. Overture from the Presbytery of Kanawha, asking for the correction of an error in its rule for the election of commissioners to the Assembly as that rule was printed in the Minutes of 1911. Answer: The following is the corrected rule as given in this overture: "The minister who is the oldest member of the Presbytery, who has been for the longest time absent from the General Assembly as a representative of this Presbytery, shall be the ministerial commissioner to the General Assembly, unless the Presbytery by a two-thirds majority shall determine otherwise."

49. Complaint of the Lafayette Church, New Orleans, against the Synod of Louisiana.

1911, p. 66. The report of the Standing Committee on Judicial Business in the complaint of the Lafayette Church, Presbytery of New Orleans, was taken from the docket. Majority and minority reports were presented and the minority report was adopted, and is as follows:

Inasmuch as this case is now before the Synod of Louisiana, and a day for its hearing, has been appointed, both parties having been notified to appear at the hearing the Assembly declines to entertain this complaint.

1912, p. 70a. The Judicial Committee, to which was referred the appeal of the Session of the Lafayette Church of New Orleans from the decision of the Synod of Louisiana, failing to sustain a complaint of the said Session against the Presbytery of New Orleans, recommends that the appeal be dismissed, as the record of the case shows on *its face* that the entire proceedings in the case are *irregular* and *void;* for that

(1) The said Session does not complain of *"some decision"* made by the Presbytery of New Orleans, as required by Sec. 4, Chap. XII, Rules of Discipline [pres. § 117-1, 5], which defines a complaint as a "representation made to a superior court against *some decision* of an inferior court"; but the Session merely *complains.*

(2) "The Session of the Lafayette Church complains to the Synod of Louisiana against the Presbytery of New Orleans." One church court cannot complain to a superior court against another church court. Sec. 4, Chap. XIII, limits the right of complaint to "any *member* of the Church submitting to its authority."

50. Complaint of Robert A. Lively, against the Synod of Oklahoma.

1913, p. 43. In the complaint of Robert A. Lively and others your Judicial Committee finds this complaint irregular in the following particulars:

First. There is no official "record" of the cause transmitted to this court by the Synod of Okahloma, as required by Paragraph 189, Rules of Discipline.

Second. The complainant failed to lodge his complaint with the Stated Clerk of this Assembly before the second day of its sessions, as required by Paragraphs 268 and 260 [pres. § 116-4, 117-4].

With reference to the second irregularity, your Committee finds that the complainant was providentially hindered from reaching this court on time, and that he presented his complaint at the earliest possible time, and that therefore this irregularity should be waived.

With reference to the first irregularity, we find that the attached papers constitute substantially the record, though they are not officially attested. We find further that Rev. E. Brantly, representing the Synod of Oklahoma, and Mr. Orme, representing the complainant, desire the case to be heard, and agree to its submission on the basis of the unofficial record attached.

We, therefore, recommend

(1st) That the Assembly waive the irregularity noted and hear the case, as provided in Book of Church Order, Paragraph 269 [pres. § 117-4, 6.].

(2nd) That the case be heard through a Commission. (p. 44 of Minutes.)

(3rd) That the steps be taken in their order by the Commission as provided in said paragraph.

(4th) That the Synod of Oklahoma be solemnly reminded of its neglect in not sending up the record of this case, as provided in the Book of Church Order, and that they be urged to use greater care in the future.

p. 70k. The Judicial Commission to try the case of Robert A. Lively and others vs. the Synod of Oklahoma made a report, which was approved and the judgment of the

Commission was entered as the judgment of the Assembly in the case. The report is as follows:

It is the judgment of your Commission that the action of the Synod of Oklahoma in this case was irregular, in that the Judicial Committee of said Synod exceeded its authority by recommending action in regard to a complaint referred to it, when it should have merely reported the regularity or irregularity of the complaint; and the complaint is sustained and the case remanded to the Synod for re-hearing.

51. Complaint of Rev. J. M. Holladay, against the Presbytery of Bethel.

1914, p. 21. The Judicial Committee reported a complaint of Rev. J. M. Holladay against the Presbytery of Bethel, referred by the Synod of South Carolina to this Assembly. We have found the complaint in order and recommend that the Assembly hear said complaint according to paragraph 269, Book of Church Order [pres. § 117-4, 6], and that Reverend S. C. Byrd, D.D., be recognized as the representative of said complainant.

p. 28. The vote was then taken, resulting as follows: to sustain the complaint, 91; not to sustain, 15.

p. 33. The Committee appointed to explain the vote of the Assembly on the complaint of Rev. J. M. Holladay against the Presbytery of Bethel, which was specifically against the action of the Presbytery in omitting the examination and sermon for ordination of a candidate who had recently been licensed to preach the gospel, recommend the following:

The Assembly, in voting to sustain this complaint, would be understood as expressing its judgment, that in all cases of trial for ordination for the ministry, however soon they may follow the trial for licensure, the Presbytery should not omit examination of the candidate, and should require an ordination sermon.

52. Appeal of Rev. Lloyd B. Field, against the Synod of Arkansas.

1915, p. 27. [The Standing Committee on Judicial Business made a report, which was adopted.]

An overture from the Presbytery of Pine Bluff: as this is a plea for a certain decision in this judicial case, we recommend that it be referred to the Judicial Commission to be appointed.

p. 49. The Judicial Commission to try the case of the appeal of Lloyd B. Field against the Synod of Arkansas presented the minutes of the Commission, which were approved and ordered spread upon the Minutes of the Assembly.

The vote was taken with the following result: To confirm the action of the lower court in full, 22; to confirm it in part, 1; the Moderator not voting.

The following paper was presented by the committee appointed to draft the judgment of the Commission:

It is the judgment of the Commission in the case of the appeal of Rev. L. B. Field from the Synod of Arkansas:

First.—That the appeal should be, and is hereby, dismissed.

Second.—That the judgment of the Synod of Arkansas be, and the same is hereby confirmed in so far as it adjudges the appellant guilty on both counts of the indictment, and also in restoring the appellant to the sacrament of the Church.

Third.—That the judgment of the Synod of Arkansas be, and the same is hereby, reversed, in so far as it modifies the judgment of the Presbytery of Pine Bluff by substituting indefinite suspension of the appellant from the ministry in lieu of deposition from the ministry. It is our judgment that, under all the facts and circumstances of the case, the Rev. L. B. Field should be deposed from the ministry, but restored to the

sacrament of the Church, and that the courts below be, and they are hereby, instructed to take such steps as may be necessary to put this judgment into effect.

This report was adopted, the first and second sections unanimously, and the third section by the following vote:

Ayes—McGeachy, Murray, Lyle, Rogers, Drennan, Boyd, Storey, W. R. Anderson, Robbins, Bingham, Caldwell, Davidson, Patterson, McGill, Watkins, and Sydenstricker—16.

Noes—Walthall, I. S. Anderson, Bradshaw, Gilmore, McCutchan, Whittet, Adair, and Offutt—8.

p. 80e. The following protest against the action of the Assembly in approving the report of the Judicial Commission in the appeal of L. B. Field from the Synod of Arkansas was admitted to record without answer:

[Fifteen persons protested] against the action of the Assembly in the case of Lloyd B. Field vs. the Synod of Arkansas, because of what is, in our opinion, an error of judgment in the following particulars:

1. Irregularity and illegality of procedure on the part of the trial court. On the one hand, instead of granting relief to the appellant from the decision of the lower court, that decision was reversed, and for it was substituted the extreme censure. This judgment, in our opinion, was excessive, and we believe a lighter sentence would have achieved all the designed ends of discipline. On the other, an overture was admitted to record contrary to the Rules of Discipline.

2. A full statement of the case was not given by the Commission to the Assembly, as is required in the Book of Church Order, Article 94, III [pres. § 19-4.]

3. Discussion of the question to approve records of the Commission having been denied, in our opinion, the Assembly could not arrive at a fair and intelligent judgment of the cause.

53. Complaint of F. G. Ruff, against the Session of the Clearwater Church.

1916, p. 41. There has come before us a complaint of F. G. Ruff, a member of the Clearwater Church, St. Johns Presbytery, against the Session of said church.

Your Committee, on investigation, find that the complaint has not been made to the Presbytery, and as that is the first court to which, according to our Book of Church Order, such a complaint should be referred, your Committee recommends that the complainant be so advised.

54. Complaints of A. H. P. McCurdy and Robt. A. McCurdy, against the Synod of Texas.

1924, p. 31. [The complaint was ordered heard by the Assembly.]

p. 47. Rev. A. H. P. McCurdy was allowed to withdraw the complaint.

55. Complaint of H. F. Bookout and W. W. Lewis, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1924, p. 31. [The complaint was ordered heard by a commission of the Assembly.]

pp. 32, 45. [Report of the Commission: The vote was 5 to sustain, 14 not to sustain.]

The Commission, therefore, reports its findings in a refusal to sustain the complaint.

In voting not to sustain this complaint the Commission concludes that a Presbytery has the right to give judicial powers to a commission of its creation.

p. 61. Protest [signed by 9], admitted to record.

The undersigned respectfully protest against the action of the Commission of the General Assembly, in the complaint (above) against the Synod of South Carolina in voting to sustain the said Synod, and for these reasons:

1. The Book of Church Order nowhere gives a Presbytery the right to try a judicial case by a commission, as was done by Bethel Presbytery, Synod of South Carolina, in the case under review.

2. The Rules of Discipline were not observed as they are set forth in the Book of Church Order in Paragraphs 183, 186, 187, 190, and 196 [pres. § 105-3, 6, 8, 11, 17] in the procedure of the said commission of Bethel Presbytery.

3. Wherefore, your protestants believe that grievous hurt has been done a member of the Church, and injury done also to the peace of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

p. 76. [Answer to protest:] 1. A majority of the court construes the Book of Church Order to give a presbytery the right to clothe a commission with judicial powers.

2. The record of the cause shows that the Commission did comply with the Rules of Discipline in the Book of Church Order.

3. The Assembly believes the action taken will preserve the peace of the Church more than the opposite course, and that no injustice has been done the complainant.

56. Complaint of the Rev. J. B. Hutton, et al., versus the Synod of Mississippi.

1928, p. 34. [Complaint of the Rev. J. B. Hutton, D.D., et al., versus the Synod of Mississippi. Ordered tried by a commission.]

The law at issue, which our instructions call for, is as follows:

1. Whether a court has the right to meet out of its bounds.

2. Whether, if a court ignores its own standing rules, this constitutes a censurable error.

3. Whether the call for the Synod of Mississippi to meet stated the purpose as the law requires. Par. 58, 81 and 82 [pres. § 14-2, 3; 17-3, 4] of the Book of Church Order bearing upon this case.

p. 88. Report of Judicial Commission: The complainants asked:

First: that the Assembly make a definite statement that the last General Assembly erred in undertaking to grant a power to the Synod of Mississippi, which alone can be given by the Constitution of our Church, and that it declare the resolution to be found on page 58 of the Assembly's Minutes of 1927 to be null and void, because Synod meets by right given her in the Constitution, and not by permission of the General Assembly.

Second: That the Assembly declare the meeting of Synod held without its bounds to be illegal; and that the Synod be admonished to meet henceforth within its own bounds.

The Commission voted on the first item of the complaint unanimously not to sustain; on the second item unanimously not to sustain; and on the complaint as a whole unanimously not to sustain.

57. The Matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith.

1929. p. 82. Overture from the Presbytery of Augusta, asking the Assembly to take some action in regard to the alleged pamphlets of the Rev. Hay Watson Smith, on Evolution and other matters.

[Answer:] This Assembly enjoins upon the Presbytery of Arkansas its duty to investigate the rumors that are abroad as to the soundness in the faith of Rev. Hay Watson Smith.

1930, p. 41. [Complaint of Rev. J. E. McJunkin and others against the Presbytery of Arkansas] referred by the Assembly to the Synod of Arkansas, in accordance

with the Book of Church Order, par. 284 [pres. § 117-1], as follows: "A complaint shall not be made to any other court than the next higher except with its consent."

1931. p. 38. The Complaint of Rev. J. E. McJunkin et al. vs. the Synod of Arkansas in the matter of Rev. Hay Watson Smith [was ordered] tried by a commission.

p. 67. The Commission by unanimous vote sustained the complaint and rendered the following judgment: That this case be remanded to the Synod of Arkansas for a new hearing, in accordance with par. 288 [pres. § 117-5], Book of Church Order.

1933, p. 27. Complaint of Rev. J. E. McJunkin and Rev. A. Killough vs. the Synod of Arkansas, together with a package of papers and letters bearing on the Hay Watson Smith case from Arkansas. [Complaint ordered heard by a commission.]

p. 57. Report of the Commission:

In response to the complaint . . . which is as follows:

"We, the undersigned, hereby complain to the General Assembly that is to convene in Montreat, N. C., on the 25th day of May, 1933, against the action of the Synod of Arkansas of 1932 on the case of the Rev. Hay Watson Smith, that came up by way of complaint against the Presbytery of Arkansas of 1931. The grounds of our complaint are as follows:

"(1) That Dr. Smith has never been examined touching his views or the rumors concerning them, as demanded by the General Assembly of 1929, and as required by the Book of Church Order, which remissness of duty on the part of Arkansas Presbytery is shown by the evidence herewith submitted, which we maintain furnishes sufficient grounds (a) to justify fuller examination of Dr. Smith, and (b) by itself to justify the trial of Dr. Smith for unsoundness in the great doctrines of our faith.

"(2) That the Synod of 1932 refused to censure and otherwise deal with the Presbytery of 1931 for disregarding the order of the Synod of 1931, 'instructing and requiring the Presbytery of Arkansas to examine Rev. Hay Watson Smith according to the Book of Church Order, using as a basis the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of the Church with a view to ascertaining his beliefs,' as the Synod was empowered and obligated to do by the Book of Church Order.

"(3) That the Synod of 1932 refused to censure and otherwise deal with the Presbytery of 1931 for its refusal to allow a member in good standing to file charges against Dr. Smith in an effort to carry out the injunction of the Assembly of 1929.

"We, therefore, petition the General Assembly in view of the remissness of Synod 'to examine, deliberate, and judge in the whole matter,' which it is incumbent on it to do according to the Book of Church Order.

Signed ALGERNON KILLOUGH,
J. E. MCJUNKIN."

The Judicial Commission, appointed by the General Assembly of 1933, after most prayerful and careful deliberation offers the following judgment:

I. That the Presbytery of Arkansas carried out conscientiously the instructions of the General Assembly of 1929 (see page 82, General Assembly's Minutes, 1929), and acted in accordance with the Book of Church Order (Chapter V, Paragraph 183) [pres. § 104-2], and therefore the Synod of Arkansas is not to be censured.

II. That the Synod of Arkansas exceeded its authority in demanding an examination of Dr. H. W. Smith in 1931 (see Book of Church Order, Chapter XVII, Paragraph 288, Chapter V, Paragraph 182, Chapter IX, Paragraph 227) [pres. § 117-5, 104-1, 106-1], and so recognized this by approving the action of the Presbytery of Arkansas taken in 1931 by its action in 1932, and therefore is not to be censured for its action.

III. That the Presbytery of Arkansas acted within its authority in receiving the charges preferred against Dr. H. W. Smith by Rev. A. Killough, and in the light of the

investigation then being made in declining to indict Dr. Smith. The matter under consideration by the Presbytery at that time was the injunction of the General Assembly of 1929, and the action of the Synod of 1930, all of which is more fully set forth in the Minutes of Presbytery, 1931, pages 7 to 9 inclusive. (See also Chapter IX, Paragraph 229, Book of Church Order.) [pres. § 106-3.]

1934, p. 42. A minority report, signed by 8 members of the Standing Committee on the Judicial Business and recommending that the overtures and communications relating to the Hay Watson Smith case be answered by referring the whole matter to a commission of the Assembly which should act Ad Interim, proceeding in accordance with Par. 265 [pres. § 114-6] of the Book of Church Order, was rejected.

The majority report was adopted, as follows:

Overtures from the Presbyteries of Athens, North Alabama, Central Mississippi, Harmony, Mecklenburg, Bethel, asking the Assembly to reopen the case and take action with reference to the Presbytery of Arkansas and Rev. Hay Watson Smith and appoint a Committee to investigate the rumors concerning the soundness of faith of Dr. Smith; overture from the Presbytery of North Mississippi, asking the Assembly to refuse to reopen the case; a memorial from Rev. W. M. McPheeters; and a communication from the Presbytery of Western Texas all relate to the same matter, namely, the case of the Presbytery of Arkansas and Rev. Hay Watson Smith. They include many statements and the following requests: (1) That the case be regarded as still pending. (2) That an ad interim committee be appointed to investigate the whole case. (3) That the Assembly take such action as the truth and good name of our Church may require. (4) That the Assembly take action under Sections 265, 266 [pres. § 114-7] of the Book of Church Order. (5) That an adequate committee be appointed to carefully investigate the action of Arkansas Presbytery. (6) That the Assembly appoint a committee to cite Rev. W. M. McPheeters to prefer such charges as he desires and Arkansas Presbytery to answer them. (7) To appoint a judicial commission. (8) To appoint a special ad interim committee. (9) To cite Arkansas Presbytery to make answer to the Assembly of 1935. (10) That the case be reopened on the ground that it was not properly adjudicated. (11) That the records were not read by a commission of the Assembly. (12) A suggestion that the minutes of a commission should be made a part of the report of the commission and recorded in the Assembly Minutes.

We recommend that to these several overtures and requests negative answer be returnd, based upon the following findings of the Permanent Committee on Judicial Business.

(1) The facts of the case referred to as the Arkansas Presbytery vs. Hay Watson Smith, are as follows:

In 1912 the Presbytery of Arkansas received Rev. Hay Watson Smith into its membership on examination together with the submission to it by Dr. Smith of a statement concerning his divergence at certain points from the Confession of Faith. Seventeen years later, that is, in 1929, the General Assembly, responding to an overture from Augusta Presbytery, enjoined upon the Presbytery of Arkansas its duty to investigate the rumors that were abroad as to the soundness in the faith of Rev. Hay Watson Smith. In 1929 the Presbytery of Arkansas conducted such an investigation, declaring the good standing of Rev. Hay Watson Smith. In 1930 Revs. A. Killough and J. E. McJunkin complained to the General Assembly of this action of Arkansas Presbytery. In 1930 the General Assembly referred this complaint to the Synod of Arkansas in accordance with the Book of Church Order, Par. 284 [pres. § 117-1]. In 1930 the Synod of Arkansas acted upon this remanded complaint, not sustaining it, in an alleged irregular way, adopting the judgment of its Committee on Judicial Business instead of issuing it regularly in the Court or by the Court's Commission. In 1931 Rev. A. Killough and J. E. McJunkin complained to the General Assembly against this

alleged irregular action of the Synod of Arkansas as to its method of procedure. This complaint was unanimously sustained by the Assembly and the case was remanded to the Synod of Arkansas for regular process. In 1931 the Synod of Arkansas took up the remanded case, sustained the complaint against the Presbytery of Arkansas, and ordered the said Presbytery to take up and again investigate the rumors as named in the Assembly's Act of 1929. In 1932 the Presbytery of Arkansas, obeying the Synod, again took up the remanded case and reached the same findings as in 1929. In 1932 complaint was made against this finding of the Presbytery to the Synod of Arkansas, the complaint covering both the action of the Presbytery as to this investigation and as to the Presbytery's declining to indict Rev. Hay Watson Smith. In 1932 the Synod of Arkansas declined to sustain this complaint. Against this action of the Synod complaint was lodged with the General Assembly in 1933. The Assembly of 1933 declined to sustain the complaint, declaring that the Presbytery of Arkansas had carried out conscientiously the Assembly's injunction, and added a statement that the Synod of Arkansas had exceeded its authority in demanding an investigation of Rev. Hay Watson Smith in addition to its investigation of the rumors mentioned above, for which exceeding of its authority, however, the Assembly declared, for reason assigned, that the Synod was not to be censured. (See Minutes of Assembly, 1929, p. 82; 1930, p. 41; 1931, p. 67; 1933, p. 58; Minutes of Synod of Arkansas, 1930, 1931, 1932; Minutes of Presbytery of Arkansas, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932.)

(2) The power of original jurisdiction does not belong to the Assembly. (See Book of Church Order, Pars. 182, 217 [pres. § 104-1, 107-1]; Alexander's Digest (1910), p. 120; Assembly's Minutes, 1879, p. 23; Leslie's *Presbyterian Law and Procedure*, p. 429.)

(3) The immediate case in hand has been carried, in every possible phase of it, through eleven processes: Four in Presbytery, three in Synod and four in the General Assembly; and the General Assembly of 1933 (see Minutes, p. 58) seems to have ended it entirely as to all involved in it up to May 29, 1933, in its final action touching upon various aspects of it in Synod and Presbytery, and expressing its belief that its instructions had been carried out conscientiously. (See Minutes, 1933, p. 58.)

(4) No new matter, that is, matter not previously deliberated upon and legally adjudicated, appears to have risen.

p. 45. We recommend that the action taken as [the] recommendation [above] constitute the answer of the Assembly to the overture, asking that the Assembly decline to consider further overtures from any source regarding this case.

p. 44. The "communication" from the Presbytery of Western Texas states that a Commissioner of that Presbytery to the Assembly of 1933 has represented to the said Presbytery that "the record of the case of the complaint above referred to" appeared not to have been read in the commissioner's hearing, and on that account the case was not properly adjudicated; and the Assembly is asked to regard the case as still pending, and to make it the practice that the Minutes of the Commission be made a part of the report of the Commission and be recorded as such in the Minutes of the Assembly. Your Committee infers from the rigidity of the requirement of the record being read and from the universal practice of the Church as to that phase of a process, that in this case there must have been consent in the Commission as to the omission of the reading of a part of the record, as all the members knew the contents of the record. (See Book of Church Order, Par. 279.) [pres. § 116-7.] And your Committee believes, further, that had there not been such consent the Commissioner concerned should have called for the reading, either in the Commission or in the Assembly; failing of which at the proper time, in either criticism or challenge, the Commissioner lost his opportunity to interpose an objection. (See Book of Church Order as above.) The omission to read at least a portion of the record was a grave irregularity,

but we do not think such error was so vital as to invalidate the adjudication of the General Assembly or to render it void.

58. Complaint of F. M. Ramsay, against the Synod of Texas.

1930, p. 41. Complaint of F. M. Ramsay against the Synod of Texas was [ordered] tried by a commission.

p. 48. Report of Commission: It was moved and unanimously carried that this cause be remanded to the Synod of Texas for a new hearing, according to par. 288 of the Book of Church Order.

1932, p. 42. Complaint of F. M. Ramsay against the Synod of Texas [ordered] heard by a Commission.

p. 83. Report of Commission: It was unanimously decided not to sustain the complaint. The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

By this action the Assembly is not to be understood as condoning the transaction of unnecessary business on the Lord's Day.

59. Complaint of Rev. W. A. Stevenson, against the Synod of Kentucky.

1933, p. 27. We [the Standing Judicial Business Committee] recommend, in view of the fact that in the judgment of this Committee no violence has been done to the spirit of the Book of Church Order, that the action of the Synod of Kentucky in said case be sustained.

[Ed. note: This action was irregular. See this Digest, Rules of Dis., § 105-12.]

60. Complaint of Rev. H. A. Knox, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1933, p. 27. [Ordered] heard by a Commission.

p. 45. [From report of the Commission:]

The motion not to sustain the complaint was carried by a vote of 16 to 7.

[Ed. note: Action complained of was *re* an alleged illegal ordination.]

61. Complaint of Rev. J. P. Robertson, against the Synod of Tennessee.

1934, p. 31. Complaint of Rev. J. P. Robertson against the Synod of Tennessee [ordered] heard by a Commission.

p. 42. [From the report of the Commission:]

The complaint . . . stated that the Synod of Tennessee refused to consider his request that it "express to the Board of Southwestern College its regret concerning certain charges made by the Board" against himself and other brethren.

[Judgment:] That the complaint be not sustained for the reason that recourse should have been sought before the Board of Directors of Southwestern College rather than the Synod.

62. Complaints of the Church By the Side of the Road, against the Presbytery of Orange and the Synod of North Carolina.

1934, p. 43. Complaint of the Church by the Side of the Road against the Presbytery of Orange and the Synod of North Carolina.

"That the complaint . . . be dismissed for the reason that the complaint of the Church to the Synod against Presbytery of Orange has not been disposed of by the Synod but is still in process of adjudication. The complaint is therefore premature.

1936, p. 35. Complaint of the officers of the Church By the Side of the Road against the Synod of North Carolina [ordered] heard by a Commission.

p. 59. Your Commission finds and declares the law in this case to be:

First, that while the Book of Church Order does not prescribe the method by which a presbytery may exercise its original jurisdiction to dissolve a church (Par. 76,

Book of Church Order) [pres. § 16-7], yet it would be contrary to the spirit of our Presbyterian System for a presbytery to dissolve one of its functioning churches without its consent in the absence of an opportunity being afforded the church to be heard by notice to appear.

Second, that a church may waive the issuance of a citation from presbytery to appear at a hearing on the matter of its dissolution by voluntarily appearing at such hearing and submitting itself to the jurisdiction of the court.

Third, that the record of the case shows that while no citation was issued by Presbytery to the Church-by-the-Side-of-the-Road to appear at the called meeting of Presbytery at which the dissolution of the church was effected, the church was duly represented at such meeting and voluntarily submitted itself to the court's jurisdiction, and was thereby afforded due process of law in the premises.

The Commission voted unanimously that the complaint be not sustained.

The Judgment of your Commission is, That the decision and judgment of the Synod of North Carolina be and the same is affirmed.

63. Appeal of Rev. F. W. Gregg, against the Synod of South Carolina; and the Appeal of Bethel Presbytery, against the Synod of South Carolina in the Bethel Church case.

1935, p. 30. Report of the Committee on Judicial Business:

1. Bethel Presbytery appointed a committee (Commission) to investigate conditions in one of its churches, to-wit, Bethel Church; the Commission made investigations, took evidence and made a report to Bethel Presbytery, and Bethel Presbytery approved the report of said Commission:

2. From the approval of said report by Bethel Presbytery, Rev. F. W. Gregg, a member of Bethel Presbytery, appealed to the Synod of South Carolina, in which he alleged that the action of Presbytery was erroneous in five specifications. The Synod of South Carolina then overruled his contentions as to the first two specifications, but sustained him as to the last three specifications.

3. D. D. Johnston, an Elder in Bethel Church, appealed from the action of Bethel Presbytery to the Synod of South Carolina, in which he alleged that the action of Presbytery was erroneous in two specifications. The Synod of South Carolina sustained his contentions in both specifications.

4. From the action and decision of Synod, Rev. F. W. Gregg appealed to the General Assembly, and his appeal is in due form.

5. From the action and decision of Synod, no appeal was taken by Bethel Presbytery; but Bethel Presbytery "assented to the case being carried to the Assembly by Rev. R. W. Jopling, in order that there may be a final issue of the matters without further delay." The appeal is signed "Bethel Presbytery, by its representatives J. M. Forbis and R. W. Jopling."

6. At a meeting of Bethel Presbytery in May, 1935, the record recites, "Rev. R. W. Jopling gave notice that he would file a complaint against the action of Presbytery touching the matter decided," &c., and "requested the permission of Presbytery to pass over the Synod and take his complaint direct to the General Assembly, and this was granted."

We find that the appeal of Bethel Presbytery, so-called, is not in fact an appeal, as there is no record of any order of Bethel Presbytery appealing from the action of Synod, which so far as Bethel Presbytery is concerned is a final decision.

We also find that the attempt of Rev. R. W. Jopling to appeal from the action of Bethel Presbytery direct to the General Assembly, by "passing over Synod," as it is called, is irregular and illegal, and does not confer jurisdiction on the General Assembly to adjudicate the matter.

We recommend that a Commission be appointed by the General Assembly to hear and adjudicate the appeal of Rev. F. W. Gregg in his complaint against the Synod.

p. 64. [From the report of the Commission:]

The vote being taken, resulted as follows: Three to sustain, 16 not to sustain, which being interpreted means that the constitutional rights of the Session were not invaded when the Commission of the Presbytery assumed "Original Jurisdiction"; that power having been delegated to the Commission by the Presbytery.

[See this Digest, Form of Govt., § 14-5, 19-2 (action of 1927, p. 51)]

64. Complaint of Rev. J. W. Lehmann, against the Synod of Texas.

1935, p. 31. Your Committee would report that the record in this proceeding deals with two unrelated complaints:

1. The action of the Commission of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas ordering dissolved the pastoral relationship between Mr. Lehmann and Robbins Memorial Church of Beaumont, Texas, which Presbyterial action was sustained by the Synod of Texas. We report that the record of such proceeding is regular and that the matter is properly before the General Assembly.

2. The action of the Presbytery of Eastern Texas in refusing to hear and consider a complaint made by Mr. Lehmann against himself in which document Mr. Lehmann stated to Presbytery that he had been slandered by certain members of Robbins Memorial Church, and asked that he be put on trial to determine the truth of the charges, which Presbyterial action was sustained by the Synod of Texas. We report that the record in such proceeding is regular and that the matter is properly before the General Assembly.

We recommend that a commission be appointed to hear and adjudicate this case.

p. 63. After consideration the Commission unanimously voted not to sustain the complaint upon the ground that the Synod of Texas committed no error in refusing to sustain the complaint of Rev. J. W. Lehmann against the Presbytery of Eastern Texas.

65. Complaint of Rev. R. W. Jopling, against the Presbytery of Bethel.

1936, p. 35. Complaint of Rev. R. W. Jopling against the Presbytery of Bethel referred to us by the Synod of South Carolina (Book of Church Order, Par. 269); also a communication from the Rev. R. W. Jopling of date of May 20, 1936, to the effect that on account of two cases of extreme illness he was unable to present his case to this Assembly, and requesting as an act of courtesy that the Complaint be remanded to the Synod of South Carolina (Book of Church Order, Par. 288) [pres. § 117-5], your Committee recommends that the petition be granted and the Complaint remanded to the Synod of South Carolina for settlement and readjustment.

[Ed. note: This is a peculiar case. Remanding the case to the Synod as a matter of courtesy to the complainant would normally be irregular. But in this instance the case was up on "reference" from the Synod. Cf. This Digest, Rules of Discipline, § 105-12.]

66. Complaint of Revs. W. H. Mills and G. G. Mayes, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1938, p. 37. The Complaint of Revs. W. H. Mills and G. G. Mayes vs. the Synod of South Carolina was ordered heard by a commission.

p. 70. The vote of the commission was unanimous upon each count not to sustain the Complaint. The following explanatory minute was adopted: The Commission, having found nothing unconstitutional in the case, declines to sustain the Complaint.

failed to prosecute his appeal as required by the constitution of the Church, and the Synod of Georgia at its Fall Meeting of 1937, by reason of said failure to prosecute, dismissed said appeal.

It further appears that the Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., appealed from the action of the Synod of Georgia to the 78th General Assembly of the Church, and that at said Assembly, on a report of the Standing Committee on Judicial Business showing again on the part of the appellant a failure to appear and prosecute his appeal, that appeal was dismissed.

It further appears that at the meeting of the 79th General Assembly, a Judicial Commission was appointed to consider this case and finding error in the action of the 78th General Assembly in disposing of the appeal without the appointment of a Judicial Commission, or without a hearing by the Assembly itself, returned the case to the Athens Presbytery for a trial *de novo*.

It further appears that said case was again tried by the Athens Presbytery after due notice to the Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., at the 1940 Fall Meeting of said Presbytery, and after hearing counsel for the Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., and after considering all the facts in the case, that Presbytery again divested him of his office as Minister of the Gospel without censure, and he again appealed to the Synod of Georgia.

It further appearing from the record that at the meeting of the Synod of Georgia, held in September, 1941, the Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., did not appear before that Court in person or by counsel within the time required by the Constitution of the Church, and gave the Court no satisfactory explanation of his failure to appear and prosecute his appeal, and that in consequence thereof the Synod declined to entertain such appeal, and from this action the Rev. W. W. Pippen, Jr., appealed to the 82nd General Assembly of the Church.

In view of these facts (it appearing to the Commission that this appellant has had two trials of his case on the merits before the Athens Presbytery, and has repeatedly failed and neglected to prosecute appeals from the actions of the Church Courts, in the manner required by the Constitution of the Church, and particularly failed to prosecute his appeal before the Synod of Georgia at its meeting in 1941, and, therefore, under the Constitution of the Church, particularly Section 281 [pres. § 116-9] of the Rules of Discipline, is considered to have abandoned that appeal), and in further consideration of the fact that in his argument before the Commission, the appellant urged no reason why the provisions of the Constitution of the Church with respect to the appellant should not be enforced, the action of the Synod of Georgia at its meeting in September, 1941, was approved and confirmed by this Commission."

69. The Matter of West Columbia (S.C.) church vs. Presbytery of Congaree.

1944, p. 44. Your Committee has carefully considered the papers and procedure in the matter of the West Columbia Church, West Columbia, S. C., against the Presbytery of Congaree referred to the General Assembly by the Synod of South Carolina.

Your Committee, after careful consideration, finds and so reports that the papers and procedure are not in order; that in relation to the matter of Item 1 in the papers referred to, no appeal was taken by the complaining party; and as to Item 2, no action thereon was taken by the Synod.

Your Committee therefore recommends that the papers be returned to the Synod of South Carolina for such further action as the Synod or parties in interest may deem appropriate.

70. Complaint of Rev. John C. Blackburn, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1946, pp. 25, 48, 49, 99. The Judicial Commission appointed to hear and determine the complaint of Rev. John C. Blackburn against the Synod of South Carolina makes the following report:

The complaint of the complainant was read as well as the record sent up by the Stated Clerk of the Synod of South Carolina, and the answer of that Synod to the complaint. Thereafter the Commission heard Rev. John C. Blackburn in his own behalf and also heard Rev. H. A. Knox and Rev. Benson Sloan as representatives of the Synod in behalf of that body.

The vote of the commission was not to sustain any items,—the vote being unanimous on items designated as First and Second in the complaint, and there being three votes to sustain the complaint with respect to the item therein designated Third and eighteen votes not to sustain.

The Commission next considered the matter contained in the complaint following the last numbered item and after giving the complainant and the responding Synod through its representatives opportunity to be heard as fully as they desired and, after full discussion by members of the Commission, took the following action:

That portion of the Complaint following the last numbered item thereof is interpreted by the Commission to be in effect an overture, with respect to which the Commission is without power to act. The Commission also would point out to the complainant that under the Book of Church Order there is available to him before Congaree Presbytery adequate procedure to secure investigation of the matters he desires to have investigated.

The complaint of the complainant, the record accompanying the same, with the exhibits therein referred to and the answer of the Synod of South Carolina are attached hereto.

71. Complaint of Rev. G. Coleman Luck, against the Synod of Oklahoma.

1947, pp. 26, 50. Relative to the complaint of Rev. G. Coleman Luck against the Synod of Oklahoma, we find that this complaint should not be considered for the following reasons:

(1) The record is not in proper form for either an appeal or a complaint;

(2) The complainant has not appeared either in person or by a representative to prosecute his complaint, and for this reason his appeal or complaint must be considered as having been abandoned according to Paragraph 287 of the Book of Church Order.

72. Complaint of Rev. John C. Blackburn, against the Synod of South Carolina.

1951, pp. 41, 43, 46, 71. In the matter of the complaint of Rev. John C. Blackburn against the Synod of South Carolina, "For Their Failure to Answer Certain Questions Concerning the Orthodoxy of an Examination of a Minister by Congaree Presbytery," the Commission replies as follows:

After carefully considering all the records in the case and patiently listening to both complainant and Rev. F. W. Gregg, representing the respondent, the Commission votes unanimously not to sustain the complaint. Our reason for this action is that we have found nothing irregular or improper in the records of what was done or in the facts as verbally reported by the complainant.

The provisions of the Book of Church Order for receiving ministers by transfer from one presbytery to another are quite explicit, and in the judgment of your Commission adequately safeguard the faith of our fathers and the common heritage of the Presbyterian ministry. Each Presbytery is the sole judge of the extent to which the prescribed examinations are to be carried out and must accept responsibility for its own share in upholding the standards of our church.

The action of the Judicial Commission accomplishes the following:

a. Leaves intact the authority of the Presbytery, under paragraph 76 of the Book of Church Order, to dissolve the pastoral relationship where the interest of religion imperatively demands it, without the necessity of a formal trial.

b. Continues in full force and effect the dissolution of the pastoral relationship that existed between the Rev. Charles M. Jones and the Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church.

c. Continues in full force and effect the special oversight of Orange Presbytery over the Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church.

d. Affords the Rev. Charles M. Jones and the Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church the right of formal trial should it be so desired.

75. Complaint of Rachel Willet English, against the Synod of Georgia.

1955, pp. 42, 44, 45, 54. In this cause, the Judicial Commission appointed by The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, meeting in Richmond, Virginia, in June 1955, met and duly considered the complaint of Rachel Willet English against The Synod of Georgia, to wit: (1) That The Synod of Georgia omitted vital testimony of the Complainant in the trial of her complaint against the Presbytery of Atlanta; and, (2) That the Moderator of the Synod of Georgia sustained an irregular motion made at the aforementioned trial.

The Judicial Commission considered the complaint, the reply of The Synod of Georgia, the testimony and statements of parties concerned and the entire record at large, from all of which the decision of the Judicial Commission is that the complaint be not sustained on either of the two charges.

It is therefore the judgment of the Judicial Committee, after prayerful and thoughtful consideration, that the complaint of Rachel Willet English against the Synod of Georgia be and the same is hereby dismissed in all its parts.

76. The Matter of Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, Jr., against the Synod of South Carolina.

1. Action of 1956.

1956, pp. 24, 45. Communication from Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, Jr., requesting the General Assembly to direct the Synod of South Carolina to correct its record of report of Judicial Commission . . . received as information and that the Synod of South Carolina be directed to include in their official minutes for the year 1956 a full statement of the facts upon which judgment was rendered by the Judicial Commission of the Synod that heard the complaint of Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, as directed by paragraph 95 [pres. § 19-4], Book of Church Order.

2. Action in 1957.

1957, pp. 25, 38. [Communication from] the Rev. Thomas B. Hoover charging the Synod of South Carolina with failure to comply with directive of the Ninety-Sixth General Assembly as recorded in the Minutes page 45, item 11.

The Committee finds that the communication from Rev. Thomas B. Hoover concerning the failure of the Synod of South Carolina to comply with a directive of the General Assembly is true and recommends that the Assembly again call this failure of compliance to the attention of the Synod for its proper action.

3. Complaint of Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, Jr., against the Synod of South Carolina.

1958, pp. 40, 43, 56. We find the said complaint to be set forth in the following specifications:

I. That the Synod of South Carolina was in error in failing to record a Protest.

II. A. That the Synod of South Carolina was in error when failing to comply with a lawful injunction of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States due, in part, to the neglect of the Synod to implement the requirements of the Book of Church Order when the original complaint was considered.

II. B. That the Synod of South Carolina was in error when failing to comply with a lawful injunction of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States due, in part, to the existence of constitutional evidence that the Synod erred in not sustaining the original complaint.

III. That the Synod of South Carolina was in error when it supplied information of a prejudicial nature to the secular press in which false statements were made as facts of ecclesiastical procedure.

This Judicial Commission has given careful and extensive study to the complaint of Rev. Thomas B. Hoover versus the Synod of South Carolina, reading all information submitted to us and questioning the parties concerned.

We have full confidence in the intent of the Synod of South Carolina in complying with the directive of the 1957 General Assembly in that they have made all necessary pertinent facts in the case a part of the record. Further, we have the conviction that the Synod of South Carolina has not sought to damage the reputation of anyone.

At the request of the complainant, with the concurrence of the respondent and by the unanimous vote of the Judicial Commission, Specification No. 1 was deleted.

This Judicial Commission by a majority vote fails to sustain any of the specifications of the complaint.

4. Action in 1959.

1959, pp. 26, 68. [Communication] from Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, claiming denial of his constitutional rights by actions of the Synod of South Carolina and the General Assembly.

[Answered:] That the General Assembly receive the communication from the Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, Jr. This committee finds no grounds to substantiate his grievances.

5. Action in 1960.

1960, pp. 24, 59. That the communications from Rev. Thomas B. Hoover not be received for the following reasons:

The 1958 Assembly, through a Judicial Commission, heard the "Complaint of Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, Jr., vs. the Synod of South Carolina" with the decision that it "fails to sustain any of the Specifications of the complaint." (Minutes 1958, pp. 56-57)

The 1959 Assembly received a communication from Mr. Hoover "claiming denial of his constitutional rights by actions of the Synod of South Carolina and the General Assembly" (Minutes 1959, p. 26) which it referred to the Standing Committee on Judicial Business.

This 1959 Standing Committee reported: "Recommendation 3. That the General Assembly receive the communication from the Rev. Thomas B. Hoover, Jr. This committee finds no grounds to substantiate his grievances." (Minutes 1959, p. 68)

The Synod of South Carolina (see its minutes of 1959, pp. 17-20) heard a final report from the Commission of Synod which had dealt with this matter over a period of several years. This "final report" appears merely to recount what the General Assembly did in its final adjudication of the Complaint in 1958, and in an appendix prints full texts of Mr. Hoover's communications of June 12, 1958 and July 21, 1958 to the General Assembly copies of which had been sent also the Synod.

The Synod action referred to in this Communication No. 22 appears no more than the proper steps taken by a Judicial Commission to get all necessary matters read into Synod's record to clear the way for the Commission's being discharged.

This Communication No. 22 from Mr. Hoover is a "demand" made on the *Assembly* to have the *Synod* repudiate and apologize for an action apparently entirely proper.

Synod. This Commission would remind the Synod of Florida of the necessity for keeping a full and complete record of its proceedings as outlined in the Book of Church Order.

80. Complaint of Rev. Albert J. Kissling et al., against the Synod of Florida.

1959, pp. 40, 42, 63. The following are the specifications of the Complaint against the Synod of Florida:

1. The proceedings of Synod's Commission were highly irregular.
2. There is evidence of prejudice in the judgment rendered.
3. The court's judgment is clearly at variance with the evidence, the Book of Church Order, and rulings of General Assembly:
   (1) The Judgment of Synod is not supported by the evidence at the trial or the record before Presbytery and before Synod.
   (2) Said judgment is contrary to the overwhelming weight of the evidence introduced at the trial and incorporated in said records.
   (3) In and by said judgment Synod has usurped the province of the "triers of the facts" to wit, of the Session.
   (4) The premises on which the judgment was based are clearly at variance with the Book of Church Order, and the rulings of the General Assembly.

Opportunity was given, according to the requirement of the Book of Church Order, Rules of Discipline, paragraph 285, for the members of the commission to give free expression of their opinions.

The question was put on each of the specifications with the following results:

On specification #1, vote to sustain, 1; vote not to sustain, 22.

On specification #2, vote to sustain, 0; vote not to sustain, 23.

On specification #3, in its entirety, vote to sustain, 16; vote not to sustain, 7.

By request, Thad Page and R. G. Lawton, Jr., had their votes "not to sustain" recorded, on specification #3.

Motion that the complaint be sustained, except as noted above, and that the judgment of the Court of Original Jurisdiction is effective as of this date. The vote on this motion was 16 "yea" and 7 "nay."

81. Complaint of Rev. B. W. Baker, against the Synod of Mississippi.

1961, pp. 31, 36, 54. Mr. Baker not appearing, we recommend that the Assembly declare the complaint as abandoned.

82. Appeal of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi from the Synod of Mississippi.

1964, pp. 50 ff.

PRESBYTERY OF CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI — Appellant

v.

SYNOD OF MISSISSIPPI — Appellee

G. A. Appeal No. 1-1964

In Re: *The Rev. A. M. Hart*

Trinity Presbyterian Church of Meridian, Mississippi, contemplated filling a vacancy by calling the Rev. A. M. Hart of East Arkansas Presbytery. It was advised, however, by the Commission on the Minister and His Work of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi that the Commission would disapprove a call to Mr. Hart on grounds involving Mr. Hart's views on integration, church union, and other matters. The Session of the church therefore sought advice from the Presbytery as to whether Presbytery would regard the reasons given by the Commission as a proper basis for withholding a call. After some debate, Presbytery tabled the matter and took no action. Trinity Church proceeded to issue the call, and Mr. Hart moved on the field.

At the succeeding meeting of Presbytery the question of the admission of Mr. Hart to Presbytery arose. Presbytery proceeded to conduct a full examination of Mr. Hart. The examination was sustained on Christian experience, sacraments, and church government, but it was not sustained on theology. The Presbytery voted not to sustain the examination as a whole and then adopted the recommendation of the Commission on the Minister and His Work against approving the call to Mr. Hart and placing it in his hands. Certain members of Presbytery gave proper notice of Complaint, with reasons, and filed a Complaint with Synod. The Complaint gave as specifications of error "manifest evidence of bias and prejudice," "impairment of constitutional rights," and "manifestation of injustice." Synod entertained the Complaint and appointed a Special Judicial Commission to hear it and make report. Following the hearing, the Special Judicial Commission filed its final report as follows:

"This Judicial Commission sustained in substance, by majority vote, the complaint against Central Mississippi Presbytery, * * * and:

1. The Commission directs that this matter be remanded to Presbytery on the basis of the findings of this Commission, with instructions that Reverend A. M. Hart be re-examined, and that a full, complete, and properly authenticated transcript of such examination and all of the proceedings relating thereto, be filed with this Commission, or with the Stated Clerk of Synod.

2. The Special Judicial Commission of Synod also finds that Trinity Presbyterian Church, Meridian, and the Reverend A. M. Hart acted imprudently and unwisely in the matter of his moving onto the field and beginning to serve the Church as Minister, knowing the advice of the Presbytery's Commission on the Minister and His Work to be adverse, which could possibly result in Presbytery's disapproval of the request that a call be placed in Mr. Hart's hands, before this matter had been dealt with by Central Mississippi Presbytery.

Therefore, we voice our strong disapproval of the action of the Church and Mr. Hart, which we deem unwise, and which has been contributed to the difficulty confronted by this Commission of the Synod of Mississippi.

We further take note of the unusual situation existing, and hereby authorize the Church to use Mr. Hart's service in an extraordinary relationship if necessary, until this entire matter shall have been adjudicated." Minutes of Synod, 1963, page 26.)

Central Mississippi Presbytery complained to Synod against the report of its Special Judicial Commission. Synod voted not to sustain the Complaint and then voted to sustain the Special Judicial Commission in that part of its report involving the Hart matter. "The Reverend J. R. Miller gave notice on behalf of Central Mississippi Presbytery of an appeal to General Assembly against this action of Synod." (Minutes of Synod, 1963, page 18.)

The Appeal was appropriately filed and is now before the Permanent Judicial Commission for preliminary judgment.

The first issue presented by the case is whether Synod has authority under the *Book of Church Order* to pass on the action of Presbytery in declining to admit Mr. Hart to Presbytery. Undoubtedly Presbytery has primary authority and original jurisdiction to determine whether to admit ministers to its membership. This is specifically provided in the *Book of Church Order* in Section 16-7 (13).

It is just as clear, however, that acts of the lower court are subject to review by a higher court. The Preface to the *Book of Church Order* declares: "III. 1. The Presby-

Section 17-5 lists the powers of Synod. Relevant here are the following three subsections:

"(2) To review the records of the Presbyteries and redress whatever they may have done contrary to order.

(3) To take effectual care that they observe the Constitution of the Church and that they obey the lawful injunctions of the higher courts. * * *

(6) To take such order with respect to the Presbyteries, Sessions and churches under its care as may be in conformity with the Word of God and the Constitution, and may tend to promote the edification of the Church."

Synod was here acting to grant "redress," to take care that Presbytery "obey the lawful injunction" of Synod, and to take appropriate "order" with respect to both Presbytery and Trinity Church which would be "in conformity with the Word of God and the Constitution" and which tended "to promote the edification of the Church." It is apparent that this was the only way in which redress could have been given, since a failure to continue this temporary relationship would have rendered the whole case moot and have left nothing for Synod or General Assembly to act upon. Any court must be held to have inherent power to afford appropriate relief, whether these powers are set out in express words or not.

The provision in Section 16-2 that "no Minister shall engage in work which is within the bounds and which falls properly under the jurisdiction of another Presbytery without its consent" does not necessarily apply to a temporary arrangement pending a judicial determination. Mr. Hart was given no final authorization to "engage in work" in Central Mississippi Presbytery by the action of Synod.

We therefore hold that Synod did not exceed its authority in this regard.

A final issue involves procedural matters. Appellant cites Sections 116-5 and 105-19 and urges that these sections mean that the Special Judicial Commission of Synod could consider no evidence outside the record in the case. A careful reading of these sections, however, indicates that they are not fully applicable. They refer specifically to the situation where there has been a judicial trial in the court below and indicate that the record in such a case is all that the appellate court could consider.

In the present case there was no trial at Presbytery level. This case involved a Complaint against an administrative action of the Presbytery. The person complaining against such action must be given an opportunity to prove by suitable evidence what that action was, and he cannot be regarded as bound by the express language in the minutes of the lower court. In other words, the Complaint to Synod in this case produced the original trial, and in that original trial evidence should be admissible. Thus it should be permitted that persons who had been presented at the meeting of the Presbytery could testify as to what happened in the examination of Mr. Hart on his views in theology. Appropriate witnesses would be sworn to tell the truth (Section 106-6) and would be subject to cross examination (Section 106-5).

In this case it appeared that representatives of the parties actually testified as to the facts while purporting to submit arguments to the Special Judicial Commission. No objections seem to have been made to this, however, and there is no indication that this proved seriously prejudicial to the Appellant's case, especially in view of the fact that Synod did not annul the action of Presbytery but simply ordered a re-examination. Under the provisions of Section 116-3 "To sustain an Appeal the ground must be not a mere technicality but must involve real harm to the Appellant's case."

The alleged admission of a "list of questions (asked Mr. Hart) * * * as part of the record without the presence" of the representatives of the Presbytery is not regarded as involving "real harm" to the Appellant's case. Appellant had the opportunity to introduce evidence that the list of questions was inaccurate. While it did urge that the list was incomplete, it did not offer evidence or even suggest that the questions listed were not asked.

Any errors in "receiving improper * * * evidence" are regarded as not sufficient ground on which to base a reversal, and the parties are cautioned to take care that appropriate rules of evidence are followed if another trial takes place.

It is, therefore, the preliminary judgment of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly that the Appeal of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi be denied in each of its particulars and that the action of the Synod of Mississippi be confirmed.

Homer A. Holt, a member of the Permanent Judicial Commission who participated in the hearing and deliberations, concurring in part and dissenting in part, requests that it be recorded that he concurs in the opinion that a Synod has jurisdiction to review the actions of a Presbytery in examining a minister seeking admission to the Presbytery and that the Synod has jurisdiction to direct a re-examination; but that he is of the opinion that upon the record in this case the Synod of Mississippi should not have sustained the complaint against the Presbytery of Central Mississippi and should not have directed a re-examination of the applicant by the Presbytery.

At the conclusion of the report the Moderator gave opportunity for questions for the sake of any necessary clarifications. There were no questions.

The Moderator put the following required question before the Assembly: Shall the preliminary judgment of the Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi, Appellant, versus the Synod of Mississippi, Appellee, in the case of the Rev. A. M. Hart be made the final judgment of the General Assembly?

The Assembly voted to confirm and the Moderator declared that the preliminary judgment of the Permanent Judicial Commission in the above mentioned case is now the final judgment of the General Assembly, and the case is herewith closed.

83. Complaint of Frank J. Buchanan, et al., against the Synod of Mississippi. 1964, pp. 55 ff.

FRANK J. BUCHANAN, et al.,
of Trinity Presbyterian Church
Meridian, Mississippi
Complainants

v.

SYNOD OF MISSISSIPPI
Respondent

G. A. Complaint
No. 1-1964

In Re: The Rev. A. M. Hart

The Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., having received the Complaint of Frank J. Buchanan, et al., v. the Synod of Mississippi, submits this preliminary judgment to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., meeting in Montreat, North Carolina, April 24, 1964.

The facts leading up to the Complaint are substantially as follows:

At a meeting of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi held at Wynndale Presbyterian Church, Terry, Mississippi, April 19, 1962, the Rev. A. M. Hart, a minister in good and regular standing in the Presbytery of East Arkansas, was examined by the Presbytery of Central Mississippi, subject to a call to the Trinity Presbyterian Church, Meridian, Mississippi.

The record in the case indicates that the Commission on the Minister and His Work of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi had previously advised the Nominating

REV. W. A. GAMBLE, et al., of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi, Complaints,

v.

SYNOD OF MISSISSIPPI, Respondent

G. A. COMPLAINT NO. 2-1964

The Complaint in this case was erroneously entitled "A Complaint to the General Assembly Presbyterian Church U.S., by the Presbytery of Central Mississippi, against the Synod of Mississippi, growing out of action by the Synod in June 1963." The *Book of Church Order* provides, however, that only a "communing member of the Church" may make a Complaint (Section 117-1) and the General Assembly has ruled that one church court may not complain against another church court (Complaint of the Lafayette Church of New Orleans v. the Synod of Louisiana, Digest of the General Assembly Proceedings (Millard ed. 1945), Judicial Cases, item 49, page 328; (see also *id.* at page 230). For this reason the Permanent Judicial Commission decided to treat the Complaint as having been made by the Rev. W. A. Gamble, who signed it. Previous decisions of the General Assembly have indicated that minor irregularities may be waived (see, e.g., Complaint of the Rev. J. S. Shaw v. the Synod of Memphis, *id.*, item 30, page 302).

In a stated meeting, July 19, 1962, the Presbytery of Central Mississippi took certain actions concerning the signers of a Memorial to the Synod of Mississippi. The Rev. J. M. McDill at that time gave oral notice of Complaint against the action of Presbytery, which he planned to file with the Synod of Mississippi. There is no indication in the Presbytery Minutes as to whether Dr. McDill gave the reasons for the Complaint, but the minutes clearly record the fact of the Notice. (Presbytery Minutes, Vol. 62, No. 2, p. 79-80, 83.)

At a stated meeting convened on April 18, 1963, the Presbytery took further action concerning the signers of the Memorial, whereupon Dr. McDill reminded the Presbytery of his notice of Complaint given the previous July. In addition, the Rev. W. F. Mansell gave oral notice of Complaint against the action of Presbytery to be filed with the Synod of Mississippi. The Presbytery Minutes record the giving of notice but do not indicate whether the reasons were given (Presbytery Minutes, Vol. 63, No. 2, p. 61). During the same meeting the Presbytery voted to suspend further action against the Memorial signers until action of Synod on the Complaints should be taken (*id.*, p. 65). The Presbytery appointed a committee to defend its own actions against the Complaints (ibid). The Minutes of the Synod of Mississippi state that a reason for the Complaints was given at the Presbytery meeting convened on April 18, 1963 at which oral notice of Complaints was given (Synod Minutes 1963, p. 59). Further, the Complaint which is the basis of the case before this Commission contains the following statement on page 3:

> "Dr. McDill and Dr. Mansell took the position that in giving oral notice, in July 1962 and in April 1963, of Complaints to be filed, they stated that this would be done because they did not believe Presbytery had jurisdiction and that their oral statements fulfilled the requirements of the *Book of Church Order*."

The Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly construes Section 116-4 (with Section 117-4) of the *Book of Church Order* not to require a written notice of Complaint if the notice is given while the court is still in session. It is clear, however, that the notice of Complaint must be accompanied by the "reasons supporting it," and the court receiving the Complaint must have valid evidence that the

reasons for the Complaint, if given orally, were given at the time of the oral notice or while the lower court was still in session. Compare also Section 105-19, in which the clause, "if any [reasons] have been filed" implies that notice of Complaint and the reasons supporting it are not required to be written in every instance.

There is in this case no clear proof from the minutes of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi that supporting reasons were given at the time oral notices of Complaints of Dr. McDill and Dr. Mansell were given in Presbytery meetings, as required by *Book of Church Order*, Sections 116-4 and 117-4. Subsequent actions of Presbytery, however, plus the references in the minutes of Synod (Synod Minutes, 1963, p. 59), plus the admission in the Complaint in this case amount to adequate proof that reasons were given orally when oral notice of the Complaint was given.

It is, therefore, the preliminary judgment of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the General Assembly that the Complaint in this case be not sustained.

At the conclusion of the report the Moderator gave opportunity for questions for the sake of any necessary clarifications. Rev. J. Reed Miller asked "is it ever necessary that notice of complaint be given in a written form?" Mr. William Nash, a member of the Judicial Commission, answered the question by saying that an overture touching this subject was referred to the Judicial Commission at its meeting in February. He indicated that because the Commission was aware at that time that cases of process were pending in which the same subject would be a matter of judgment, the Judicial Commission deferred answering the overture until these cases were settled.

The Moderator put the following required question before the Assembly: Shall the preliminary judgment of the Permanent Judicial Commission in the case of the General Assembly Complaint, No. 2, 1964, Rev. W. A. Gamble, et al., of the Presbytery of Central Mississippi, Complainants, versus the Synod of Mississippi, Respondent, be made the final judgment of the General Assembly?

The Assembly voted to confirm, and the Moderator declared that the preliminary judgment of the Permanent Judicial Commission of the above mentioned case is now the final judgment of the General Assembly, and the case is herewith closed.

85. Reference of a complaint by the Synod of Appalachia. Refused and returned.

1965, p. 97. REFERENCE with regard to the complaint of members of Session of First Presbyterian Church, Johnson City, Tennessee, against the Judicial Commission of the Presbytery of Holston; referred by the Presbytery to the Synod of Appalachia; referred to the General Assembly by the Synod of Appalachia.

The Committee recommends that this reference be declined and that the case be returned for adjudication. (See Section 111-5, B. C. O.)

In this case a substantial part of the record consisted of sound tapes. The Committee holds that a written transcript of the Record in all judicial cases shall be required in order that the members of the Commission shall have access to the Record in advance of the hearing thereon. Therefore, any sound tapes accompanying and forming a part of the Record must be transcribed. This is in accordance with Section 105-19, Book of Church Order.

Part VII.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES.

A. CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER BODIES.

1. The Assembly solicits fraternal correspondence with various Churches.

1861, p. 13. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America appreciates the precious import of that memorable prayer addressed by the adorable Redeemer to the Father, in full view of the agony of the garden and the cross: "that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me;" and impelled by a sincere desire to meet the full measure of responsibility which devolves upon us as a branch of Christ's visible Church, in the accomplishment of this vastly important petition, would most earnestly endeavor to draw closer the bonds of Christian intercourse and communion between all churches of like faith and order in the Confederate States of America. This Assembly, therefore, affectionately solicits fraternal correspondence with the following churches, viz.: The Associate Reformed Synod of the South, the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Independent Presbyterian Church, and the German Reformed Synod, within the Confederate States. And in order to consummate this, our Christian purpose and desire, the Assembly will, at its present session, appoint and commission delegates to the aforesaid Churches, with full power and authority to arrange and adopt articles of permanent intercourse and correspondence, which, however, shall be submitted to the Assembly for its ratification or rejection.

1862, p. 14. The General Assembly need scarcely re-assert its earnest desire to cultivate friendly relations with churches professing the same doctrines, and practicing the same polity. The unity of God's people is not only a reality, but it is of the highest importance that this unity should be manifested to the world. Where this is not practicable this Assembly is ready to do all that is consistent with truth to promote peace, and hopes that the charity which is the "bond of perfectness" will ever characterize its intercourse with other ecclesiastical bodies.

B. UNIONS ACCOMPLISHED WITH OTHER ECCLESIASTICAL BODIES.

1. Union with the United Synod of the South.

1863, pp. 137, 141. "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States is hereby overtured by the Presbytery of East Hanover to take such steps as its wisdom may suggest, at its approaching meeting in Columbia, to bring about a union between the Old and New School Presbyterians in the Confederate States."

The [Committee on Bills and Overtures] recommend the appointment of a committee to confer on the subject with any committee that may be appointed by the United Synod, and report results of such conference to the next Assembly.

[Ed. note: by New School Presbyterians the overture meant the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church.]

1864, p. 253. The committee to confer with a committee of the United Synod report to the General Assembly:

That they met a committee appointed by the United Synod in July last, and, after prayer and conference, unanimously agreed to recommend to the General Assembly

feels free solemnly to assure the Synod of Kentucky not only of our cordial approval of, and sincere concurrence substantially in, the Synod's statement of doctrine and constitutional principles, as contained under the four heads of the third division of their letter, but of our sincere joy to find our brethren of Kentucky so ready to unite with us in solemn covenant, with a view, among other things, to the advancement and maintenance of these doctrines and principles as against the apparent Erastian tendencies of our American Protestantism.

3. That the letter of the Synod of Kentucky be admitted to record, as they suggest, as a part of the historical acts and monuments of the Church, by publishing it in the Appendix to the Minutes of this Assembly [p. 178.]

4. That this Assembly cordially approves of the determination of the Synod of Kentucky, as expressed in the fourth resolution of its Minutes of June 28, 1867, communicated by its commissioners to this Assembly, to assert fully all its legal claims as a part of the "Presbyterian Church of the United States of America," and to reserve all its legal rights of property as a Synod in any union which may be formed with this body.

5. That this Assembly assures the Synod of Kentucky a cordial welcome. And its Standing Committee on Commissions is hereby instructed to receive and enroll, without further order, commissioners properly accredited from the Presbyteries of Ebenezer, Louisville, Muhlenburg, Transylvania and West Lexington.

1868, p. 264. The Rev. Robert L. Breck was introduced to the Assembly as a delegate from the Synod of Kentucky, and delivered an address conveying the assurance of the kind feeling, sympathy and confidence of that body, and explaining its present position in regard to an organic connection with this Assembly. To this address an appropriate response was made by the Moderator.

1869, p. 369. The Stated Clerk reported that the Committee on Commissions have enrolled commissioners from the Presbyteries of the Synod of Kentucky, in accordance with the order of the Assembly of 1867.

[Ed. note: For details of the schism of the Synod of Kentucky, see Alexander's Digest, 1888, p. 427 ff.]

6. Union with the Associate Reformed Presbytery of Kentucky.

1870, p. 521. The Committee on Bills and Overtures have considered the request of the committee of the Synod of Kentucky, that the Assembly will express its judgment concerning the propriety and expediency of organic union with the Associate Reformed Presbytery of Kentucky, and beg leave to report to the Assembly for its adoption the following resolutions:

Resolved, That this Assembly does hereby express its hearty approbation of the action of the Synod in this matter of organic union with the Associate Reformed Presbytery of Kentucky, on the following terms, viz.:

The Committee of Conference on Union, recognizing the fact that the bodies are one in doctrine, government and discipline, and that the difference between them on the subject of psalmody is a proper matter of forbearance, agree to the following propositions:

1st, That the Associated Reformed churches, in their worship and in the ministration of the gospel, shall be undisturbed in their usages.

2d, That the Synod will secure, as soon as practicable, the insertion of an acceptable version of the Psalms in the general book of praise.

3d, That on the acceptance of these terms by each body, the Associate Reformed congregations and ministers, being received as a Presbytery, shall become connected with the Presbyteries of Synod most convenient to them.

The following explanatory resolution was adopted:

Resolved, 4th, By the terms of the second proposition in the basis of union is meant, that Synod will secure, as soon as practicable, the insertion, in the general book of praise, of that edition of Rouse's Version now in use in the Associate Reformed Church, for the accommodation of those churches in our connection that may desire to use it. (See Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, 1869, p. 7.)

[The Committee of Publication was instructed to do this.]

[Ed. note: United with the Presbyterian Church, U. S., in 1870. See Thomas H. Spence, "Survey of Records and Minutes in the Historical Foundation," p. 37.]

7. Union with the Synod of Missouri.

1867, p. 143. Rev. A. P. Forman, delegate from the Synod of Missouri, addressed the house, assuring the Assembly of the most cordial sympathy of that venerable Synod, and bearing testimony to their sincere wishes for our prosperity. To this address the Moderator made a suitable reply.

The subject presented by the delegate from Missouri was referred to a committee, consisting of the Rev. B. M. Smith, D.D., Rev. John Jones, and J. A. Leland, to bring in a proper minute for adoption by the Assembly.

p. 149. This Assembly has heard with profound interest the communication made by the Rev. A. P. Forman on behalf of the Synod of Missouri, and desires to place on record its high appreciation of the principles and conduct of that venerable Synod as set forth by Mr. Forman.

The Assembly expresses its deep sympathy for the brethren in Missouri, both officers and members of the Church, in the great fight of affliction through which they have not yet fully passed, though it is hoped they have successfully encountered the greatest trials to which the great Head of the Church has been pleased to call them.

The Assembly feels entire confidence in the full and cordial attachment of the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Churches in Missouri, as represented in the Synod, for the principles of doctrine and church order set forth in the time-honored Standards of our Church, and is entirely persuaded that, should that Synod be prepared to form an organic union with this Church, no difficulties could arise owing to discrepancies of opinion on any fundamental or important doctrines of the Gospel, or any theories of church government which find a practical expression in our Standards.

As to the future relations of this Synod, the Assembly does not feel prepared to express any opinion, whatever it may desire. But it is due to us and to them to say, that this Assembly cordially sympathizes with the Synod of Missouri, as represented by Mr. Forman, "in expressing a longing desire for the day when throughout our land all who agree with us in the great truths of the Gospel of the grace of God," and especially who fully sympathize in our position as a truly simply spiritual body, ever testifying for the supreme and sole authority of the divine and exalted Head of the Church, shall constitute one organized Christian communion, prepared by the spiritual weapons of her warfare to contend earnestly "for the faith once delivered to the saints," and successful in "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

1871, p. 21. The General Assembly has been well pleased to receive the Christian and fraternal salutations of the Rev. R. P. Farris, D.D., the Rev. J. L. Yantis, D.D., and Mr. Edward Bredell, delegates from the Synod of Missouri (Old School), and recommends the adoption of the following resolutions:

1929, p. 83. In answer to a communication from the Commission on Church Union of the Protestant Episcopal Church, inviting the Presbyterian Church in the United States to form a Commission to sit with other Commissions appointed by other evangelical bodies looking to the organic union of all Protestant Churches, we make the following reply:

The General Assembly heartily reciprocates the desire for closer relations between all bodies of Christians, so generously presented in the communication of the Protestant Episcopal Church, holds all such expressions as important steps toward the attainment of an ideal, but deems it unwise at this time to appoint a Commission to confer with similar Commissions of other bodies looking to the organic union of all Protestant Communions.

1932, p. 58. That a letter of appreciation be sent to the Rev. George F. Dudley, Secretary of Commission on Church Unity, for the invitation to appoint a representative to meet with the Commission in June next, but expressing regret that we do not see the way clear to do so.

1950, pp. 131-134. In response to an invitation, your committee appointed Dr. Frank H. Caldwell as an "observer" at the Conference on Union held at Greenwich, Conn., Dec. 14-16, 1949. In the light of a written report on this conference, indicating, among other things, the permanent organization of this conference to continue the exploration of possible bases for the union of various Protestant bodies which recognize each other's faith and order, and the desirability that our church be represented in such a conference, your committee submits to the Assembly the following:

1. That this Permanent Committee recommend to General Assembly that it authorize the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union to appoint two fully participating representatives of General Assembly to "The Conference on Union," with the understanding that such delegates are authorized to make no commitments of General Assembly to any proposed plan of union.

1961, pp. 28, 72. [In answer to overtures regarding the "Consultation on Church Union," or "Blake-Pike proposals" the Assembly gave the following answer:]

(2) That since constitutional provisions governing the Presbyterian Church in the United States forbid its entrance into negotiations of any plan of organic union with denominations not conforming to the doctrine and order of our Presbyterian heritage, Overtures 16 and 17 be answered in the negative.

(3) That since it appears that the UPUSA Church will be involved in discussions that attempt to construct a plan of union with some denominations of different dogma and polity than belong to our understanding of and commitment to the Reformed Heritage, and since it appears that only the most limited benefits could be expected at this time from any explorations dedicated to devising a plan of union with the UPUSA Church, Overture No. 18 be answered in the negative.

(4) That since the Church is always enjoined to regard seriously all attempts by churches of the Reformed Faith to find more extensive forms of obedience to its Head, through which it can exist and perform its ministry, Overture No. 25 be answered as follows: The General Assembly, through its Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations, is to avail itself of any opportunity to be present for the purposes of observing any exploratory discussions held in quest of Evangelical Union.

1963, pp. 27, 37, 93. That observers from the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations to the Consultation on Church Union be continued as the General Assembly has authorized.

1963, pp. 93, 172. [See "Summary of cooperation and union activities, 1960-1963."]

1965, pp. 23, 81. [Communication] from the "Consultation on Church Union" inviting the Assembly to join in the drafting of a plan of union with a number of

other Churches, including the Episcopal, Methodist, United Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ and Evangelical and United Brethren: to the Standing Committee on Inter-Church Relations.

The communication and resolution concerning the Consultation on Church Union be answered by the Stated Clerk to the effect that we continue our present relationship of observer-consultant, and decline the invitation to bcome a participant member.

3. Early suggestions of union among all Presbyterian bodies in the United States declined.

1883, p. 57. Overture from the Presbytery of St. Louis, asking this Assembly to appoint a committee of conference to confer with a similar one from the Northern Church, on the propriety of re-arranging the territory of the Presbyterian Church in this country so as to form three or four Provincial Assemblies, and a General Presbyterian Council, composed of an equal number of representatives from each Provincial Assembly, this council to meet every three or four years.

Your committee recommend the following answer: This Assembly judges that the providence of God does not indicate the time to be yet ripe for such action.

1893, p. 52. A communication from the Rev. R. M. Patterson, renewing the invitation to this Assembly to co-operate in the effort to establish a "Federal Union between the Reformed Churches in the United States holding the Presbyterian System," the object of which shall be "to secure co-operation in religious work, and in the promotion of such moral and social reforms as affect the welfare of the nation," and asking for the appointment of a committee to attend a conference, the purpose of which shall be "to perfect a plan of federation to be submitted to the General Assemblies and General Synods for their consideration and action."

[Answer:] This Assembly does not desire to enter into the federal union proposed.

[Ed. note: This was from the Committee on Church Unity of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.]

1894, p. 234. [Rev. W. F. Junkin, D.D., a delegate from the Alliance of the Reformed Churches throughout the world, presented] to the Assembly the "Plan of Federation" agreed to by committees of eight different ecclesiastical bodies in the United States connected with said Alliance, and inviting this General Assembly to adopt these articles of federation.

[Answer:] This Assembly does not desire to enter into the federal union proposed.

1903, p. 496. There has been referred to the Committee of Foreign Correspondence a communication from the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, asking the General Assembly to appoint a committee of conference to meet any other similar committees which may be appointed by the various bodies belonging to the Alliances of Reformed Churches to consider the closer co-operation and organic union of all the Presbyterian Churches in the United States. We recommend that the General Assembly express its fraternal regards for this branch of the Reformed Church and its sympathy with the spirit that desires closer fellowship among Presbyterian bodies, but declines to appoint the committee asked for, because there is no evidence in sight to justify the Assembly in hoping that the object proposed may be gained in this way.

4. Council of the Reformed Churches in America holding the Presbyterian System established 1904-1906.

[Ed. note: The Council started as a dream of federal union among the Reformed Churches, but by the time of its actual establishment in 1907 it had settled down to be an agency for promoting closer relations and more effective administrative cooperation among the participating Churches. This it did ef-

fectively until merged with the Western Section of the Alliance of Reformed Churches in 1926.

Participating in its organization were the United Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Church in the U. S., the Reformed Church in America, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.

For the origin and work of this Council see 1904, pp. 12, 15, 31; 1905, pp. 13, 45, 57, 107; 1906, pp. 12, 16, 45, 62; 1907, pp. 12, 28, 43, 45, 58; annual reports of Standing Committee on the Council 1908-1925; 1926, pp. 79, 136; 1927, p. 42.]

5. Later suggestions of union among all Presbyterian bodies in the United States declined. 1913-1916.

1913, p. 35. The Committee to which were referred the overtures form the Presbyteries of Dallas, Central Texas, Nashville, and Upper Missouri, asking that an Ad Interim committee be appointed by this Assembly, and that the Assemblies of other Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System in this country be requested to appoint similar committees, which shall confer on the feasibility of a plan for closer relations betwen these Churches, would recommend the following answer:

In view of negotiations now pending between this Assembly and that of the United Presbyterian Church touching organic union of the two bodies, this Assembly deems this an inopportune time to raise the question of closer relations with other bodies.

1914, p. 35. Your Select Committee on Closer Relations of Churches holding the Presbyterian System has had referred to it various papers, which, classified, present two subjects for our action, viz.: the specific one of the proposed union of the Presbyterian Church in the United States with the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and the more general one of closer relations, upon some basis, of Churches holding the Presbyterian system.

We beg to report:

In the matter of closer relations of Churches holding the Presbyterian System.—There have been referred to us certain papers containing proposals from the Presbyterian Church United States of America to the Presbyterian Church United States, of May, 1913, and referred to this Assembly; also Overture from Knoxville Presbytery, asking the erection of four provincial Assemblies instead of other plans of Federal Union; from the Presbytery of Asheville, asking the appointment of an Ad-Interim Committee, to which shall be referred a proposition for a Federal Congress of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System; from the Presbytery of Paducah, asking for a committee of conference with other such committees, to consider the matter of Closer Relations with the Presbyterian Church in the United States; and, finally, the overture from the Council of the Reformed Churches in America holding the Presbyterian System, contained in its annual report, asking that matters looking to closer relations and co-operative action be referred to said Council.

It is the judgment of this Committee that,

Whereas, the desire for some sort of closer relations, or at least of co-operation, seems to be *general*; and,

Whereas, in the Council of the Reformed Churches in America holding the Presbyterian System we have an already existing body having substantially these objects and aims and peculiarly fitted to the task in its personnel, by reason of its opportunity for consideration and its thorough information upon the subjects involved,

We recommend:

1. That the overture from the Council of the Reformed Churches in America holding the Presbyterian System be answered in the affirmative, which overture is as follows:

"Whereas, Article 5 of the said Articles of Agreement reads:

"5. The Council shall promote the co-operation of the constituent Churches in their Foreign Missionary work, and also in their general work in the United States of America, in connection with Home Missions, Work Among the Colored People, Church Erection, Sabbath Schools, Publication and Education. The Council may also advise and recommend in other matters pertaining to the general welfare of the Kingdom of Christ;" therefore, be it

Resolved, 1. That the Council hereby overtures the Supreme Judicatories of the constituent Churches that they authorize and direct the Council:

a. To give careful and full attention to the whole subject of closer relations and more effective administrative co-operation between the several Presbyterian and Reformed Churches represented in the Council, with particular reference to the formulation of an effective federation of their plans, work and executive or administrative agencies, both in the home and foreign fields.

b. That the Council shall report its conclusions to the Supreme Judicatories at their regular meetings in 1916.

Resolved, 2. That when as many as four of the Supreme Judicatories shall approve the above overture, the Executive Committee of the Council shall appoint a committee of members of the Council, not exceeding eleven in number, which committee shall undertake the duties provided for in the overture, shall confer with the boards and agencies interested in co-operative work, and shall report to the Council at its next meeting, either special or regular.

2. That all matters looking to Closer Relations with Reformed Churches in America holding the Presbyterian System be referred by this Assembly to its constituent representation in said Council for its information and guidance, and by this Constituency to the Council for its mature deliberation.

3. That this action of the Assembly be construed as answer to all overtures and documents upon this subject presented for our consideration.

1916, p. 72. In answer to Overture from the Synod of Arkansas, asking that the Presbyterian Church, U. S., take steps toward the union of all the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States:

We recommend that the Assembly answer that, while the Assembly is responsive to the spirit of the overture from the Synod of Arkansas, it does not deem the time opportune to take such steps.

6. Activity of our Church for Federal Union of all Presbyterian bodies in the period 1917-1923.

[Ed. note: This was the outgrowth of negotiations with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. See this Digest, Union—Pres. Ch., U. S. A.]

7. Activity of our Church for Federal Union of all Presbyterian bodies in the period of 1929-1936.

[Ed. note: The initiative in these actions arose within our own Church. The idea of organic union was specifically negatived.]

1929, p. 83. [Overtures from the Presbyteries of Florida, Nashville and Transylvania, concerning organic union with other Presbyterian bodies. Answer:] We recommend that the Moderator of this Assembly appoint a committee of nine, of which the Moderator shall be one and chairman, to confer with and take active steps toward organic union with all Presbyterian bodies in the United States.

1930, p. 57. Without in any sense committing our Assembly to organic union, but being unwilling to close the door to further discussion of this important question, we direct to Moderator to appoint a committee consisting of one member from

each Synod, with the Moderator as chairman in addition, in order that it may continue conferences with representatives of the Churches holding the Presbyterian and Reformed system with the view of placing before the Assembly of 1931 any information they may secure or plans evolved concerning union with such churches.

That the foregoing be considered as sufficient reply at this time to the various overtures touching organic union with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Reformed Church in America, and the Reformed Church in the United States.

[Of these overtures: 5 approved the larger union; 11 were in caution or opposition; and 5 by way of limitation and safeguard.]

1931, p. 68. The majority report adopted:

Your Committee believes that after the continuous and unsuccessful efforts for many years of the best and most consecrated minds of our Church to agree, either among themselves, or with representatives of other Presbyterian and Reformed bodies upon a satisfactory plan, or basis, for organic union with any of such Presbyterian or Reformed bodies, the continuance of negotiations to that end would be detrimental to the peace, unity and usefulness of the Church.

We therefore recommend:

1. That negotiations and conferences looking to organic union cease.

2. That the Ad Interim Committee be continued with direction to draft, either jointly with all, or any other Presbyterian or Reformed bodies, or alone, a definite, complete and detailed plan for a Federal Union of our Church with any or all Presbyterian or Reformed bodies and present the same to the next General Assembly for its consideration.

3. The committee, in its deliberations, place emphasis upon the historic interpretations of our faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of mankind, rather than the mechanics of church government and operation; that in the meantime our Church concern itself mightily in the prayerful, Christian stewardship of its possessions, time, talents and opportunities.

1932, p. 47. Report of the Select Committee on Church Union: [Overtures from 8 Presbyteries touching union with other bodies were considered and answered by the following action.]

1. We recommend the adoption of the comprehensive and detailed plan for a Federal Union of our Church with any or all Presbyterian or Reformed Churches as presented by the Ad Interim Committee appointed by the General Assembly of 1931.

2. We recommend that this Ad Interim Committee be continued . . .

3. While the primary purpose of this Ad Interim Committee shall be to effect the organization of the United Assembly proposed in the plan of union of the report submitted to our General Assembly, yet this Committee shall have authority to receive, consider and report on proposals from Presbyterian or Reformed Churches looking toward well recognized forms of church union, and if important proposals are made, to confer with those making them, and to report the results to a subsequent General Assembly.

p. 137. [From the Ad Interim Committee on Union with all Other Presbyterian Bodies in the United States:] 1. Your Committee has corresponded with like committees of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Reformed Church of America, and the Reformed Church in the United States, advising them of the action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. inviting them to unite with us in drafting a Plan for Federal Union. The answers of these churches stated that they are not willing at this time to enter into any negotiations having as their end the accomplishment of a federation of

churches or Federal Union. Therefore, it has not been practicable to formulate with any one or more of them any plan for a Federal Union.

2. Therefore, in accord with the Assembly's instructions, your Committee has prepared alone a plan of Federal Union.

3. Your Committee thinks that if the Assembly approves of this Plan of Federal Union, it will be well for the Assembly to state clearly and distinctly, that the Plan is designed to express our Church's desire for unity of spirit, and its recognition of kinship in faith and order, and its possession of a common purpose, through united effort, to promote the work of Christ in the world, and by this closer relation to secure a more effective administrative co-operation among the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches.

4. Your Committee believes that under this Plan of Union there might be established Regional Assemblies, in which the autonomy of the several Churches could be preserved, the homogeneity of the geographical divisions of our country be respected, and the spirit of a court of the Lord Jesus Christ be maintained, with opportunity for deliberation offered and the unwieldy nature of a large national Assembly avoided.

Proposed Plan for Federal Union [adopted, 1932, p. 47.]

1933, pp. 27, 91. The Ad Interim Committee on Union with all other Presbyterian Bodies in the United States begs to report to the General Assembly that no communication has been placed in its hands calling for action. This report is made in accord with the Action of the Assembly of 1932, Recommendation 3, Page 47 of the Minutes, which action limits the province of the Committee to the consideration of overtures from other bodies.

[Ed. note: This committee reported similarly: 1934, pp. 25, 102; 1935, p. 106; 1936, p. 54 ff. Out of its 1937, pp. 39, 122 report came the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union. See immediately below.]

8. Union with all other bodies in the period 1937-1962.

[Ed. note: 1937 saw the establishment of a Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union with instructions "to explore the possibilities of cooperation or union with other Presbyterian bodies." Subsequently the activities of that Committee concerned themselves exclusively with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. until that effort failed in 1955.]

9. 1962 et seq.

1962, pp. 28, 73. It is recommended that Overture 15 requesting that our General Assembly seize the initiative in seeking organizational and operational unity of the great Reformed family in North America, be referred to our representatives to the World Alliance of the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches, North American Area, for consideration and recommendation to the 1963 General Assembly through the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations.

1963, pp. 93, 176. [Reported action by North American Area of World Alliance of Reformed Churches.]

1963, p. 93. That the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations continue conversations with the corresponding bodies of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and other Presbyterian and Reformed communions toward reaching an understanding of the similarities and differences of the several churches in order that the Presbyterian Church U.S. may better equip itself for negotiations toward union with any or all churches committed to the Reformed Faith.

That the 103rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. declares its conviction that ultimately the Presbyterian and Reformed communions in the United

States should present a united life and witness according to the Reformed faith and Presbyterian order.

1963, pp. 93, 172. (Summary of cooperation and union activities, 1960-1963.)

Questions of Cooperation or Union With Other Churches

Communications to the Committee during the year and overtures from various presbyteries coming before the Assembly indicate some misunderstanding of the function and responsibility of the General Assembly's Permanent Committee, and the Committee believes it imperative that, before the General Assembly makes further decisions in the entire field of inter-church relations, it should review the total area, with full knowledge of the areas of discussion and possibilities of cooperation or of union with other churches that have been before the General Assembly and its Permanent Committee since 1960.

Five distinct areas of discussion and concern involving possibilities of cooperation or of union, which are in many respects inter-related, have been considered in the past three years; and they are:

A. The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
B. The "Consultation on Church Union" growing out of what has been popularly known as the "Blake-Pike" proposal.
C. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church.
D. The Reformed Church in America.
E. The "Reformed" communions generally in North America.

A. *Questions of Cooperation or Union with the UPUSA Church.*

1960 Minutes Page 77 The Assembly instructed its Committee on Inter-Church Relations to enter into conferences with the corresponding body in the UPUSA Church "as to ways in which present tensions, where they exist, may be eased, where cooperation may be extended and made more fruitful . . ."

Two overtures regarding union with the UPUSA Church were answered in the negative.

Minutes Page 78 A communication from the UPUSA Church expressing the "hope of closer fellowship was 'received as information' " and response was ordered to be made by the Moderator.

1961 Minutes Page 106 The Committee reported to the General Assembly that it was in correspondence with the UPUSA Church's Commission on Ecumenical Relations and that arrangements had been made for conferences between representatives of the two bodies.

One overture seeking union with the UPUSA Church was answered in the negative ". . . since it appears that the UPUSA Church will be involved in discussions that attempt to construct a plan of union with some denominations of different dogma and polity than belong to our understanding of and commitment to the Reformed Heritage, and since it appears that only the most limited benefits could be expected at this time from any explorations dedicated to devising a plan of union with the UPUSA Church . . ."

1962 Minutes Page 117 The Committee reported in 1962 that a conference had been held between representatives of the Committee and the Moderator, Stated Clerk and Chairman of the Department of Relations of the UPUSA Church. This conference resulted in recommendations that the two Assemblies later adopted concerning renegotiation of an agreement between the two churches relative to the exchange of church property. The conference was also beneficial as the representatives of each church were acquainted with denominational procedures and policies of the other in the field of inter-

church relations, and further conferences between the two groups were anticipated.

Minutes Page 73 Three overtures concerning problems of relations between lower courts of our Church and the courts of the UPUSA Church were answered by the General Assembly by instructing the Committee to discuss these problems with the Division of Ecumenical Relations in order that greater mutual understanding and coordination might be effected.

Minutes Page 121 The General Assembly affirmed a pattern of proper procedure to be followed in our relationship between the lower courts of the two churches. This was transmitted to the UPUSA General Assembly which in 1962 expressed a positive response to the action of the US General Assembly by referring such matters to its Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations for consultation with appropriate boards and judicatories of the UPUSA Church and consultation with the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations of the US Church.

Minutes Page 73 Two overtures seeking union with the UPUSA Church were answered in the negative. The General Assembly repeated its view expressed by the 1960 General Assembly set out hereinabove.

Minutes Page 73 A communication from the General Assembly of the UPUSA Church inviting our Church again to discuss union was answered in the negative.

Oct. 25-26 In order to implement the instructions of the two General Assemblies relative to instructions concerning relations between the lower courts of the two churches, a conference was held between representatives of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations and the Division of Relations of the UPUSA Church. Representatives of the Committee proposed a general discussion of ways and means to implement the action of the two Assemblies. While professing a willingness to respond fully to the initiative taken by the Presbyterian Church, U.S., representatives of the Division of Relations candidly expressed deep concern and the view that further joint conferences between the Permanent Committee and the Division should await clarification on the part of the two groups as to any possible negative effect upon such future conferences as might be caused by the omission of the UPUSA Church from formal conversations presently in progress between the Presbyterian Church, U.S., and the Reformed Church in America. Representatives of the Division expressed on behalf of the UPUSA Church a great desire to have the UPUSA Church included in any discussions or explorations concerning the strengthening of the Reformed and Presbyterian witness in North America. The UPUSA representatives announced their intention of sharing their desire to be included in the Reformed-U.S. talks with appropriate representatives of the Reformed Church in America. Representatives of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations urged that conferences between the Permanent Committee and the Division should proceed under the mandate of the two Assemblies without regard to independent conversations being carried on by a special ad interim committee of the U.S. Church and representatives of the Reformed Church in America. The representatives of the Committee and the Division of Relations did agree that because of the special and unique closeness of the relationship betwen the two churches, rising out of our common history and our long record of cooperative enterprise and the wide range presently existing of common work and witness, that the two churches must continue together this common work and its representatives continue to explore diligently new possibilities of cooperation.

It was agreed, therefore, that the representatives present at the meeting would recommend to the full Committee and the entire Division of Relations that a comprehensive list be prepared of the actual cooperative work now going on at all levels, both at home and abroad, between the two churches. It was agreed that such a list, when completed, should be reported to both General Assemblies and plans were made to implement this action, with the hope that it might be accomplished in time for the 1963 reports to the General Assemblies. Both the Division of Relations and the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations have been engaged in preparing such a comprehensive list, and considerable progress has been made. The Committee has determined that the scope and extent of our cooperation with the UPUSA Church is so extensive that it is impossible to report accurately to the 1963 Assembly, and the Committee will continue its activities in cooperation with the Division of Relations in the hope that a joint and comprehensive list of cooperative endeavor may be prepared in time for the 1963 UPUSA General Assembly and for presentation to the US General Assembly in 1964, with the recommendation that the comprehensive list of cooperative endeavor be presented in such form that its widest distribution among the members of the two communions will positively demonstrate the compelling need for our continued common work and cooperative enterprise in existing fields and larger and greater possibilities of cooperation and common witness in the future.

Summary of UPUSA Relations on Cooperation and Union

The Assemblies of 1960, 1961 and 1962, having been asked by six overtures from various presbyteries, and invited directly by the General Assembly of the UPUSA Church to undertake discussions leading toward organic union, have answered in the negative each time. The reasons assigned by the Assemblies of 1961 and 1962 were: "... it appears that only the most limited benefits could be expected at this time from any exploration dedicated to devising a plan of union with the UPUSA Church."

At the same time the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. has consistently and diligently sought to improve communications with the UPUSA Church through conferences with the proper representative body of that Church (The Department of Relations of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations). These conferences have not thus far proved very rewarding; at first because of differences in structures and authorities between the responsible groups of the two churches, and more recently because of the concern of the UPUSA consultants that the UPUSA Church was not included in the discussions now under way between our Assembly and the Reformed Church in America.

The Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations hopes and believes that continued conferences with the Division of Relations and particularly the joint project of listing in detail for the people of our communion the very extensive areas of present cooperation will lead the two groups and the two Assemblies to an increasing awareness of the necessity for continued exploration and consultation and concern for our common co-operative endeavors.

B. *The "Consultation on Church Union."*

This is the formal title of meetings among representatives of the UPUSA Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ and other bodies growing out of a sermon delivered December, 1960 by the Rev. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of the UPUSA General Assembly, from the pulpit of Bishop Pike of the Episcopal Church, and concerned with the possibilities of a church both "reformed and catholic". Representatives of these churches met formally in April, 1962 in Washington, D. C. and at Oberlin College in March, 1963.

1961

The Committee discussed the possibilities of our Church being invited to send observers and to participate in such a consultation, and recommended to the 1961 General Assembly that our Church avail itself of any opportunity to be present for the purposes of observing any exploratory discussions held in quest of Evangelical Union.

Minutes Page 72

The Assembly had three overtures asking full participation in the negotiation and consultation and answered all in the negative. One overture asked the Assembly to send observers to such consultation and the Assembly instructed its Committee on Inter-Church Relations to send observers to the Consultation on Union when invited.

1962 Minutes Page 73

The Assembly received an invitation from the General Assembly of the UPUSA Church to participate in the consultation as parties to the negotiation, and the Assembly received one overture to the same effect. The invitation and the overture were simply answered in the negative.

1963 Jan. 7

Formal invitation from the Consultation having come by correspondence requesting the presence of "observer-consultants" at the March, 1963 meeting of the "Consultation on Union", the Committee, pursuant to the instruction of the 1961 Assembly, appointed two of its members to attend as observers. Their report will be made to the next meeting of the Committee and transmitted to the General Assembly, but obviously cannot be included in this printed report to the General Assembly.

C. *The Cumberland Presbyterian Church.*

1962 Minutes Page 117

Discussion of cooperation with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was reported to the 1962 General Assembly by the Committee on Inter-Church Relations. Efforts have been made by the Committee to place our boards in touch with the agencies of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to offer cooperation where desired. The Committee understood this to be the maximum action indicated by its informal discussion with representatives from the Cumberland Church.

1963

The Committee has very recently been advised of the creation by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of a Committee on Inter-Church Relations. The chairmen of the two committees on Inter-Church Relations of the two churches have been in correspondence and plans are being made for a meeting of the two groups later in the calendar year 1963.

A popular meeting will be held at the First Presbyterian Church in Nashville, in March, 1963, at which the Moderators of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the United Presbyterian Church, USA, the Reformed Church in America and the Presbyterian Church, US, will appear and address the group.

D. *The Reformed Church in America.*

1961

The General Synod of the Reformed Church in America instructed its Executive Committee to hold conversations with the UPUSA Church and the Presbyterian Church, US, and to report in 1962 the results of their conversations. (See Minutes, General Synod, page 142).

1962 The Executive Committee of the Reformed Church in America invited representatives from our Committee on Inter-Church Relations to meet with their representatives, and a meeting was held in January, 1962, which led to an April, 1962 meeting between the full Executive Committee of the Reformed Church and the Committee of our Church.

Minutes Page 71 From the foregoing meetings came the "Joint Statement" adopted both by our Assembly and by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in their meetings of 1962. The General Assembly and the General Synod created a "Joint Committee" for the specific and limited purposes set forth in the "Joint Statement".

Minutes Page 89 This "Joint Committee" is made up, from our side, of twelve members appointed by the Moderator. These members constitute an ad interim committee of the General Assembly, reporting directly to the General Assembly of 1963, and have no responsibility to the Committee on Inter-Church Relations. Two members of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations are members of this ad interim committee, and this fact enables the Committee to keep advised of the progress in this area of inter-church relations.

E. *The "Reformed" Communions Generally in North America.*

1962 Minutes Page 73 An overture to the 1962 General Assembly asked that our Church consider "seizing initiative" toward general "organizational and operational unity" among the Reformed bodies in North America. The Assembly referred this matter to its representatives to the North American Area Council of the World Alliance of the Reformed Churches.

1963 At a January, 1963 meeting, our representatives to the North American Area Council discussed the matter fully and made the report which is found as an appendix to this report to the 1963 Assembly.

It appears North American Area Council, in 1963, has created a new committee responsible for concerns similar to that expressed in the overture mentioned above. Reports from the North American Area Council will doubtless reflect action in this area. Liaison is maintained between the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations and our representatives to the North American Area Council by members of the Committee who also serve as our representatives to the North American Area Council.

The public meeting in Nashville in March, 1963, referred to above in connection with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, reflects an activity where a number of churches of the Reformed tradition can together express their cooperative witness.

SUMMARY

The General Assembly has clearly assigned to its Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations the responsibility of conferring with corresponding bodies in the UPUSA and other Presbyterian churches as to ways in which tensions, where they exist, may be eased, where cooperation may be extended and made more fruitful, and to arrange, where advisable, for meetings of representatives of our boards and agencies for further exploration of ways and means of a greater united effort. (See action 1960 Assembly, Minutes, page 77).

This Committee has an overall responsibility on behalf of the Church to maintain firm relations with all churches holding Biblically founded beliefs, and especially with those churches with whom we share common roots in history.

While attempting to carry out these assigned duties, the Committee would call attention to the very wise provision made by the General Assembly in 1962: "In instances in which discussions relative to full and organic union are to be undertaken, the General Assembly shall appoint an ad hoc committee to carry on negotiations . . ." (Minutes 1962, page 121).

All of the five areas outlined in this report have come within the general interests which are the responsibility of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations. The Committee is deeply concerned at the indications of basic misunderstanding of these matters in certain quarters of the Church. These areas are all interrelated, and an understanding of the activities in each area is necessary to an understanding of the others. Only an informed Assembly can wisely determine our course as a Church.

Therefore: The Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations submits this statement of background information.

[Ed. note: For subsequent years see Minutes, Report of Permanent Committee.]

D. UNION—PARTICULAR ATTEMPTED.

(1) The Associate Reformed Synod of the South.

(2) The Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

(3) The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

(4) The General Synod of the Reformed Church in America (Dutch Reformed).

(5) The Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah, Ga.

(6) The United Presbyterian Church.

(7) The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

(1) THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF THE SOUTH.

1. In the Period 1861-1866.

1861, pp. 7, 10. Rev. Henry Quigg, delegate from the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, bore the fraternal greetings of that body of Christians.

p. 9. A paper introduced by Judge Swayne, on the subject of a union between the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America and other churches of like faith and order, was referred to a special committee, consisting of one minister and one elder from each Synod in connection with this Assembly.

p. 36. [The report of this committee, offering amity and union, after being amended, was cordially and unanimously adopted.]

The Stated Clerk is directed to forward a copy of this paper to the Stated Clerk of each Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Church at an early day.

1863, p. 141. [Overture for union reaffirmed.]

[Ed. note: After some further correspondence (1864, pp. 260, 280) the negotiations for organic union were terminated by the Associate Reformed Synod. The Assembly then adopted the following:]

1866, p. 30. The Assembly, laying aside ecclesiastical etiquette, would affectionately say to their brethren of the Associate Reformed Synod that they may pull the latch-string of our dwelling whenever they may choose, and may be incorporated with us upon the simple adoption of our Standards wherever they may happen to differ from their own.

2. In the period 1894-1899.

1894, p. 196. The Synod of North Carolina asks the Assembly to appoint a committee with instructions to present to the Associate Reformed Synod of the South our desire for closer relations with said church.

The committee finds, on consulting Alexander's *Digest*, pp. 406-408, that this Assembly in 1861 did make said Synod an "offer of union and amity," which resulted in negotiations between the two bodies, looking to organic union. It finds, further, that the Associate Reformed Synod did in 1865 terminate the negotiations on this subject.

Your committee recommends for the adoption of the Assembly the following action:

This Assembly reaffirms its cordial desire for closer relations with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and hereby expresses its readiness to renew negotiations on this subject in any form agreeable to the Synod of said church.

1898, p. 239. The report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence on the overture relating to union with the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, was taken from the docket and adopted, and is as follows:

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence, to which was referred the overture from Columbia Presbytery proposing organic union with the Associate Reformed Church, report recommending that the petition of the overture, asking for the appointment of a committee to confer with the Associate Reformed Church, be granted.

We recommend that the Rev. F. B. Webb, D.D., Rev. M. S. Kennedy, Rev. Alexander Sprunt, and Hon. J. W. Lapsley be appointed, and that they be directed to confer with the Associate Reformed Church, proposing organic union with that church, and asking for the appointment of a committee on their part to confer with our committee. If the Associate Reformed Church agrees, our committee is authorized to arrange details for a union, and report to the next General Assembly.

Our committee is directed to express to the Associate Reformed Church our most cordial, fraternal regard, and to assure them of our readiness for a union with them.

1899, p. 403. The Committee made the following report, and was discharged: Your committee beg leave to report that, in accordance with the direction of the Assembly, they appointed one of the committee, viz., Rev. Alexander Sprunt, to visit the Associate Synod, in session at Chester, S. C., October last, and bearing the greetings of our Assembly, to make known the desire of our church, and request the appointment of a committee of conference on the subject.

Dr. Sprunt visited the Synod, and ably presented the matter to said body. In response the "Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod of the South" passed the following resolutions, respectfully declining to appoint the committee asked for by our Assembly; the resolutions are as follows:

In reference to the proposed organic union between the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, and the Presbyterian Church of the United States, commonly known as the Southern Presbyterian Church, which cause was presented by Dr. Alexander Sprunt, of Rock Hill, S. C., the representative of that church, it was

"*Resolved*, 1. That this Synod desires to express in the warmest terms its esteem and affection for this noble church of Christ, because of its fidelity to the truth of God, because, also, of the great work it is doing for the Master, and, further, because 'we have so many things in common.'

"*Resolved*, 2. That we regard union with this honored body most desirable provided our historic testimony in favor of an exclusive use of an inspired psalmody for the united church might be maintained.

"*Resolved*, 3. Inasmuch, however, as such testimony is, in our judgment, a barrier to organic union, we regard it unwise to prosecute negotiations to that end."

Your committee, having discharged the duty assigned to them, respectfully ask to be discharged.

3. In the period of 1905-1911.

1905, p. 40. [Answering an overture from the Presbytery of Suwanee: We express our most cordial regard for the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, and our readiness at any time to consider overtures from this honored body looking towards closer relations with our Church, but in view of the recent action of this Assembly appointing a committee to present the willingness of this Assembly to confer with the Associate Reformed Synod of the South on this subject, and the action of the Associate Synod of the South responding, the Assembly does not deem it expedient to appoint a second committee on this subject at this time.

1909, p. 63. In answer to the overture from the Presbytery of South Carolina, that we take steps looking to organic union with the A. R. P. Church, the Assembly would say that our Assembly has already expressed itself in favor of such a union and expressed its willingness to print their psalms in our Psalms and Hymns and it does not see that there are any further steps to take at present. However, the General Assembly reiterates its willingness for such a union whenever the A. R. P. Church shall favor the same.

1910, p. 30. [Answer to an overture from certain individuals:]

1. That the Rev. R. C. Reed, D.D., be appointed a fraternal delegate to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod of the South, and Rev. S. L. Morris, D.D., be appointed alternate. Our delegate is instructed to convey the Synod assurances of our fraternal and cordial Christian affection, and to invite the Synod to appoint a committee of conference with reference to closer relations.

2. That in the event the Synod appoints such a committee, this Assembly hereby gives Drs. R. C. Reed and S. L. Morris authority to act as a committee from this Assembly, and if they think necessary, to appoint three other members of our Assembly to act with them.

1911, p. 44. [Our delegate reported that] the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod of the South declined by a vote of 24-36 to entertain a proposal of "closer relations" with our Assembly. [A letter expressing our affection for them was sent.]

4. In the period 1919-1922. Comity established.

1919, p. 54. [Reappointment of committee of two] to meet any committee the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of the South may appoint to consider closer relations.

1920, p. 37. [Ad-Interim Committee on Conference with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod reported progress and was continued.]

1921, p. 23. [Committee report received as information, and committee continued.]

p. 35. There was placed in our hands a communication from Dr. R. C. Reed, Chairman of our Committee on Comity with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, reporting progress, and announcing that the Synod of that Church had appointed a Committee on Comity to confer with our Committee, and also a fraternal delegate to our Assembly.

We recommend that our Committee on Comity be continued and that the diligence of the Committee in the discharge of its duty be commended. The Committee is composed of Dr. R. C. Reed and Dr. S. L. Morris.

We recommend that before the report of the Committee is entered on our minutes, certain phrases in it that might be offensive to the Associate Reformed Church be eliminated.

1922, p. 26. The report of the Ad-Interim Committee on Comity with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church was adopted. Rev. R. C. Reed and Rev. S. L. Morris, D.D., were re-elected to represent this Assembly in the matter of comity with the A. R. P. Church.

p. 192. Your Committee begs leave to report that it has been slow, of necessity, in discharging the duty committed to it. Having been appointed immediately after the Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church had held its annual meeting, the Committee could do nothing till the next annual meeting of this Synod. In response to the Committee's request, this next annual meeting of the Synod appointed a Committee, consisting of Drs. D. G. Phillips and J. L. Oates.

The two committees held a joint meeting in Columbia, S. C., on the 26th of March, last. They spent several hours in delightful fellowship, and had no difficulty in seeing eye to eye, touching all matters of common interest to the two Churches. The more one mingles with the brethren of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and the more intimately acquainted he becomes with them, the more he wishes that the two Churches might be no longer twain, but one, and the more difficult it is for him to see any sufficient reason why they should not be. The temptation was strong to seek enlightenment on this subject during the session of the Committees, but it was clearly understood that the Synod did not commission its Committee to impart such information.

The following rules were adopted by the Committees, and are hereby submitted for the consideration of your venerable body. They will likewise be submitted to the Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church at its approaching meeting:

1. When presbyteries belonging to the two Churches overlap, they will endeavor through Committees of Comity, before beginning new work, to divide the territory in such way as to prevent the efforts of one Church from interfering with the work of the other.

2. When there are weak churches belonging to one Church, unable of themselves to support a minister, but capable of being grouped with like weak churches belonging to the other Church, so as to form one pastoral charge, the presbyteries having jurisdiction are advised to encourage such churches to be grouped under a minister from either body, to whom the respective presbyteries are willing to give them in charge, leaving the relation of these churches to their presbyteries undisturbed.

3. In towns of less than 5,000 inhabitants, where either Church is already at work, the other will not enter without conference and agreement with the Church already at work.

4. In a community where either of the Churches has a church and the community is not capable of supporting more than one Presbyterian church, the people of the community should be encouraged to connect themselves with the existing church, it being understood that a fair exchange will be encouraged in other communities.

5. The Supreme Judicatories will recommend to their church members that when members of one Church move into a community where there is no church of their own, they join, for the time being, the church of the other, if there be one in reach.

6. The Supreme Judicatories will each appoint a permanent Committee on Comity, to which all matters covered by the foregoing rules may be referred for settlement.

5. In the period 1926-1934.

1926, p. 37. [An Ad-Interim Committee appointed] to confer with a similar committee of the Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (should such a committee be appointed) in regard to closer relation between that Church and the Presbyterian Church U. S., [A request made] of the Synod of the Associate Reformed Church to appoint a Conference Committee.

1927, p. 131. The Committee has not been advised as yet by the Synod of the Associate Reformed Church as to whether they have appointed a committee to consider the question of closer relations with us.

1928, p. 152. The official organ "The A. R. Presbyterian" published a statement that this body declined the invitation, though the Synod made no direct response.

1929, p. 42. [Fraternal delegate from the Associate Reformed Synod reported their appointment of a Committee on Closer Relations with the Presbyterian Church, U. S.]

1930, pp. 57, 129. [Ad-Interim Committee on Closer Relations continued.] At the meeting of the A. R. P. Synod in Memphis, it appointed a Committee on Closer Relations with our Church. . . . The joint Committee met in Charlotte, Feb. 25. . . . The brethren of the A. R. P. Church expressed themselves almost unanimously in favor of union whenever hindering obstacles were removed and Divine Providence indicated that the way was clear.

1931, pp. 32, 129. The Committee of the Associate Reformed Church decided that they could not take part in the larger movement now pending between five Presbyterian and Reformed Churches; and for that reason could not consider union with our Church. [Our Committee was continued to deal with matters of comity with the A. R. P. Church.]

1933, pp. 27, 90. [From report of Ad-Interim Committee:] The following resolution was unanimously adopted as the expression of the thought of the Joint Committee: "The Joint Committee on Comity and Closer Relations believe that Organic Union is a goal which, if attained, will help the two Denominations to advance the Kingdom of God; but we do not believe that it should be pressed so rapidly as to cause division or unfraternal feelings."

1934, p. 61. [Action of the Associate Reformed Church,] deciding for the present that the interests of the Kingdom will be best promoted by continuing a Committee on Cooperation and Comity. [The Assembly appointed a committee on Comity.]

6. In the period from 1936 ff.

1936, p. 53. No report or statement has been received from the Permanent Committee on Comity with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. We recommend that this Committee as now constituted be continued.

1937, p. 29. [No report from the Committee.]

1938, p. 55. [No report from the Committee.]

1939, p. 7. [Committee still in existence. No report.]

1940, p. 7. [Committee still in existence. No report.]

1941, p. 7. [Committee still in existence. No report.]

1942, p. 7. [Committee still in existence. No report.]

1943, p. 61. [Cooperation and union with the A.R.P. Church referred to the Committee on Cooperation and Union.]

1944, p. 79. [Committee on Cooperation and Union instructed to give special consideration to union with this Church.]

1950, p. 62. The Assembly addressed the following telegram to the A. R. P. Church: We are much encouraged by your telegram and the prospects which it promises. Our Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union will be more than pleased to meet with your committee at the earliest possible mutually convenient time. Please convey our warmest greetings to all our brethren of the General Synod.

1951, p. 63. That this Assembly take no action on the proposed plan of union with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in view of the fact that the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church has voted against the plan; at the same time we express our continued confidence in and Christian love towards the brethren of this church.

(2) THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

1. In 1861-1867.

1861, pp. 13, 25. [In an effort] to draw closer the bonds of Christian intercourse and communion between all churches of like faith and order in the Confederate States of America [the Assembly appointed a delegate to the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church] with full power and authority to arrange and adopt articles of permanent intercourse and correspondence, which, however, shall be submitted to the Assembly for its ratification or rejection.

1862, p. 14. New delegate appointed.

1863, p. 141. Similar action.

1864, pp. 270, 281. Delegate reported and he was reappointed.

1866, p. 15. Rev. Charles A. Davis, D.D., delegate from the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, addressed the Assembly, presenting the cordial salutations of that body, and intimating his belief that an extensive and growing desire for a closer union between the two bodies prevailed.

The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the subject of Christian union, brought before this Assembly by the Rev. Dr. Davis in his address, be referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, with instructions to report a suitable minute; and that the Rev. Drs. B. M. Palmer and J. M. P. Atkinson, and Ruling Elder George J. S. Walker, be added to the committee.

p. 30. The Assembly has received with the liveliest satisfaction, and reciprocates with the utmost cordiality, the Christian greetings of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, through its representative, Rev. C. A. Davis, D.D. If nothing more were gained by this fraternal correspondence than the expression before the world of the spiritual unity and fellowship of the Lord's people, amidst seeming diversity and separation, the Assembly would, for this reason alone, desire its continuance. But especially is this interchange to be perpetuated in the hope that it may tend, at no distant day, to a closer union. This corresponding delegate has unofficially expressed his conviction that many, in their respective communions, are ready for this consummation. And this declaration is made in the face of the fact that no overtures for such union have as yet originated in the Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

. . . To our brethren of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church we would respectfully suggest whether the time has not come to consider the great importance to the kingdom of our common Master of their union with us, by their adoption of the time-honored Standards to which we adhere.

p. 31. That a committee of five be appointed by this Assembly to confer with any similar committee on the part of the Cumberland Presbyterian Assembly, to ascertain how far the way is prepared for an organic union between the two bodies upon the basis of the Westminster Standards.

1867, p. 135. The committee to which was referred the report of the Committee of conference with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, report, for adoption by the Assembly, the following minute:

The Assembly hereby records its devout acknowledgment to the great Head of the Church for the manifest tokens of His presence with the committees of conference during their deliberations, as evinced by the spirit of Christian candor, forbearance and love displayed by both parties in their entire proceedings.

The Assembly regards the object for which that committee was appointed as one fully worthy of the earnest endeavors and continued prayers of God's people in both branches of the Church represented in the committee; but at the same time it is compelled, in view of the terms for effecting any organic union suggested by the committee of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, to declare that, regarding the present period as one very unfavorable for making changes in our Standards of faith and practice, it is more especially so for effecting changes so materially modifying the system of doctrine which has for centuries been the distinguishing peculiarity and the eminent glory of the Presbyterian churches, both of Europe and the United States.

Resolved, That the entire documents submitted to the Assembly by the committee be printed in the Appendix to the Minutes of the Assembly [p. 172.]

2. In 1903.

1903, p. 485. The Committee on Foreign Correspondence reported recommending the following answer to the communication from the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church:

The General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church has unanimously adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That a committee of nine on Presbyterian fraternity and union be appointed by this Assembly to confer with such like committees as may be appointed by other Presbyterian bodies in regard to the desirability and practicability of close affiliation and organic union among the members of the Presbyterian family in the United States, and if, in any particular case after conference and investigation, union shall seem to be desirable and practicable, to suggest suitable measures for its accomplishment and to report such basis of union as may be mutually agreed upon to the next General Assembly.

We recommend the following reply: While sympathizing with the spirit of your telegram, we do not see our way clear to appoint the committee requested.

3. In 1928-1929.

1928, p. 44. Overture from the Presbytery of Muhlenburg, asking appointment of an Ad-Interim Committee on Closer Relations with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church referred to the Ad-interim Committee on Closer Relations with Other Presbyterian Bodies.

1929, pp. 62, 138. [From the report of the Ad-interim Committee:] The official reply of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church: "The Cumberland Presbyterian Church at all times stands ready to co-operate in spirit in the world-wide program, but at no time and under no conditions would the Cumberland Presbyterian Church look with favor upon any move towards organic union with the Presbyterian Church, U. S. or any other denomination."

4. In 1962 et seq.

1962, p. 117; 1963, p. 175. [Inter-Church Relations Committees of the two churches discuss cooperation only.]

(3) THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

[Ed. note: Certain of the following actions deal with Federal union of all Presbyterian Bodies. Because the stimulation to such planning arose out of our

relations with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. these actions are listed here.]

1. Negotiations of 1870 concerning both fraternal relations and union. Union negatived by our Assembly. Fraternal relations negatived by action of Northern Assembly dissolving committee on conference.

1870, p. 501. The Stated Clerk announced that he had received through the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, official information of a paper adopted by that Assembly, as found on page 934 of its printed Minutes for 1869; which paper was addressed to this body, and is as follows:

Whereas, the last General Assembly acknowledged the separate and independent existence of the Presbyterian Church in the Southern States, and enjoined upon all subordinate courts so to treat it; thus according to its ministers and members the privilege of admission to our body upon the same terms which are extended to ministers and members of other branches of the Presbyterian Church in this country; Therefore,

Resolved, That this General Assembly hereby conveys its Christian salutations to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Southern States, and gives expression to its sentiments of Christian fraternity and fellowship towards the ministers and members of that body. And as we inherit and hold with them the same ancient symbols of faith, the same forms of government and of worship, thus presenting before the world the same sacred principles to which our common ancestors witnessed, and which we have maintained together in the past, especially since we occupy adjacent, and in many places common territory, we deem it due to our one Lord, and to the best interests of His kingdom on earth, to express the desire that the day may not be distant when we may again be united in one great organization that shall cover our whole land and embrace all branches of the Presbyterian Church.

Resolved, That the Stated Clerk be directed to forward a copy of these resolutions to the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the Southern States.

This was referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence.

p. 516. The Stated Clerk announced to the Assembly that he had received official information of the appointment of a delegation to this body from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, convened in Philadelphia, in the following paper:

Whereas, this General Assembly believes that the interests of the kingdom of our Lord throughout our entire country would be greatly promoted by healing all unnecessary divisions; and whereas, this General Assembly desires the speedy establishment of cordial, fraternal relations with the General Assmbly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, commonly known as the Southern Presbyterian Church, upon terms of mutual confidence, respect, Christian honor, and love; and whereas, we believe that the terms of reunion between the two branches of the Presbyterian Church at the North, now so happily consummated, present an auspicious opportunity for the adjustment of such relations; therefore, be it—

Resolved, 1, That a committee of five ministers and four elders be appointed by this Assembly to confer with a similar committee, if it shall be appointed by the Assembly now in session in the city of Louisville, in respect to opening a friendly correspondence between the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches, and that the result of such conference be reported to the General Assembly of 1871.

Resolved, 2, That, with a view to the furtherance of the object contemplated in the appointment of said committee, this General Assembly hereby reaffirms the concurrent declaration of the two Assemblies which met in the city of New York last

year, viz.: "That no rule or precedent which does not stand approved by both bodies shall be of any authority in the re-united body, except in so far as such rule or precedent may affect the rights of property founded thereon."

Resolved, 3, That two ministers and one elder of the committee appointed by this Assembly be designated as delegates, to convey to the Assembly now in session at Louisville, Kentucky, a copy of these resolutions, with our Christian salutations.

The Stated Clerk announced also that, in pursuance of the object referred to in this paper, the Rev. J. C. Backus, D.D., the Rev. H. J. Van Dyke, D.D., and the Hon. W. E. Dodge, were present, awaiting the pleasure of the Assembly. These delegates, being introduced by the Moderator, proceeded to address the Assembly on the subject of their mission. To these addresses a suitable response was made by the Moderator.

The Rev. Stuart Robinson, D.D., then offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That this Assembly duly appreciates the marked courtesy and kindness of the General Assembly now sitting in Philadelphia in commissioning brethren so particularly acceptable to us to be the bearers of its resolutions to this body; that it will take into careful consideration the proposition presented by them; and that, in order to proper deliberation and care in so important a matter, these resolutions, together with the message of exposition of the delegation, be referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, with instruction to report at the earliest possible time, recommending an answer to this proposition.

p. 523. The Standing Committee on Foreign Correspondence presented a report on the communication from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (Old School) of 1869, and from the General Assembly of 1870, now in session in Philadelphia.

The Rev. J. A. Lyon, D.D., proposed a paper as an answer to the communication from the General Assembly in Albany of 1869.

After a protracted discussion of the matters presented in these papers, in committee of the whole, it was resolved that the committee rise and report progress, which motion was adopted, and the committee accordingly rose.

The Moderator then resumed the chair, and the chairman of the "Committee of the Whole" reported the papers which had been offered.

p. 528. The discussion of the unfinished business, viz.: the papers from the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, was resumed, and continued throughout the afternoon.

The vote was taken on the motion to amend the report of the committee by striking it out and substituting therefor the minority report offered by Mr. Wallace. This motion was decided in the negative.

The Rev. Dr. J. J. Bullock moved to strike out the report, and substitute therefor a paper which he presented. This motion was also decided in the negative.

The motion offered by Mr. Prince to strike out from the report all that part providing for a committee of conference, was also decided in the negative. The report of the committee was then adopted, and is as follows:

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence, to whom were referred the overture for union from the Old School General Assembly North, of 1869, at its session in the city of New York, and also the proposition from the United Assembly of the Northern Presbyterian Church, now sitting in Philadelphia, conveyed to us by a special delegation, respectfully report:

That the former of these documents is virtually superseded by the latter, because the body by whom it was adopted has since been merged into the United Assembly, from which emanates a new and fresh proposal, reflecting the views of the larger constituency. To this proposition, then, "that a committee of five ministers and four

elders be appointed by this Assembly to confer with a similar committee of their Assembly, in respect to opening a friendly correspondence between the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches," your committee recommend the following answer to be returned:

Whatever obstructions may exist in the way of cordial intercourse between the two bodies above named are entirely of a public nature, and involve grave and fundamental principles. The Southern Presbyterian Church can confidently appeal to all the acts and declarations of all their Assemblies, that no attitude of aggression or hostility has been, or is now, assumed by it towards the Northern Church. And this General Assembly distinctly avows (as it has always believed and declared) that no grievances experienced by us, however real, would justify us in acts of aggression or a spirit of malice or retaliation against any branch of Christ's visible kingdom. We are prepared, therefore, in advance of all discussion, to exercise toward the General Assembly North, and the churches represented therein, such amity as fidelity to our principles could, under any possible circumstances, permit. Under this view the appointment of a committee of conference might seem wholly unnecessary; but, in order to exhibit before the Christian world the spirit of conciliation and kindness to the last degree, this Assembly agrees to appoint a committee of conference to meet a similar committee already appointed by the Northern Assembly, with instructions to the same that the difficulties which lie in the way of cordial correspondence between the two bodies must be distinctly met and removed, and which may be comprehensively stated in the following particulars:

1. Both the wings of the now united Assembly during their separate existence before the fusion, did fatally complicate themselves with the State in political utterances deliberately pronounced year after year, and which, in our judgment, were a sad betrayal of the cause and kingdom of our common Lord and Head. We believe it to be solemnly incumbent upon the Northern Presbyterian Church, not with reference to us, but before the Christian world and before our Divine Master and King, to purge itself of this error, and, by public proclamation of the truth, to place the crown once more upon the head of Jesus Christ as the alone King of Zion; in default of which the Southern Presbyterian Church, which has already suffered much in maintaining the independence and spirituality of the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth, feels constrained to bear public testimony against this defection of our late associates from the truth. Nor can we, by official correspondence even, consent to blunt the edge of this our testimony concerning the very nature and mission of the Church as a purely spiritual body among men.

2. The union now consummated between the Old and New School Assemblies North was accomplished by methods which in our judgment, involve a total surrender of all the great testimonies of the Church for the fundamental doctrines of grace, at a time when the victory of truth over error hung long in the balance. The United Assembly stands of necessity upon an allowed latitude of interpretation of the Standards, and must come at length to embrace nearly all shades of doctrinal belief. Of those falling testimonies we are now the sole surviving heir, which we must lift from the dust and bear to the generations after us. It would be a serious compromise of this sacred trust to enter into public and official fellowship with those repudiating these testimonies and to do this expressly upon the ground, as stated in the preamble to the overture before us, "that the terms of re-union between the two branches of the Presbyterian Church at the North, now happily consummated, present an auspicious opportunity for the adjustment of such relations." To found a correspondence professedly upon this idea would be to endorse that which we thoroughly disapprove.

3. Some of the members of our own body were but a short time since violently and unconstitutionally expelled from the communion of one branch of the now united

Northern Assembly, under ecclesiastical charges which, if true, render them utterly infamous before the Church and the world. It is to the last degree unsatisfactory to construe this offensive legislation obsolete by the mere fusion of that body with another, or through the operation of a faint declaration which was not intended originally to cover this case. This is no mere "rule" or "precedent," but a solemn sentence of outlawry against what is now an important and constituent part of our own body. Every principle of honor and of good faith compels us to say that an unequivocal repudiation of that interpretation of the law under which these men were condemned must be a condition precedent to any official correspondence on our part.

4. It is well known that similar injurious accusations were preferred against the whole Southern Presbyterian Church, with which the ear of the whole world has been filled. Extending, as these charges do, to heresy and blasphemy, they cannot be quietly ignored by an indirection of any sort. If true, we are not worthy of the "confidence, respect, Christian honor and love," which are tendered to us in this overture. If untrue, "Christian honor and love," manliness and truth, require them to be openly and squarely withdrawn. So long as they remain upon record they are an impassable barrier to official intercourse.

Adopted. Ayes, 83; nays, 17.

p. 535. The following were appointed on the committee contemplated in the above action, to confer with a committee to be appointed by the Northern Assembly, viz.: Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, D.D., Thomas E. Peck, D.D., Andrew H. Kerr, D.D., William Brown, D.D., Joseph R. Wilson, D.D.; Ruling elders— Judge John A. Inglis, Hon. W. P. Webb, A. G. McIlwaine, Sr., Esq., Col. Charles A. Ready.

p. 542. The following dissent was offered in relation to the paper from the Committee on Foreign Correspondence adopted on Friday:

The undersigned, who voted in the negative on the adoption of the report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence in reply to the delegation from the Northern General Assembly, desire, in explanation of their vote, to say, that if that part of the report denominated "instructions" to our commissioners had been put in the form of a "statement" or "declaration of principles," as the grounds of difference between us and that Assembly, rather than in the apparent form of charges against the Northern Church, which, under the circumstances, seemed to be discourteous to them, they would have voted in the affirmative [Signed with three names.]

The following protest was offered, and was, by a vote of the Assembly, admitted to record without an answer:

Having voted with the minority, we respectfully protest against the action taken by this General Assembly in reference to the overture of the General Assembly of the united Presbyterian Church, now sitting in Philadelphia, proposing a conference with a view to fraternal correspondence, for the following reasons, in part:

1. Because it was advocated, and appears to proceed, upon a misconstruction of the actual proposition made by the Northern General Assembly, and seems to be directed against a supposed latent intent, which, however, was expressly disavowed.

2. Because the instructions appended arraign the said Assembly, as now constituted on its basis of union, upon the most serious charges, of "the total surrender of fundamental doctrines of grace," as well as with the actual discrowning of the Lord Jesus Christ; which, even if we believe them to be true, it is at least indecorous to prefer while in the act of accepting its proposition for fraternal conference.

3. Because it wears an aspect of inconsistency on our part, in that, while we accept their proposal for conference, we require conditions manifestly offensive and out of place in a simple conference, as asked by them.

4. Because it places this Assembly and the Southern Presbyterian Church—we do not say intentionally or consciously, yet, in spite of all explanations, places us—not

only in the face of our Northern brethren, but before the world, in an attitude palpably, and to many of us painfully, variant from the placable and charitable spirit of the Gospel of peace and good-will. [Signed with five names.]

1870, p. 537. [The Rev. Dr. Palmer, from the Committee on Foreign Correspondence presented a pastoral letter to the churches under our care, which was adopted. It was ordered that five thousand copies of this Letter be printed by the Committee of Publication for gratuitous distribution.]

1871, p. 10. The members of the committee of nine, appointed by the last Assembly to confer with a corresponding committee appointed by the Northern General Assembly, would respectfully report that, in consequence of the dissolution of the committee of the Northern Assembly immediately afterwards, this committee has never been convened.

2. Negotiations from 1874 to 1882 establishing fraternal relations.

Any idea of "organic union" negatived by our Assembly.

[Ed. note: In 1874, as a consequence of several overtures from presbyteries and of a communication from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., a committee of conference with reference to fraternal relations was appointed. The actions and papers during the subsequent exchanges between the two bodies pointedly speak of "fraternal relations." The Minutes in 1874, p. 500, specify that "organic union" is not contemplated in the overtures arising from the presbyteries. The first communication from the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. read: "to seek closer and more fraternal relations" (1874, p. 501.) Replying to that, our Assembly was positive, saying: "an organic union with the Northern Assembly is not contemplated in this action" (1874, p. 503.)

A conference of the committees of the two Churches failed to draw any agreement (1875, p. 17.) In 1876 the Assembly of the U. S. A. Church again opened the matter, to which we replied with only a telegram (1876, pp. 242, 243.) Another communication from the U. S. A. Assembly in 1877 drew the same telegraphic response (1877, pp. 412, 416.) The failure of these efforts was due to our insistence that the "imputations of schism, heresy and blasphemy" cast upon our Church at the time of our severance be disapproved by the Assembly of the U. S. A. Church.

Salutations were exchanged in 1878, but our Minutes specified that they were not "fraternal correspondence" (1878, p. 634.)

Taking the initiative, our Assembly adopted the following minute: "That while receding from no principle, we do hereby declare our regret for and withdrawal of all expressions of our Assembly which may be regarded as reflecting upon, or offensive to, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A." (1882, p. 530.)

The Assembly of the U. S. A. Church, took the action: "Whilst receding from no principle, we do hereby declare our regret for, and withdrawal of, all expressions of our Assembly which may be regarded as reflective upon or offensive to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and we renew the expression of our warm fraternal regard for all who compose its communion, and our readiness to exchange delegates forthwith" (1882, p. 541) Explanatory of this, the Moderator of the U. S. A. Assembly sent an unofficial telegram to the effect "that in the action now being taken we disclaim any reference to the actions of preceding Assemblies concerning loyalty and rebellion, but we refer only to those concerning schism, heresy and blasphemy" (1882, p. 541.)

It should be noted that both our position and the retraction of the U. S. A. Assembly were *not* concerned with the *political* issues of the War Between the States. (See also 1884, p. 201.)

Delegates were appointed by both Assemblies, and attended the 1883 meetings.]

3. Negotiations of 1883.

Organic union declined by our Assembly.

1883, pp. 40, 58. In response to overture from the Presbytery of Upper Missouri in regard to the appointment of a committee by this General Assembly to confer with a similar committee from the Northern General Assembly in reference to organic union, your committee would recommend the adoption of the following answer, viz.: This General Assembly declines to appoint a committee for the purpose stated.

p. 57. Overture from the Presbytery of St. Louis, asking to reject proposals for organic union with the Northern Church as impossible, because of divergent views on vital doctrines, and because such union would involve a surrender of truth on our part.

Your committee would recommend the following answer, viz.: "The question of organic union is not to be entertained as a subject before the Church."

4. Negotiations of 1887-1888.

Organic union negatived by our Assembly.

1887, pp. 188, 200. Rev. R. K. Smoot, D.D., offered the following paper, which, after amendment, was adopted:

Whereas, it is within the knowledge of this Assembly that some of our Presbyteries have sent up overtures or other papers as touching the [organic union, co-operative union, or any other] relation which ought to be sustained by our Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; therefore,

Resolved, That a special committee, consisting of one minister and one ruling elder from each Synod, be appointed by the Moderator when he appoints the Standing Committee, to which special committee all these overtures and papers shall, after having been read in open Assembly, be referred, with instructions to report to this Assembly as early as practicable.

p. 207. The Special Committee on Organic Union, etc., made a majority report and a minority report, which were received, ordered to be printed, and are as follows:

The majority of your special committee, to which were referred all overtures and papers touching the subject of organic and co-operative union, and all other relations with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, respectfully report as follows:

Whereas the Synods of Missouri, Arkansas and Alabama, embracing fifteen Presbyteries, have taken action favoring reunion of some kind between the two churches; and

Whereas, subsequent thereto, eight Presbyteries, to-wit: St. Johns Upper Missouri, Chesapeake, Missouri, Holston, Indian, East Alabama and Dallas, have manifested special interest in the matter of overtures or resolutions favoring closer relations between the two churches; while from only five presbyteries have come any expression of dissent, and that chiefly against organic union; therefore,

Your committee recommend that a committee of five ministers and five ruling elders, with the Moderator of this Assembly added thereto as *ex-officio* chairman, be appointed by the present Moderator of this Assembly, to confer with any like committee that the other Assembly may appoint concerning the whole subject of organic union, co-operative union, and any other relation between the two Assemblies, and

said committee be directed to report the result of the joint conference to the General Assembly at its meeting in May, 1888, for approval or disapproval. And that the committee be instructed to take and maintain the following positions:

1. The mere acceptance of the common Standards of our Church Confession of Faith, Shorter and Larger Catechisms, does not, in our minds, form a sufficient basis of union; but the acceptance of that peculiar interpretation of our Standards which affirms and emphasizes the purely spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and forbids her legislating upon political and civil matters, is the only true basis of union.

2. And further, we insist that the colored brethren within our bounds shall be organized into separate congregations, presbyteries and synods.]

[Signed by W. F. V. Bartlett and fifteen others.]

pp. 209, 216. The minority offered a substitute for this majority report. It is as follows:

The undersigned members of your special committee, appointed to examine and report upon the papers and overtures submitted to the General Assembly on the question of organic or co-operative union with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, are of the opinion that the difficulties in the way are numerous and serious.

They arise mainly out of the fact that the two Churches are not agreed in matters of either *principle* or *polity*.

No suggestion has been made, or, in the opinion of those signing this paper, can be made, for the removal of this most serious obstacle which meets us at the very opening of this question.

To unite, or attempt to unite, the two Churches on any compromise of these fundamental differences, or upon any general statements, such as the reception of the Standards "pure and simple," would "serve only to bring together those who could not act in harmony, and would perpetuate strife and alienation."

These conclusions have been reached by us after a full and careful examination of the whole question in the light of all the papers submitted for our consideration. The discussion of the question for some time past, both North and South, has made it equally manifest that the further agitation of this question would hinder the progress, weaken the efficiency and endanger the unity of our own Church.

[Signed by Rev. R. K. Smoot and nine others.]

Rev. W. H. Parks, a member of the committee, brought in a third report, signed by himself. After verbal changes had been made in the minority report, he withdrew his individual report and gave in his adhesion to that of the minority.

Previous to the discussion of these reports, Rev. W. R. Coppedge introduced a substitute for the minority report declaring in substance that we do not see our way clear to take any action looking toward a union of the two Churches.

p. 217. [Before proceeding to consider this whole question, the Assembly was led in prayer by the Moderator.]

p. 220. During the discussion Mr. Coppedge obtained leave to withdraw his paper, whereupon Col. C. F. Collier offered, as a substitute for the minority report:

In view of the diversity of opinion disclosed by the discussion on the floor of this General Assembly on the majority and minority reports of the Committee on Organic Union and kindred questions:

Resolved, As the sense of this Assembly, it is inexpedient to take any action on the subject of organic union and other matters kindred thereto.

[Lost—ayes, 45; noes, 96].

p. 222. Rev. P. H. Hoge offered the following as a substitute for the minority report:

Whereas a number of overtures in reference to closer relations to the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America have come up to this Assembly; and

Whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has just adopted the deliverance of the two Synods of Missouri on the spirituality of the Church; and

Whereas the two Assemblies ought to labor together for the accomplishment of the great object they have in view, if they are sufficiently agreed in their principles to make them more efficient for their work united than they now are divided; and

Whereas the recent action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., apparently different from their former action as to the spirituality of the Church, makes the impression on the minds of many of our people that one obstacle to closer relations to that Church has been, or soon may be, removed; therefore,

Resolved, That a committee of four ministers and four ruling elders, together with the Moderator, be appointed to meet with a similar committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, if such a committee shall be appointed, for the sole purpose of inquiring into and ascertaining the facts as to the point above mentioned, and as to the position that Assembly proposes to maintain as to colored churches, ecclesiastical Boards, and any other subjects now regarded as obstacles in the way of united effort or the propagation of the Gospel, and report these facts to the next General Assembly for such action as they may warrant. Adopted— ayes, 83; noes, 58.

On motion of Dr. Otts, the same paper was adopted as a substitute for the majority report—ayes, 95; noes, 46.

This paper, being then directly before the Assembly, was adopted by the following vote: ayes, 80; noes, 57.

It was ordered that the foregoing paper be telegraphed to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

The following resolutions, which were lost, were admitted to record:

1. Offered by Mr. C. F. Collier: "That so much of the paper appointing a committee of inquiry as is prefatory be stricken out, and that it read, 'Resolved, that a committee be appointed to meet with a similar committee,' " etc.

2. Offered by Dr. S. A. King: "That this whole matter be referred to the presbyteries, that they may consider and report to the next Assembly, in order that in this way the mind of the whole Church may be ascertained."

p. 232. [The Northern Assembly, in session at Omaha, appointed a committee of conference, without specific instructions, except to report their action to our next Assembly for approval. Notice of this action was telegraphed to our Assembly.]

p. 249. It was ordered that five members of this committee shall constitute a quorum.

[Ed. note: pp. 200, 211. While the Assembly's committee was yet deliberating, and before it had reported, there was referred to it an official telegram from the Omaha Assembly, announcing that the Assembly had adopted the Declaration of Principles adopted by the Synod of Missouri at its session of 1886, pp. 192, 228, a communication from the Stated Clerk of the Northern Assembly, the same being a paper adopted one year ago by that Assembly on conference with other Presbyterian churches with reference to co-operation and unity of effort and action, particularly in the foreign field. This later paper was referred to the Committee of Inquiry, appointed above.]

1888, pp. 382, 456. The Committee of Inquiry made a report, which was referred to the Committee on Bills and Overtures.

[Ed. note: The report is of the meeting of the joint committees in Louisville in December 1887. Difference of view is noted upon the four subjects:

1. The spirituality of the Church, 2. The relation of colored people in the South to the Church, 3. The powers and responsibilities of the ecclesiastical

Boards of the Northern Church, and 4. The opinion in the Northern Assembly on the portions of the Confession of Faith which are more specifically Calvinistic.]

p. 420. The following report was adopted—yeas, 84; nays, 43.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures report to the General Assembly that there have been placed in their hands certain papers, all of which relate more or less to the subject of closer relations between the churches under the care of the Northern and Southern General Assemblies respectively. They are as follows:

1. The report of the Committee of Inquiry appointed by our last Assembly to confer with a similar committee of the Northern Assembly.

2. Overtures from fourteen of our own presbyteries, of which number ten express in some form or other opposition to organic union between these two Presbyterian Churches, viz.: Montgomery, Western Texas, Louisiana, Greenbrier, Transylvania, Winchester, East Hanover, Tuscaloosa, Lexington, Louisville. Of the remaining four, the Presbytery of Eastern Texas proposes simply co-operation; Presbytery of Dallas asks for a postponement of the matter until next year, and the appointment of a day of fasting and prayer in reference thereto; the Presbytery of Chesapeake express satisfaction with what the committee has done, and asks for its continuance for further service in the same way; and the Presbytery of Potosi proposes a continuance of the Committee of Inquiry looking to co-operation or organic union.

3. A communication from the Northern Assembly by telegraph, containing an official copy of a paper passed by that body. This paper expresses a substantial concurrence in the report of their Committee of Conference, their earnest hope of the happy effects which may be expected to follow the recent joint centennial celebration, their desire for co-operation in Christian work, and their conviction that this can be secured to the fullest extent only by organic union.

4. A paper on the subject of organic union, offered at an early day in the meeting of the Assembly, by the Rev. Henry M. Smith, D.D.

Touching the important matters here presented, your committee recommend the adoption by the Assembly of the following paper:

(1) After a careful consideration of the report of our Committee of Inquiry, we are unable to discover that the obstacles to organic union heretofore existing between the Northern and Southern General Assemblies have to any considerable extent been removed. Therefore in, view of all the interests involved, we continue established in the conviction that the cause of truth and righetousness, as well as the peace and prosperity of our beloved Zion, will be best promoted by remaining as we have been, a distinct member of that one body, the church, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the supreme and everliving Head.

(2) That the Committee of Inquiry be, and hereby is, discharged; that the thanks of the Assembly are hereby tendered to said committee for the faithful and able manner in which their duty was performed, and we express our sincere gratification in learning that the conference of the two committees was conducted in such a spirit of "brotherly kindness and charity."

(3) In reference to the communication from the Northern Assembly by telegram of May 26th, above referred to, we adopt the following:

[1] A more full and formal expression of our feelings in regard to the centennial celebration will be found in another paper of this Assembly. But it is suitable to declare here also that we do very highly appreciate the importance in itself of that grand event, as we do also appreciate the generous and munificent hospitality extended to us in every way by our Northern brethren, and that we will sincerely rejoice in all those "fruits of righteousness" growing out of it, "which are by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his grace."

[2] While holding fast to those matters of principle which require us to be a separate denomination, we do fully recognize that vast and precious heritage of Christian Presbyterian truth and order which our fathers held, and which we do now hold in common. We declare our desire to forget, as far as possible, all past dissensions, and to cultivate among our churches and people the most friendly relations that can grow out of "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report"; "whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing," trusting "that if anything we be otherwise minded God will reveal even this unto us."

[4] In accordance with this sentiment, and in response to the action of the Northern Assembly, we cheerfully agree to appoint a committee, whose duty it shall be to confer with a similar committee appointed by them in reference to all such modes of fraternal co-operation in Christian work, both at home and abroad, as may be considered practicable and edifying, and the said committee to report to the next Assembly.

p. 423. [The Assembly admitted to record the explanation of their votes by twenty-four different members.]

p. 432. A dissent [signed by R. T. Simpson and thirty-seven others, stating their objections to the above action], was admitted to record without answer:

We favored the substitute offered by Dr. Campbell, and object particularly to the first resolution adopted because we do not think it is true that "the obstacles to organic union heretofore existing between the Northern and Southern Assemblies have not to any considerable extent been removed," and we do not continue "established in the conviction that the cause of truth and righteousness, as well as the peace and prosperity of our beloved Zion, will be best promoted by remaining a distinct member of the church of Christ." We think that material progress has been made towards organic union, and while we recognize the fact that our Church is not now ready for organic union, yet we favor a continuance of the conference with the Northern Church, in the hope that all difficulties to organic union may be removed. Entertaining these views some of us have voted for the resolutions as the best we could do, and others voted against the resolutions.

5. 1891 invitation to form a "consensus creed" negatived by our Assembly.

1891, p. 258. To the communication from the Committee of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., inviting us to unite in the formulation of a consensus creed, the Assembly returns the following answer: We are not prepared at this time to unite in a movement to formulate a consensus creed.

6. Negotiations of 1894-1895.

Organic union negatived by our Assembly.

1894, p. [The following were appointed to a committee to whom were referred all overtures and papers touching organic union with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America:] George Summey, Eugene Daniel, J. W. Rosebro, W. M. McPheeters, H. B. Boude, J. W. Walden, J. M. Purcell, T. Harrison, Vincent Davis, W. M. Hall, W. D. Hoyt, W. H. Gee, G. E. Campbell.

p. 194. The following telegram was read:

The General Assembly, in session at Saratoga, has cordially and unanimously adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That a special committee of nine be appointed by the Moderator to confer with a similar committee, if one should be appointed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to take into consideration the whole

question of organic union of the two bodies upon the basis of our common Standards and to report to the next Assembly.

p. 211. The report of the Special Committee on Organic Union was then adopted, and is as follows:

The Committee on Organic Union to which were referred the overtures from the Presbyteries of Ebenezer, Holston and North Alabama, touching the subject of organic union with the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, begs leave to report, recommending the following answer be given:

The General Assembly declines to reopen the question of organic union by the appointment of a committee of conference as requested by the said presbyteries, on the following grounds:

1. The historic difference between the two Assemblies as to the relation of the Church of Christ to civil government.

2. To enter into organic union with the Northern Church involves the surrender of the plan of an independent Negro church which this Assembly regards as essential alike to the religious and social welfare of both races.

3. The essential difference between the two Assemblies as to woman's sphere and work in the Church of Christ.

4. God's blessing has manifestly rested upon our Church in its separate existence and work and to spring the divisive question of organic union we believe will bring upon us needless agitation and hurtful disturbance.

5. Should such organic union take place, the property interests of the Southern Church, under the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, would be seriously jeopardized, in the event of any subsequent change in our relations.

In view of the foregoing recommendation of an answer to the overtures of the presbyteries, the committee recommends that the following reply be sent to the telegram of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America:

The blessing of God having rested upon our church in her separate existence and work, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in session at Nashville, with affectionate fraternal greetings to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, in session at Saratoga, and wishing it God-speed in every good word and work, regards it unwise to reopen the question of organic union.

[Signed by all the committee, G. E. Campbell dissenting.]

p. 214. [The following protest, signed by W. W. Elwang and nineteen others,] was admitted to record:

The undersigned respectfully enter their most solemn protest against the action of this Assembly in refusing to appoint a committee of Conference on Organic Union, to meet a like committee from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, now in session at Saratoga, N. Y., and do so on the following grounds: Because,

1. The plainest dictates of Christian courtesy seem to us to demand the appointment of such a committee in reply to the fraternal spirit manifested by the Northern Assembly.

2. The issues which once ran the cleavage line between the two communions, in the opinion of your protestants, either do not now exist at all, or are not as potent as they were more than a generation ago. We are convinced that a mutual fraternal conference will disclose a closer relationship in customs, aims, principles and doctrines than is now suspected by either party.

3. The interests of our beloved Church, especially in our border territory, will be best conserved by such a course.

4. The higher interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, irrespective of denominational lines, jeoparded by the invidious inroads of worldliness, rationalism and infidelity, demand a closer fellowship of God's people for mutual helpfulness and more effective testimony and work.

5. We are seriously concerned that nothing short of the surrender of principle should be left undone to heal the breach now dividing the two Churches, lest the sin of schism be justly laid at our door.

p. 227. [To this protest the Assembly made the following answer:] Inasmuch as the General Assembly, in its answer to the overtures of Ebenezer, Holston and North Alabama Presbyteries has fully expressed its reasons for not appointing a committee of conference, it does not appear to be needful to answer the protest.

1895, p. 404. Overtures from two Synods and five Presbyteries, bearing on our relations with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, have been placed in the hands of your committee. One of these overtures (viz., from the Synod of Florida) looks to organic union with that Church. Another (from the Synod of Georgia) looks for a conference in reference "to the differences now separating the two churches." Another (from the Presbytery of Columbia) desires that "closer relations between the two Churches," be established. Still another (from the Presbytery of New Orleans) asks that a "Pastoral Letter" be issued, "setting forth fully the reasons for our continued separate existence as a Church of Christ."

Besides these there are overtures from the Presbytery of Mecklenburg, Central Texas, Lexington and New Orleans, praying this General Assembly not to reopen the question of organic union with our brethren of the Northern Assembly.

Your committee has carefully considered these various overtures, and now reports to the General Assembly that we do not think it necessary to answer them in detail, but recommend to the Assembly the following action, viz.:

This Assembly does not deem it wise, under existing conditions, to agitate the question submitted in these overtures. It avails itself of this occasion, however, to place again on record its sentiments of sincere regard and Christian affection for that honored branch of the great Presbyterian family, between whom and ourselves close fraternal relations already exist. And we here renew the expression of our desire that the plan of co-operation in Christian work, both at home and abroad, which has been agreed to by our respective Assemblies, may be always faithfully and cordially observed by both these churches.

[This action was reported from the Committee on Bills and Overtures. After the overtures had been referred to that committee, a proposition was urged to refer them to a special committee, but was withdrawn.]

p. 412. [Fraternal letters were passed between the two Assemblies. The following is an extract from that of the Northern Assembly:]

We would stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance touching the attitude which we have steadily maintained for years toward that organic union which would make us one in fact as well as in faith. While we do not purpose to press this thought unduly upon your minds and hearts, we do desire again to assure you of our readiness to reciprocate any advances which you may be led to make in this direction, under the guidance of the Spirit of Christ, who prayed that we may be one.

p. 420. [The following is an extract from the reply of the Southern Assembly:] We *are* fully one with you in all the fundamental constituents of that holy catholic church. Most especially, brethren beloved, we thank you for that truly fraternal spirit and delicate appreciation of our position, which makes your letter so very precious and so very fragrant to us. Let us walk together in full fraternity of love and sympathy in all the great and numberless things in which we are agreed, and thus be encouraged

to pray and hope that if in anything we differ God may reveal even that unto us and take away every blemish.

7. Negotiations of 1904-1906.

[Ed. note: A part of the stimulus to our Church's taking part in the formation of the Council of the Reformed Churches in America holding the Presbyterian System arose from communications from the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The whole of our exchange with the Northern Church in this instance concerned the larger plans rather than any proposal of union simply between the two bodies. See also this Digest, under "Union-general attempted."]

8. Negotiations of 1917-1923.

[Ed. note: Organic union negatived by our Assembly. Plans for federal union, involving at least three bodies, approved by our Assembly, were disapproved by the Assembly of the U. S. A. Church.]

1917, p. 27. The following telegram from the Presbyterian Church U. S. A., relating to Organic Union, was referred to the Select Committee on this subject:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has adopted the following resolutions:

(1) *Resolved*, That 195 presbyteries having taken action on an overture looking to organic union between the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., therefore,

(2) *Resolved*, That this Assembly, which has for many years stood ready, is now ready to enter into negotiations with a view to organic union with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.

(3) *Resolved*, That this matter be committed to the General Assembly's Committee on Church Co-operation and Union, with instructions to enter into negotiations with the Presbyterian Church U. S., through a committee appointed by its General Assembly, if it should deem it advisable so to do.

(4) *Resolved*, That these resolutions be telegraphed to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., in session at Birmingham, Ala.

p. 53. We recommend the following answer to the telegram from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. touching the matter of organic union between the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. and the Presbyterian Church U. S.:

While this Assembly does not regard organic union as practicable at this time, yet it hereby appoints the Committee of Conference on Union asked for by the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and recommends to the proposed conference the consideration of the federation of all the Presbyterian Churches of our country upon some practical and effective basis.

[This committee also considered:] Overtures from the Presbyteries of Meridian, Arkansas, Upper Missouri, Savannah, Eastern Texas, Knoxville, and West Lexington, asking for the appointment of a committee to confer with a similar committee from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.; from the Presbyteries of Concord, Mecklenburg, Suwannee, and Durant, asking for the appointment of a committee to ascertain if a doctrinal basis could be formulated upon which union could be effected; from the Presbyteries of Transylvania and Roanoke, opposing the opening of the subject; and an overture from the Presbytery of West Hanover, counselling the Assembly to be careful in the approach to the matter.

[An overture from the Presbytery of St. Johns asked that the Assembly take steps looking towards exchange of the Synod of Oklahoma, U. S., for the churches within the bounds of the State of Florida under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. In response to this overture,] while appreciating the

interest of our brethren in Florida, we recommend that it be answered in the negative, for the reason that no suggestion of such an exchange has come from the Synod of Oklahoma, which, it seems to this Committee, should join in such a request before it could be properly entertained by this Assembly.

1918, pp. 20, 145. The report of the Ad Interim Committee on Conference with the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., on Union and Federation was read by the Chairman, Rev. J. M. Wells, D.D.

The report was then referred to a Select Committee of one member from each Synod.

p. 25. The following telegram from the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., approving of the continuation of the Committee on Union and Federation was read and referred to the Select Committee on Union and Federation:

The General Assembly, in session at Columbus, O., approved today of the continuance of the negotiations between our respective Churches on the subject of federation and union. The sentiment is unanimous for the continuance.

p. 23. The report of the Select Committee was taken up and the Chairman, Rev. D. H. Ogden, D.D., read the majority report signed by sixteen members (p. 28). Rev. George Summey, D.D., read a minority report signed by himself (p. 29).

Rev. J. M. Wells, D.D., offered a substitute for the majority and minority reports.

p. 26. The Substitute paper of Rev. J. M. Wells, D.D., was amended and adopted by a yea and nay vote of 152 to 72 which was ordered to be placed on record. This paper is as follows:

The Assembly approves the report of our Ad Interim Committee on Conference, and continues a Committee as requested by the Committee on Conference of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

The Assembly goes on record as opposing Organic Union at this time, but as approving the idea of a Federal Union of all the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States.

That the Committee be enlarged, so as to include one member from each Synod.

That these Committeemen be selected by the Commissioners present from the Presbyteries constituting their respective Synods.

That this Committee select its own Chairman.

p. 36. [This was telegraphed to the General Assembly, U. S. A.]

p. 61. The following message from the General Assembly, U. S. A., reached me at Durant the day after the Assembly had closed: (Stated Clerk.)

The General Assembly in session at Columbus, Ohio, invites to appoint delegates to a general convention to meet in Philadelphia to consider union of all Evangelical Churches in the United States.

1919, p. 30. The following telegram was received from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.:

The Presbyterian General Assembly, in session at St. Louis, Mo., sends fraternal greetings and the following message, to which answer is requested:

Resolved, That the part of the report dealing with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. be placed on the docket, and that the following message be telegraphed at once to the Presbyterian General Assembly, in session at New Orleans, Louisiana:

The Presbyterian General Assembly, in session at St. Louis, Mo., in the matter of the report of the Committee on Church co-operation and Union, rejoices that the two Committees of our two Churches have made some progress for a better understanding of our relations and the possibilities of united action in the Lord's work. This General Assembly states that it is not prepared to substitute the plan for federal union contained in the joint report of the two Assemblies for the plan of federal union al-

ready in operation through the Council of the Reformed Churches in America, but expresses again its preference for such a union as will eliminate all competition between our Churches, and hereby, in the most fraternal way, asks the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. to continue negotiations with a view to a more satisfactory plan of union. This Assembly also expresses the desire that the negotiations for union proceed at present only between our two Churches.

p. 47. The majority report on Relations with Other Churches was adopted, and is as follows:

Your Committee on Relations with Other Churches would respectfully report that the following papers have been placed in its hands, to wit:

1. The majority report of the Committee of Conference on Federal Union. This report is signed by fourteen members.
2. The minority report, signed by two members.
3. An overture from Louisville Presbytery, touching "The Synodical plan of Organic Union."
4. An overture from Ebenezer Presbytery, touching the same matter.
5. An overture from Nashville Presbytery, touching Organic Union.
6. Sundry personal communications relating to the above overtures.
7. Overture from Abingdon Presbytery, requesting continuance of negotiations for Federal Union.
8. Overture from Montgomery Presbytery, touching Union with the U. P. Church.

Your Committee has held five meetings, and has given to these matters careful consideration and extended discussion.

After a very full and frank interchange of views, your Committee has reached the conclusion that wide divergence of opinion exists as to what our Israel ought to do in such a time as this.

Unrest is reported as existing to a marked degree in the Synods of West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri. An increasing desire for some form of closer relations with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and with other bodies of like faith and order, is reported from Arkansas, Texas, and Florida, while the older and stronger synods seem content with conditions as they now are.

It seems clear to your Committee that the existence of these diverse currents of opinion and desire cannot be safely or wisely ignored. We face a *condition*, not a *theory*. Something should be done to remove friction and prevent injury and waste. Those sections of the Church that are strong and untroubled should strive to ease the burdens of our brethren who are facing a situation replete with difficulties of a grave and trying nature.

Five courses of action have been proposed, viz.:

1. Complete Organic Union.
2. Organic Union according to the so-called "Synodical Plan."
3. Organic Union on the basis of Provincial Assemblies—with one Supreme National Assembly as the capstone of the system.
4. A federal body having only advisory powers, inspirational in its influence, serving as a kind of clearing house for the sentiments of fraternity and comradeship that dwell in the Presbyterian heart.
5. A Federal Union with clearly defined powers and responsibilities and which, at the same time, conserves the autonomy of the constituent Churches in doctrine and discipline, as well as in all other matters of local interest, including the tenure of Church property and other material assets. This last is in substance the majority report of your Ad-Interim Committee on Federal Union.

In view of all the facts brought to its attention, your Committee favors some form of closer relations. Your Committee, therefore, recommends:

First.—That the majority and minority reports, with all other papers that have been in its hands, be referred to an Ad-Interim Committee which, in conjunction with similar Committees from one or more of our sister Churches of like faith and order, shall consider the whole question of closer relations.

Second.—That whatever plan or plans this Ad-Interim Committee shall decide to report to the General Assembly, shall be formulated in the most definite terms possible, and that this Ad-Interim Committee shall make its report to the next General Assembly.

Third.—That this Ad-Interim Committee be instructed to publish in the Church papers, not less than two weeks prior to the meeting of the Assembly, the plan or plans to be submitted by them to that body.

Fourth.—That this Ad-Interim Committee shall be composed of one member from each synod, who shall be nominated by their respective synods and reported to the Moderator, to be appointed by him. The Moderator shall designate the convener as well as the time and place of the first meeting of this Ad-Interim Committee. And in case of the inability of the Moderator to act, the Stated Clerk shall perform these duties. This action of the Assembly shall be promptly communicated to the synods by the Stated Clerk of the Assembly.

Fifth.—In case the discussions of closer relations between this Church and any other Church shall contemplate organic union, the attention of the Ad-Interim Committee is directed to past deliverances and reports of this Assembly touching such matter, and it is advised that the Assembly and the Church would view with uneasiness any structure of Union which failed to take into account and safeguard in the United Church the historic convictions and positions of this Church with respect to sound doctrine, just and effective discipline, the plenary inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures, the vicarious atonement, the spiritual mission of the Church and its obligations to abstain from interference in matters purely of civil or political concern, its position as to its Negro constituency in the South, and other matters of like interest and importance.

Your Committee feels that it cannot conclude this report without placing upon record its appreciation of the able and self-sacrificing work done by the members of the Ad-Interim Committee of Conference on Federal Union. Theirs was a difficult and delicate task. It has been discharged with a skill, a loyalty and a single-hearted devotion that is worthy of all praise.

(The recommendations above given are endorsed by thirteen of the seventeen members of the Committee.)

p. 49. The Stated Clerk was directed to telegraph the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. the action of this Assembly on our relations with Other Churches. The following telegram was sent by the Stated Clerk:

Our Assembly, in response to your message of yesterday, sends the following:

The General Assembly U. S. has referred to a Committee composed of one from each synod, to be appointed by the synod, the reports of the Ad-Interim Committee on Federal Union, together with other papers bearing on relations with other Churches. This Committee to report to the next Assembly.

1920, p. 28. The report of the Ad-Interim Committee on Closer Relations, was taken up. The final report of the Committee is as follows:

The Committee on Closer Relations begs leave to submit a supplementary report as follows:

Subsequent to the filing of our report with the Stated Clerk on May 1st, as required by the action of the last Assembly, another joint conference was held in Richmond, Va., May 12th, at which the Plan of Union contained in the report was still further amended in accordance with recommendation made by a joint sub-committee

which had been appointed at the Louisville meeting and had held its meeting in Washington.

We herewith submit the amended Plan of Union and request the Assembly to substitute it for the Plan of Union contained in the report previously filed.

The Plan of Union therewith presented was adopted, and the report of the Committee approved.

The Stated Clerk was directed to notify the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., of this action.

p. 29. Telegram from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., read as information and ordered placed in the record:

The General Assembly in session this morning approved the plan of union as presented in its Committee's report and which contemplates a United Assembly, and voted to transmit the plan to the approaching meeting of the Council of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System for its consideration and appropriate action.

Plan of Union.

p. 184. [A plan proposed by the Joint Conference on Closer Relations as a substitute for the plan contained in the Report of the Committee previously submitted.]

The Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States of America, desiring to evince and develop their spiritual unity, and to promote closer relations and more effective administrative co-operation among these Churches, hereby adopt a Preamble and a Basis of Union.

Preamble.—The Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States of America represent the same type of Evangelical Protestant Christianity, commonly known as Reformed or Calvinistic. The Churches of the Reformation in Europe, to which they are historically related, originated in different lands and passed through different experiences, which differences by reason of nationality and languages appear in the forms of the original Standards of the several Churches. We, therefore, with clear understanding of the nature of such differences, hereby declare our conviction that the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of the Synod of Dort are in essential agreement, and are different expressions of one and the same system of doctrine. This doctrinal agreement appears in the recognition, in all the symbols, of the fundamental doctrines of evangelical Christianity as held by the Reformed or Calvinistic Churches, and also in the use made of the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Catechisms of the several Churches, for the instruction of the youth of their congregations.

Basis of Union.—1. The Doctrinal Basis of the Assembly shall be the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments acknowledged as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice, with the common system of doctrine as set forth in the existing Standards of the constituent Churches.

2. The Principles of the Forms of Government and the Constitutions including the terms of doctrinal subscription of the several Churches uniting, are recognized as a part of the Basis of Union.

3. The Directories of Worship of the several Churches shall be a part of the basis of union to the extent that congregations shall have the same freedom of worship both as to forms and usages, under the United Assembly, as they had before the Union.

Articles of Agreement.—1. The "United Assembly" to be constituted shall have the title, "The United Assembly of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States of America." It shall represent in one body all the Churches united

therein and shall constitute the bond of union, peace and correspondence among all the congregations and courts of the constituent Churches. It shall be the declarative, executive, administrative and judicial agency of the United Churches, and shall possess the ecclesiastical powers hereinafter delegated to it.

2. The United Assembly shall consist of eight representatives from each of the constituent Churches for each one hundred thousand communicants or fraction thereof up to three hundred thousand; and when a Church has more than three hundred thousand communicants, then eight representatives for each additional two hundred thousand communicants or major fraction thereof. These representatives shall be ministers and ruling elders in equal numbers and shall be chosen with their alternates under the direction of their respective Churches, in such manner as their Churches shall respectively determine.

3. Every Church entering into this Union retains its distinct individuality, its own creed, government and worship, as well as every power, jurisdiction and right, which is not by these Articles expressly and exclusively delegated to the body hereby constituted.

4. Subject to the more detailed enumeration of its powers, to be set forth in a formal constitution to be adopted by the legal action of the constituent Churches, the powers to be delegated to the United Assembly shall be in substance as follows:

(a) To receive into the United Body any other ecclesiastical body conforming to the doctrine and order of the constituent Churches of this Union. The question of the closer union of any two or more of the constituent Churches shall be a matter outside the province of the United Assembly, and entirely within the jurisdiction of the Churches proposing such union.

(b) In general to recommend to the constituent Churches measures for the promotion of charity, benevolence, truth and holiness.

(c) To correspond with other Churches.

(d) To institute and superintend the agencies necessary to its general work of evangelization: Foreign Missions, Publication, Ministerial Relief, Schools and Colleges, Home Missions, Church Erection, Colored Work, Evangelism Stewardship, and such other causes as may be expressly delegated to it, subject to the provisions of the constitution to be adopted.

(e) The principle of local control in Home Missions at present existing in most or all of the constituent Churches shall continue; and the direct administration shall be exercised as at present in each constituent Church through its General Assembly, General Synod and other lower courts; except where any constituent Church shall commit the administration of its Home Mission work, or any part thereof, to the United Assembly.

5. The United Assembly shall have the power, by executive commission or otherwise as it may from time to time determine, to exercise judicial functions in settling all questions of comity arising between constituent Churches, and to enforce any and all agreements entered into by or between any two or more of said constituent Churches. The findings of the United Assembly in any case shall be final, and shall be enforced through the courts of the constituent Churches.

The United Assembly shall advise, encourage and foster the complete consolidation by constituent Churches of their work within the bounds of the same presbytery, synod or other considerable stretch of territory occupied in common, whenever in the judgment of the United Assembly such consolidation would contribute to greater harmony, efficiency and economy in the work as a whole.

When such consolidation is not feasible, the United Assembly shall propose to the constituent Churches thus occupying territory in common, definite plans of co-operation in said territory.

6. The United Assembly shall exercise such power as to doctrine as may be necessary in the discharge of the administrative and judicial functions conferred upon it in these Articles of Agreement, but it shall not have the power to impose symbols of faith or forms of worship on any of the constituent Churches.

7. The United Assembly shall exercise such judicial powers as may be required for the work committed to it by these Articles of Agreement, but cases of judicial process involving heresy or immorality arising in any of the constituent Churches shall terminate as at present in said Churches.

8. The United Assembly shall have power to deal with any other matters of interest common to any two or more of the constituent Churches, which may be referred to it by the supreme judicatories of the Churches concerned for its action, with such authority in the premises and under such conditions as may be agreed upon by the Churches which make the reference.

9. The General Assemblies or General Synods of the constituent Churches shall send their records for information, and shall report to the United Assembly on all administrative matters, and the United Assembly shall receive and consider said records and reports and shall make such deliverances thereon as are calculated to stimulate the whole Church on matters pertaining to the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ.

10. The officers of the United Assembly shall be a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk, Treasurer, and such other officers as may be necessary. The United Assembly may also appoint an Executive Committee with such authority as the Assembly may confer, to act in the intervals between the meetings of the Assembly.

11. All boards or other administrative agencies of the United Assembly shall be composed of representatives of the constituent Churches, each Church being represented thereon by at least one member. When the United Assembly shall decide that the number should be more than one for each Church, then the increase shall be in proportion to the volume of work as represented by the annual investment of each Church. All members shall be nominated by the Churches directly interested or by their Boards or Agencies as the Churches may determine. Each Church shall nominate one or more persons for each vacancy and the term of office shall be four years, the members being divided into two classes, one of which in the first election shall be elected for two years only.

12. The United Assembly shall hold and administer all properties given to said United Assembly or any of its chartered, incorporated or other agencies. All of the property rights of the constituent Churches shall remain as at present vested and shall not be changed except by the proper and constitutional procedure of the said respective constituent Churches. And it shall be agreed upon by the constituent Churches entering into said Union that the General Assembly or General Synod, or body corresponding thereto, is the supreme court as respects property rights of the respective constituent Churches.

13. The United Assembly shall meet in regular session at least biennially, and on its own adjournment, at such times and places as may be determined. In the conduct of its meetings it shall respect the conscientious views of its constituent members.

14. The expenses of the United Assembly shall be met by a fund to be provided by a pro-rata apportionment on the basis of the representation of each Church in the Union. The expenses of the representatives shall be paid by their respective Churches. All the expenses involved in the settlement of any question between the Churches shall be borne equally by the Churches concerned.

15. When any two representatives, at a meeting of either the United Assembly or its Agencies, request a unit vote by Churches upon a pending motion, the vote shall be so taken, each Church being entitled to one vote.

16. The United Assembly shall have power to make such standing rules as shall be deemed necessary for the conduct of its business.

17. Any Church holding the Reformed Faith and Presbyterian Polity may be received into this Union by a majority of the representatives of the Churches, voting by the unit rule, and upon its adoption of the Plan of Union, these Articles of Agreement included.

18. Any Church in this Union may withdraw therefrom on notice sufficiently given, and on its observance of the same constitutional steps as were followed in its adoption of these Articles.

19. Any amendment to these Articles proposed to the United Assembly shall before its adoption be approved by the Assembly, and receive the consent of the constituent Churches acting in accordance with their respective Constitutions. When the United Assembly shall have been notified of such consent it shall declare the amendment to be a part of the Articles of Agreement.

20. The details of the constitution shall be taken up and reported upon by the Committee to be appointed by the supreme judicatories of the respective Churches which shall approve of this outline of a tentative plan. The constitution shall be adopted by each Church in accordance with its own constitution.

In case our Assemblies and General Synods adopt these recommendations, we recommend that their action be conveyed to the approaching meeting of the Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches with the request that it appoint a committee for conference on this subject with the committees appointed by the constituent Churches to draft a constitution.

Plan of Union Through Regional Assemblies.—In the first separate session of our Committee in Louisville it was learned that some of our members believed that "Organic Union through Regional Assemblies" was still possible. Therefore, the following paper was adopted:

"That a Special Sub-Committee, consisting of Drs. Dobyns, Ogden, Thompson, Graham and Brownlee, be appointed to ask representatives of the Churches represented in the Joint Conference whether they are willing to recommend a union of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches on the Regional or Provincial Assembly plan, and if so to present to us as fully and clearly as possible a Plan of Union prepared on the basis of Regional or Provincial Assemblies."

This Special Sub-Committee was also authorized to discuss the "Synodical Plan" if they so desired.

The Committee of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., made the following reply to these representations of the Special Sub-Committee:

"We propose for discussion such changes in our form of governments as will provide for Regional Assemblies or General Synods covering the territory now occupied by several synods and possess such powers as are now exercised by the synod in the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.

"This plan could retain the present synod or substitute for several synods the proposed General Synods, under which would be grouped immediately the several classes or presbyteries of that territory.

"Over the General Synods or Regional Assemblies, the General Assembly shall have supreme jurisdiction, legislative, judicial and executive, in all matters of faith and order."

To this paper our Committee made the following answer:

"That we regard it as organic union by consolidation, and therefore it would not be acceptable to our Church; but that we still stand ready to confer with them on the subject of union through Regional Assemblies."

The Committee of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. prepared the following memorandum as to distribution of powers among the several courts:

"*Presbyteries or Classes.*—Powers as at present.

"*Synods.*—Powers as at present, and also denominational synods as they are.

"*General Synods.*—Powers, complete control and review of presbyteries and synods under them, with privilege of appeal to General Assembly, on questions of faith and order, when asked for by at least one-third of the General Synod, in which case final adjudication by majority vote of the General Assembly.

"*General Assembly.*—Administration of all Church-wide agencies and veto power by two-thirds vote of any proposed change in polity or doctrine."

In return our Committee sent to the Committee of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A., the "Plan of Union" which had been prepared by Dr. Wells as a tentative statement of the powers this Committee is willing to grant to the Supreme Assembly.

The Committee of the Church U. S. A., sent our Committee the following paper:

"We do not find in this proposition any elements preferable to the proposed amendments to the Plan of Federal Union of the Council of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches."

In response to the first paper in this correspondence with the Committee of the Church U. S. A., the following paper was adopted:

"Our Committee has heard the communication from your Committee through Dr. Stevenson. We feel that the communication does not indicate that we are near enough to find a basis for agreement.

"Our Committee has already adopted at a previous meeting the following resolution, which shows the basis on which we can negotiate further. We submit it to you to see whether, in view of this, you are ready to consider the discussion further."

" 'That this Committee is prepared to consider earnestly and fully any form of Closer Relations that will safeguard these points, viz.:

1. The autonomy of the Churches.
2. The system of doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.
3. The protection of all existing property rights.
4. The complete separation of Church and State.
5. Separate synods and presbyteries for the Colored People.' "

Dr. Dobyns asked permission to record his vote against this paper as not being a "proper answer to the paper of Dr. Stevenson, which was submitted as a basis of discussion."

The following communication came back from the Committee of the Church U. S. A.:

"Our Committee desires to have you define clearly what you mean by 'the autonomy of the Churches'."

Our Committee returned the following answer:

"In respense to your inquiry, we beg to state that we employ the word 'autonomy' in the sense that Presbyteries, Synods and General Synods (or Regional Assemblies) reserve to themselves all powers now enjoyed by them, except in so far as those powers are expressly delgated to the proposed Supreme Assembly, just as was done by the thirteen original States when they united in the formation of the American Republic."

The Committee of the Church U. S. A. returned the following paper:

"Regarding the points to be safeguarded in the consideration of Closer Relations our Committee believes there will be no difficulty in reaching an agreement on Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5. As to No. 1, concerning which you have sent in a fuller statement, the possibility of agreement hangs on the powers to be granted to the Supreme Assembly.

What are the maximum powers which you would be willing to grant the Supreme Assembly?"

The following reply was sent by our Committee:

"The powers mentioned in the paper 'Proposed Plan of Union' sent your Committee this afternoon are the powers our Committee regards as the maximum we are willing to grant in any 'Plan of Union'."

Drs. Whaling, Campbell, Ogden, Thompson, Hutton, Brownlee and Fraser were made a Sub-Committee to remain over after adjournment to continue negotiations with the Committee of the Church U. S. A. to see if any agreement can be reached as to powers to be granted the Supreme Assembly.

It was left to the discretion of the Sub-Committee to incorporate in this report whether we are making progress toward a "Plan of Regional Assemblies," and, if so, ask for a continuation of the negotiations.

Second Meeting in Washington.—The Sub-Committee appointed at Louisville met in Washington, D. C., April 21st, and decided to recommend to the Joint Conference the further strengthening of the "Plan of Federal Union," already adopted by the Joint Conference, by adding certain amendments taken from the paper on Regional Assemblies offered by our Committee. The Joint Conference will assemble in Richmond, Va., May 12th to consider these suggestions. That will be too late to incorporate the results in this report, which the Assembly directed the Committee to place in the hands of the Stated Clerk by May 1st. The Committee may, therefore, ask leave to present a supplementary report when the Assembly meets.

It is to be regretted that the final conclusions of the Committee are so delayed. But the Assembly will doubtless bear in mind that the Committee could not be completely made up until after the last Synodical meetings, which were held November 18th. The dates for meetings had to be so fixed as to secure the largest possible attendance by members of large Committees representing four Churches. The business has been carried forward as expeditiously as the gravity of the subject and all attending circumstances would allow.

We submit herewith the Minutes of the several meetings of our Committee and of the Joint Conference and also copies of the papers prepared at the request of the Committee by Drs. Campbell, Ogden and Wells. The Chairman will also forward copies of this report to the Stated Clerks of those bodies which did not participate in the Joint Conference by reason of the fact that they had no Committees on Closer Relations.

It is but just to the Assembly and also to the members of this Committee that this report should inform the Assembly of the diligence and spirit manifested by the Committee in the discharge of the responsible duties imposed upon it. At none of the three meetings of the Committee was there a smaller attendance than fourteen out of the seventeen members. In every case of absence a satisfactory reason was rendered which was fully sustained by the Committee. Hundreds of miles were travelled and many days consumed in order to reach each meeting. The members on leaving home, as a rule, made arrangements to stay as long as the business required. Notwithstanding the wide differences of views and the strong feelings with which those views were held, the dicussions were conducted with the utmost courtesy and good feeling. The spirit of worship and of a desire for divine leading was pronounced. The sessions were uniformly opened and closed with prayer. At the first meeting of all, following the suggestion of the Convener, all the members in succession led in prayer. It was at all times the avowed purpose of the Committee, as well as its actual practice, to give every member every opportunity to express any views he might wish to express and at any length he might choose, whether in the meetings of our Committee or in those of the Joint Conference. It was our object to have every phase of this subject of

Closer Relations given the fullest and fairest expression. So that no stone was left unturned to ascertain what is the best policy for the Church to adopt. The result is this report, the main conclusions of which are presented by unanimous action.

1921, p. 11. The Ad Interim Committee to co-operate with Committees of other Presbyterian bodies in the formation of a Constitution of the United Assembly made a report through the Chairman, Rev. A. M. Fraser, D.D. The report was adopted and the Committee was given another year in which to give further consideration to the subject. Rev. Egbert W. Smith, D.D., was substituted for Mr. A. M. Scales on this Committee. The report is as follows:

The Committee to co-operate with Committees of other Presbyterian and Reformed Bodies in framing a Constitution for a United Assembly, beg leave to submit the following substitute for the report previously filed with the Stated Clerk:

Because of differences of opinion in the Committee with regard to the Constitution prepared by the joint action of the Committees of the several Churches, a copy of which has been filed with the Stated Clerk along with our previous report, your Committee has held several meetings in St. Louis on May 18th and 19th, with a view to securing unanimity. After prolonged conferences, the following action was taken:

Resolved, That the Committee hereby request permission of the Assembly to withdraw the whole report heretofore filed with the Stated Clerk, together with the Constitution filed at the same time; recommending to the Assembly postponement of action on the proposed Constitution for a year, and asking for authority to seek further conferences with the committees of the other participating Churches, and to invite constructive suggestions for the further amendment of this Constitution to the end that obscure passages may be made more clear and the whole document brought into fuller accord with the Plan of Union adopted by the Assembly of 1920 as its instructions to the Committee in the framing of the Constitution.

The reasons for making this request are as follows:

1. Inasmuch as the General Synods of two of the participating Churches, namely, the Reformed Church in America and the Reformed Church in the United States, cannot convene for two years, no time will be lost in the final consummation of the Union by this delay.

2. Subsequent to the final meeting of the joint conference at which the Constitution was agreed upon, the Committee of one of the participating Churches, namely, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, in adopting the said Constitution did so with an explanatory resolution, which explanatory resolution is itself susceptible of different interpretations, showing that there is ambiguity in the Constitution itself.

3. The proposed Constitution has been made public so recently that there has not been sufficient time for the opinion of the Church touching its meaning and value to crystallize.

4. It is of vital importance to the success of the proposed Union that there should be as much unanimity as possible within each of the proposed constituent Churches, and we apprehend that if final action is taken prematurely, the existing divergence of views within the Committee would be reflected in the Assembly and the presbyteries, and the granting of more time will give an opportunity for the removal of differences and the securing of substantial support of the plan of our Church.

p. 25. The overture of Rev. Dunbar H. Ogden and Rev. Wm. R. Dobyns, concerning conference with other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, relative to the union of these bodies on the basis of Regional Assemblies or General Synods, was referred to the Assembly's Ad Interim Committee to co-operate with the other constituent bodies in the formation of the constitution of a United Federal Assembly.

[Ed. note: The answer to this overture appears in the majority report of 1922, **p. 178.** As the majority report was not adopted the following excerpt therefrom is not official:

As to the overture of Dr. Dobyns and Dr. Ogden:

We report that when it appeared improbable that the United General Assembly could be established by the adoption of the proposed Constitution, a tentative basis of negotiation was proposed by your committee upon which to work out a Regional Assembly plan of union and referred to a committee of members from all the Churches. It developed that the only plan acceptable to the representatives of U. S. A. and the representatives of the Reformed Church in U. S. would destroy the autonomy of all the Churches and practically make a series of Synods controlled by a Master Assembly, and would not be accepted by our Church or the U. P. Church, hence nothing could be done in that line.]

p. 27. The following telegram from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was read and referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Correspondence:

Greetings. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., in session at Winona Lake, Indiana, has taken the following action regarding the proposed United Assembly of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches:

1. The Assembly refers back to its Committee on Church Co-operation and Union the proposed constitution for a United Assembly of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches with instructions to the effect that, while willing to approve any measures which will promote closer relation with the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, it is united and earnest in the desire for an actual union of the Churches of the Reformed Faith and Order.

2. The Assembly instructs the Moderator and Stated Clerk to send a message to the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States now in session at St. Louis, expressing the desire of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America for the real union of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and the hope that the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States may take such action as will not only promote closer relations, but secure the reunion of our two kindred bodies.

p. 33. We recommend the following response to the telegram of the General Assembly in the U. S. A., on the subject of closer relations:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in session at St. Louis, has continued its Committee on Co-operation and Union, with enlarged powers, postponing action on its report for another year, and giving it authority for further conference.

Reciprocating the sentiments of fraternal regard implied in your telegram and assuring you of our confidence and Christian love, we deem it inexpedient at this time to take any further action, but we have referred your telegrams, together with other proposals on the subject of closer relations, to our Ad Interim Committee.

1922, p. 24. The report of the Committee on Closer Relations was again taken up. The majority and minority reports, together with the Constitution and By-Laws, were presented. (See Appendix, page 172.) May 20, 1922.

A substitute for the majority and minority reports was presented by Ruling Elder Geo. E. Price, which was adopted, and is as follows:

Resolved, That this Assembly approves and adopts the Constitution of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in America contained in the paper marked Exhibit B, filed at this meeting with the report of the Committee to which this matter was referred by the last Assembly, the same to become operative and effective, however, only when it shall have been approved and adopted by the Presbyterian Church in

the United States of America and at least one of the other Churches in this country holding the Reformed Presbyterian faith.

Resolved, further, That the Moderator notify the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., now in session at Des Moines, Iowa, of this action, and also communicate it to the other Presbyterian bodies of the country in such manner as he may deem most appropriate.

The Constitution and By-Laws appear in the Appendix (Exhibit B, page 180).

p. 25. The following telegram was received from the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., which was referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Correspondence:

Message regarding Constitution of Presbyterian Reformed Churches received. Is the Constitution referred to as paper B the one which was prepared by joint committees and referred back to committees for further consideration by both Assemblies a year ago? Please wire immediate reply, for consideration early Monday morning.

p. 26. The Standing Committee on Foreign Correspondence made the following partial report on the telegram from the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.

Your Committee on Foreign Correspondence would recommend that the following reply be sent to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.:

The Constitution referred to as paper B is the Constitution prepared by the joint committees, with amendments proposed by the Southern Committee at the Richmond joint conference, the Assembly being willing for further discussion of said amendments by joint committees, and results to be reported to the next Assemblies.

p. 180 ff.

EXHIBIT "B"

(Submitted to the General Assembly of 1922 by the Committee on Closer Relations.)

PREAMBLE

The Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States of America, to wit: The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., The Presbyterian Church in the U. S., The Reformed Church in the U. S., The Reformed Church in America, and The United Presbyterian Church, desiring to give expression to their unity of spirit, their kinship of faith and order and their common purpose to further the redemptive work of Christ in the world, do hereby associate themselves in one body to be known as THE PRESBYTERIAN REFORMED CHURCHES IN AMERICA.

ARTICLE I. THE BASIS OF UNION

Section 1—Doctrine

The Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. They recognize that the doctrinal standards of the constituent Churches are in essential agreement and are different expressions of one and the same system of doctrine.

Section 2—Worship and Government

Each constituent Church retains its autonomy in creed, government and worship, and every power, jurisdiction and right not in this Constitution expressly delegated to the United Assembly.

ARTICLE II. THE UNITED ASSEMBLY

Section 1—The Assembly and the Constituent Churches

The Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America shall act through an Assembly which shall be known as the United Assembly of the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America.

This Assembly shall represent in one body all the constituent Churches, and shall constitute a bond of union, peace and correspondence among all the congregations and judicatories of the constituent Churches. It shall be the declarative, administrative and judicial agency of the United Body, but shall exercise only the power delegated to it in this Constitution.

Section 2—Membership

The United Assembly shall consist of eight representatives from each of the constituent Churches for each 100,000 communicants or fractions thereof, up to 300,000, and when a Church has more than 300,000 communicants, then four representatives for each additional 100,000 communicants or major fraction thereof. The basis but not the ratio of representation may be changed by the United Assembly. These representatives shall be an equal number of ministers and elders, and shall be chosen, with their alternates, under the direction of their respective Churches in such manner as these Churches shall determine.

Section 3—Officers

Th officers of the United Assembly shall be a Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Treasurer, and such other officers as may be necessary. The United Assembly may also appoint and define the authority of an Executive Committee, on which all of the constituent Churches shall be represented, to act in the intervals between meetings of the United Assembly, and all of its acts shall be subject to review by the United Assembly.

Section 4—Time of Meeting

The United Assembly shall meet in regular session at least biennially, and in special sessions at such times and places as may be determined. Adjourned meetings may be held at the pleasure of the United Assembly. Special meetings shall be called by the Moderator on the written request of eighteen members representing at least two-thirds of the constituent Churches, or on the request of the supreme judicatory of any constituent Church. The Moderator shall designate the time and place of special meetings, giving at least fourteen days' notice thereof. No business shall be transacted at special meetings other than specified in the call.

Section 5—Quorum

A quorum shall consist of one-fourth of the membership, one-fourth of which shall be elders.

Section 6—Expenses

The incidental expenses of the United Assembly shall be met by a fund to be provided by a pro rata apportionment on the basis of the representation of each Church in the union. The expenses of the representatives shall be paid by their respective Churches. All the expenses involved in the settlement of any question between constituent Churches shall be borne equally by the Churches concerned.

Section 7—Unit Vote

When two members of any two constituent Churches at a meeting of the United Assembly request a unit vote by the constituent Churches upon a pending motion, the vote shall be so taken, each Church being entitled to one vote.

Section 8—Standing Rules

The United Assembly shall have power to make such standing rules as shall be deemed necessary for the conduct of its business.

Article III. Powers of the United Assembly

Section 1—Unifying Powers

The United Assembly shall have power of supervision and direction within the limits set by this Constitution over all forms of Christian activity that are common to two or more of the constituent Churches, to wit:

(a) To receive other Churches into the united body;

(b) To correspond with other Churches;

(c) To harmonize and unify the work of the missionary, educational and benevolent agencies of the constituent Churches;

(d) To advise, encourage and foster the consolidation by constituent Churches of their work within the bounds of synods, presbyteries or classes occupying common territory, whenever in the judgment of the United Assembly such consolidation would contribute to greater harmony, efficiency and economy in the work as a whole. When such consolidation is not feasible, the United Assembly may propose to constituent Churches thus occupying territory in common, definite plans of co-operation in said territory. Plans thus proposed shall be put into effect only when accepted by the proper judicatories of the Churches involved.

Section 2—Declarative Powers

(a) The United Assembly may from time to time prepare such deliverances as will promote charity, truth and holiness, and serve to advance the interests of the Kingdom of God.

(b) The United Assembly, having received and considered records and reports from the constituent Churches, may make such deliverances upon them as will promote the Kingdom of God. These deliverances shall be submitted to the supreme judicatories of the constituent Churches for their consideration and action.

Section 3—Administrative Powers

(a) *The United Assembly shall have power to create and superintend agencies for such work in Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Education, Publication, Ministerial Relief, the Evangelization of the Negro, Stewardship, and other missionary, educational and benevolent causes as may be committed to it, to wit:

To the agency for Foreign Missions shall be committed all mission work on the Continent of Europe and in the Countries in America south of the United States.

To the Agency for Home Missions shall be committed all mission work among the Negroes and foreign speaking peoples in the United States.

To the Agency for Publication shall be committed all publication work of the Churches entering said Union, excepting the Sunday School publications.

To the Agency for Education shall be committed all educational work among foreign speaking peoples.

(b) †The details of the organization of the administrative agencies shall be determined by the United Assembly. Each constituent Church shall always be represented on each administrative agency. Representation on such agency shall be based either on membership or gifts, as the United Assembly shall determine. These representatives

*The word "such" has been substituted for "its" in the former draft of the Constitution, and the passage beginning with the words, "as may be committed, etc.," and ending with the words, "educational work among foreign speaking peoples," added to the paragraph.

shall be nominated by the respective Churches and shall be elected by the United Assembly.

(c) The United Assembly, through its administrative agencies, shall study the fields and operations of the various missionary, educational and benevolent agencies and shall recommend to the constituent Churches methods of unifying their common work in the interest of greater harmony and efficiency.

(d) The United Assembly shall have authority to propose any other action in reference to the administrative work of the Churches, but such action shall become binding only when adopted in the regular way by each of the constituent Churches. Likewise, each of the constituent Churches may propose action to the United Assembly and if it is adopted by a two-thirds vote, according to the unit rule, it shall be referred to the supreme judicatories for final disposition. If it is adopted by all the constituent Churches it shall become a rule of the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America.

(e) The General Assemblies or General Synods of the constituent Churches shall send their records for information, and shall report to the United Assembly on all administrative matters, and the United Assembly shall receive and consider said records and reports.

Section 4—Judicial Powers

(a) The United Assembly shall exercise such judicial power as to doctrine and order as may be necessary in the conduct of its work and in the discharge of the administrative and judicial functions conferred upon it in this Constitution. It shall not have power to impose symbols of faith or forms of worship upon any of the constituent Churches, and it shall have no jurisdiction in cases of heresy or immorality arising in any of the constituent Churches. Nor shall it have any jurisdiction or power to determine, in the event of any schism or division within any one of the constituent Churches, the question which of the contending or divided parties in such Church constitutes the Church or denomination legally entitled to the rights and property involved in such controversy. Nor shall the United Assembly in any case be deemed to be the supreme judicatory of any separate constituent Church.

(b) *Whenever an issue on a question of comity arises between two of the constituent Churches, the question in issue shall be submitted to the United Assembly, and determined according to the following rules of Comity, which were formulated by "The Council of Reformed Churches" and approved by each constituent Church, and which may be amended by the United Assembly:

"1. Where presbyteries or classes belonging to the General Assemblies or General Synods cover the same ground, they are advised to endeavor, either as presbyteries or classes or through their Committees, to agree, as brethren, to have the efforts of one Church expended in certain fields, and the efforts of other Churches expended in certain other fields, within their common bounds, so as to prevent hurtful rivalry or antagonism.

"2. Where there are weak churches which, standing each alone, cannot support a minister, but which can be grouped with churches connected with some other assembly or synod so as to form one ministerial charge, the presbyteries or classes having

†This paragraph as it appears in the former draft of the Constitution is as follows:
(b) The organization of the administrative agencies shall be determined by the United Assembly, provided always that each constituent Church shall be represented in each administrative agency. These representatives shall be nominated by the respective Churches or by their boards or agencies as the Churches may determine, and shall be elected by the United Assembly.

*This paragraph as it appears in the former draft of the Constitution is as follows:
(b) The United Assembly shall have power to formulate rules of comity to govern the relations between synods, presbyteries or classes wherever their jurisdiction covers the same territory, and to recommend them to the constituent Church for adoption. Whenever an issue on a question of comity arises between two of the constituent Churches, which have adopted the comity rules proposed by the United Assembly, the question in issue shall be submitted to the United Assembly, whose decision shall be final and shall be put into effect through the courts of the constituent Churches.

jurisdiction are advised to allow such churches to be grouped under a minister from either body, to whom their respective presbyteries or classes are willing to give them in charge, the contributions of such churches to the general benevolent funds to pass through the channel appointed by their respective assemblies or synods.

"3. In towns of less than 5,000 inhabitants, where any Church is already at work, the others shall not enter without conference and agreement with the Church occupying the field.

"4. In a community where any one of the constituent Churches has a church, and the community is not capable of supporting more than one church of the Reformed faith, the people of the community should be encouraged to connect themselves with the existing church, with the understanding that a fair exchange will be encouraged in other communities.

"5. That the supreme judicatories of the several Churches recommend their church members, when moving into new communities in which there are no congregations of their own Church, to unite, for the time being, with some other Presbyterian or Reformed Church, if such there be.

"6. That the Synods are hereby directed each to appoint three representatives to unite with representatives of other Presbyterian and Reformed bodies in constituting a Joint Advisory Committee of Comity, for the purpose of effecting a fair exchange of churches, to discourage overlapping of Home Mission forces, to settle cases of friction and promote other phases of co-operation in Home Mission work, the Joint Advisory Committee to report to each of the appointing Synods.

"7. That in any city of less than 100,000, where any Presbyterian or Reformed Church is at work among foreign people, no other Presbyterian or Reformed Church shall open a work for the same people in that city, until other cities and towns where such work is needed have been occupied.

"8. That in case of any denomination contemplating opening work for foreigners in such cities already occupied by one of the constituent Churches of this Council, this matter shall be referred to the committees of Comity provided for in No. 6 of this report."

The decision of the United Assembly shall be final and shall be put into effect through the courts of the constituent Churches.

(c) The United Assembly shall have power to deal with any other matters of interest common to any two or more of the constituent Churches, which may be referred to it by the supreme judicatories of the Churches concerned, with such authority in the premises and under such conditions as may be agreed upon by the Churches which make the reference.

Article IV. Property Rights and Control

(a) In thus associating themselves in one body the constituent Churches mutually covenant that each retains, as against all the other constituent Churches and the United Assembly, the control by its own supreme governing body of the use of the property belonging to it, or to its subordinate judicatories, congregations, institutions, committees, or administrative agencies which is now vested in it by the civil law as well as by the law of such constituent Church.

(b) The United Assembly shall be incorporated and shall, as against the constituent Churches or their several supreme governing bodies, control the use of all property belonging to it or possessed by any of the agencies created and superintended by it.

(c) †But the constituent Churches and their subordinate judicatories, boards, institutions, congregations, committees, or other agencies, retain their funds and other properties and every property right now possessed or enjoyed by them or any of them unimpaired by the adoption of this Constitution of the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America by such constituent Churches. And unless and until, by consent of the constituent Churches, any of their existing incorporated boards or committees are legally consolidated and transferred to the possession, control and superintendence of the United Assembly, it shall have no power over such boards or committees or their properties, except as hereinabove specifically delegated.

Article V. Admissions and Withdrawals

Section 1—Admissions

The United Assembly may receive into membership by a two-thirds vote of the constituent Churches, according to the unit rule, any other Church conforming to the doctrine and order of the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America, and accepting this Constitution.

Section 2—Withdrawals

A Church may withdraw from the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America, provided it gives to the Stated Clerk of the United Assembly due notice of its intention, at least a year in advance, and observes the same constitutional steps in its withdrawal as it followed in its entrance into the union. Provided, however, that any of its presbyteries or classes which have been formed by the consolidation of two or more presbyteries or classes of the different constituent Churches, or by transfer from another Church, shall have the right to determine by a vote of a majority of its members present at a regular meeting, or a special meeting called for the purpose, whether it shall continue with the Church that withdraws or be dismissed to one or another of the constituent Churches. Consolidated synods shall have similar rights, to be exercised in accordance with the constitutions of their respective Churches.

Article VI. Amendments

*Amendments to the Constitution, after approval by the United Assembly, shall be submitted to the supreme judicatories of the constituent Churches. Such amendment shall become effective upon the approval of all of the supreme judicatories, provided such approval has been secured pursuant to the constitution and form of government of each constituent Church.

p. 31. The following communication from the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. was referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Correspondence:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. acknowledges the communication from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. regard-

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†This paragraph as it appears in the former draft of the Constitution is as follows:
(c) But the constituent Churches and their subordinate judicatories, boards, institutions, congregations, committees, or other agencies, retain their funds and other properties and every property right now possessed or enjoyed by them or any of them unimpaired by the adoption of this Constitution of the Presbyterian Reformed Churches in America by such constituent Churches. And unless and until, by consent of the supreme governing bodies of the constituent Churches, any of their existing incorporated boards or committees are legally consolidated and transferred to the possession, control and superintendence of the United Assembly, it shall have no power over such boards or committees or their properties, except as hereinabove specifically delegated.

*This article as it appears in the former draft of the Constitution is as follows:
Amendments to the Constitution, after approval by the United Assembly, shall be submitted to the supreme judicatories of the constituent Churches. Such amendments shall become effective upon the approval of three-fourths of the supreme judicatories, provided such approval has been secured pursuant to the constitution and form of government of each constituent Church, and provided further, that in case there shall not be unanimous action thereon by the constituent Church, such amendment shall not become effective until the regular meeting of the United Assembly following that meeting which canvassed the vote.

ing the adoption of the Constitution for a United Assembly of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, to be operative and effective when approved by the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. and at least one other Church in the country holding the Presbyterian and Reformed Faith.

We reaffirm our willingness to take any steps in the direction of the actual union of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. In our judgment, however, this proposed Constitution secures no closer union than is already made possible by the Constitution of the General Council of the Reformed Churches already adopted by the majority of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and now in operation. We therefore believe that for the present we should endeavor to promote that co-operation already made possible through the Council of the Reformed Churches and its amended articles of agreement until such time as the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. is willing to proceed further and adopt measures which will secure actual organic union.

p. 34. In reply to the Assembly of the U. S. A. touching the closer relation question, we recommend that the following message be sent:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., having expressed a preference for the General Council of the Reformed Churches in America over the Constitution of the Presbyterian Reformed Churches, which has been the subject of discussion between us for several years past, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. accepts that decision. We renew our expression of most cordial admiration and affection for your venerable Church. We thank God for the great work you have done, are doing, and are destined to do.

p. 77. Overtures from the Presbyteries of Transylvania, North Alabama and Upper Missouri, asking the Assembly to appoint committees on various forms of closer relations with the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. and other Presbyterian bodies.

Your Committee recommends that these overtures be answered in the negative, in view of the action of this Assembly on the matter of closer relations already taken.

1923, p. 41. Telegram:

Greetings. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., in session at the city of Indianapolis, having unanimously adopted the following resolution, instructs us to communicate it to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. While desiring to share in all interdenominational and international movements of the Churches of Christ, we are especially desirous of helping forward the realization of the organic union of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in our own nation. To this end we reaffirm our desire and declare our purpose to continue our activities for the realization of one Presbyterian Reformed Church in America.

p. 55. Reply:

Your gracious telegram is received, and we appreciate and cordially reciprocate your spirit of brotherly kindness and unity. The General Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in America provides an agency for such genuine fellowship and effective cooperation that our Assembly does not feel that there is occasion for reopening the question of organic union.

9. Negotiations in the period 1929-1933.

[Ed. note: This was activity for federal union of all Presbyterian bodies. Part of the negotiation was with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. See this Digest, under "Union—General attempted."]

10. Period of relative quiet on all matters concerning union with any and all other bodies. 1933-1936.

[Ed. note: These actions are included under our relations with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. because it was that body which was in the forefront of our consciousness of union.]

1934, p. 33. Overture from the Presbytery of Transylvania, looking for the appointment of a committee to confer with the Department of Church Co-operation of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. to determine the possibility of ministers serving churches composed of members from both our bodies to hold membership in both the presbyteries of jurisdiction, [answered:] That our Assembly has several times declined to enter into such an arrangement. Yet in answer to this overture and to a fraternal request of the chairman of the Department of Church Co-operation and Union of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Drs. J. Ross Stevenson and Lewis S. Mudge, Secretary, we recommend that this overture be referred to the Committee on Comity and Closer Relations of this Assembly, which is already in existence and of which our Moderator is Chairman.

p. 34. Overture from the Presbytery of Ebenezer, asking the General Assembly to take immediate steps to effect a real and actual union with any and all other Presbyterian bodies, answered in the negative as we have an Ad Interim Committee in whose hands these matters are left.

1935, p. 26. [Excerpt from telegram from the Moderator and Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.:]

"... advising that in line with our common desire for closer fellowship in Christian service the proposed change in form of government, Chapter Ten, which enables ministers of the two Presbyterian bodies servicing union Churches to have membership in both bodies, has been unanimously and cordially approved and will be submitted to our presbyteries for adoption if and when a corresponding overture is submitted by the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., to its constituent presbyteries for adoption."

[The above, with the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Union,] was referred to the Committee on Bills and Overtures.

p. 45. That the Assembly hereby approves the constitutional change reported by the Ad Interim Committee on Union with All Other Presbyterian Bodies, as to allowing a minister to hold membership in both a U. S. and a U. S. A. Presbytery, and orders the proposed amendment sent to the Presbyteries for their advice and consent.

1936, p. 40. [Vote of Presbyteries:] for adoption, 21; against adoption, 66; not voting, 1. Amendment lost.

1935, p. 44. Overture from the Synod of Kentucky, asking that immediate effort be made to open the way for the union of all Presbyterian Church bodies, answered in the negative.

1936, p. 22. Communication from the Presbytery of Central Mississippi expressing the desire that the principles which led to the organization of the Presbyterian Church in the United States might be accorded the consideration which they merit.

[Ed. note: No mention of this communication appears in the committee's report.]

p. 54. The Assembly affirms its desire to follow the leadings of God's Spirit as manifested in His providence in our relation to sister churches of like faith and order.

In view of the recommendation made to this Assembly by the Diamond Jubilee Program Committee that no divisive and controversial question be brought before this Assembly, which recommendation was adopted by this Assembly on last Friday, we recommend:

1. That the present Ad Interim Committee be continued.
2. That overtures on the subject of closer relations with other Presbyterian Bodies (from the Presbyteries of Kanawha, Suwannee, El Paso and Lexington favoring union; and from the Presbytery of Central Mississippi, asking that no steps be taken looking to union with other bodies), and the answer of the Foreign Relations Committee to these overtures, Dr. T. S. Smylie's substitute therefor and Dr. Ogden's proposed substitute, be referred to this Committee with instructions to study anew the whole question of union in its various aspects and to make recommendation to the 1937 Assembly as to what action, if any, be taken.

11. Negotiations 1937-1955.

1937, pp. 39, 123. Ad Interim Committee report adopted as amended.

We recommend that the General Assembly erect a Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union, this committee to consist of nine men to be appointed by the Moderator, and arranged by him in three classes (to serve one, two and three years respectively and thereafter three years each) and that this committee be instructed to explore the possibilities of cooperation or union with other Presbyterian bodies, and to report each year its progress to the General Assembly.

1938, p. 56. The report of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation or Union together with the statement of two members of the committee published on pages 30, 31 et seq. of the Blue Book. We recommend that this report be accepted, except the last sentence requesting instructions from the General Assembly to this committee to continue its explorations along the lines indicated in this report. We recommend that this committee be dissolved and dismissed with the thanks of the Assembly. We further recommend that the General Assembly erect an enlarged Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union with the same powers of exploration as the former committee and consisting of one member from each of the synods. That the members be nominated by each of the respective synods and when so nominated, appointed by the Moderator. If any of the synods shall fail to make such nomination at their Fall 1938 meetings, then the Moderator shall make the appointments without nomination. That the members of this Committee shall be elected for a period of three years, one-third coming up for nomination in the synods and subsequent appointment by the Assembly each year. However under the first appointments those from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia shall be appointed for one year; those from Appalachia, Georgia, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas shall be appointed for two years; and those from Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, South Carolina, Virginia and Snedecor Memorial shall be appointed for 3 years. That after the appointments are made the Moderator of this Assembly shall name a Convenor. That the necessary expenses of this committee shall be paid by the Treasurer of the Assembly out of the funds of the Assembly.

1939, p. 56. We recommend:

(1) That the General Assembly refer this report [of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union] to the presbyteries without expression of opinion concerning it and ask that, before the next General Assembly, each of the presbyteries give advice as to the whole question of union. [See Appendix p. 102, for report of Permanent Committee.]

(2) That, further, pending advice from the presbyteries and until the next General Assembly, negotiations with other bodies be left in the *status quo* insofar as any

definite action is concerned, but that the Committee on Cooperation and Union be continued in order that it may give further study to the matters for which it was created.

(3) That overtures [from 4 Presbyteries and one Session, against agitating the question of union], with the paper of Dr. Warner DuBose, and the communication from Dr. Floyd Boys be answered by reference to the above action.

p. 102. [Report of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union.]

[Ed. note: The report stated general principles for a plan of union with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. upon which their Department of Cooperation and Union would "look with favor." The gist of the principles was Regional Synods and the use of the Standards of the two Churches as the basis of union.]

1940, p. 66. Your Committee has had before it the replies of the presbyteries to the question on Union asked by the 1939 General Assembly and the overtures [from 8 presbyteries] relating to the same. We desire to explain to the Assembly that as a method of reaching a conclusion on the subject of the Committee on Cooperation and Union, the following procedure, on motion from the floor, was followed: We discussed in turn these propositions:

First, Shall the Committee on Cooperation and Union be discontinued? Answered in the negative.

Second, Shall the Committee be continued with its present powers and scope? Also answered in the negative.

Third, Shall the Committee be continued with changes and modifications? This was made the subject of long consideration after which the following resolution was adopted unanimously; and is hereby presented to the Assembly.

p. 164. ff. Replies of presbyteries to question on union asked by 1939 General Assembly:

[46 Presbyteries favored continuance of the Committee and the search for union; 38 Presbyteries wished either to dissolve the Committee or to cease agitation of union; 4 Presbyteries took no action.]

p. 66. Whereas, the requested advice and instruction from the presbyteries to the Assembly on the whole matter of the Committee on Cooperation and Union and its work show a majority in favor of the Committee being continued, and Whereas, some would have its work limited to cooperation and others would have certain restrictions in regard to union, and

Whereas, there seems a large interest in, and hope for, finding ways and means of effecting a happy reunion at some time in the future:

We recommend that the Committee on Cooperation and Union be continued with these purposes:

(1) To stress cooperation with other Presbyterian bodies in an effort to forward the Kingdom of our Christ and make it more fruitful in all good works;

(2) To continue to explore in search of suitable ways and means of bringing into one body all the branches of our Presbyterian family. This door of hope must not be shut for such labors, neither should we become unduly hasty in these matters of eternal importance.

(3) The Assembly instructs this committee to safeguard the purity of doctrines, the properties of the churches and endowments, the theological seminaries and other educational institutions, the administration of Home Missions, the direction of Foreign Missions supported by the respective synods, and the content of Sunday School literature, so that the synods, whether as present constituted or enlarged, will be the final authority in such matters.

1941, p. 62. Telegram from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, recognizing that the doctrinal Standards of the Presbyterian Church in the United States are substantially identical with our Standards, expresses the hope and prayer that these two great branches of the Presbyterian Church may once again be organically united in the service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This General Assembly reaffirms the fidelity of the Church to its doctrinal standards and declares itself convinced that its ministers and elders are loyal to their ordinational vows and we believe that the God of our Fathers who used them abundantly in winning the liberties, shaping the institutions and laying the spiritual foundations of this nation, is calling the inheritors of their convictions in this urgent day to witness in a reunited Church to the truths of the Gospel of Christ on which alone a just and fraternal commonwealth can be reared and which are the only hope for a world of righteousness and peace.

p. 63. We recommend that the Committee on Cooperation and Union be continued with these purposes:

a. "To continue to explore in search of suitable ways and means of bringing into one body all the branches of our Presbyterian family. This door of hope must not be shut for such labors.

b. "The Assembly instructs this committee to safeguard the purity of doctrine, the properties of the churches and endowments, the theological seminaries and other educational institutions, the administration of home missions, the direction of foreign missions . . . and the content of Sunday School literature." (Minutes of General Assembly, 1940, p. 67.)

c. That the Assembly directs its responsible agencies, in the areas of Foreign Missions, Home Missions and Christian Education (including Religious Education and Publication) to appoint small committees of not more than three representatives in each case, to confer with similar committees of the U. S. A. Church for the purpose of formulating plans by which all of our missionary and educational work shall be more effectively coordinated and, where possible, unified.

d. That the proposal to issue jointly a new Church Hymnal be referred to the sub-committee appointed by the Executive Committee on Religious Education and Publication, as recommended by paragraph (c).

e. That the proposal to have printed and circulated jointly, in pamphlet form, copies of the Brief Statements of both the U. S. and U. S. A. Churches be likewise referred to the above mentioned sub-committee of the Executive Committee of Religious Education and Publication.

p. 76. The following telegram was ordered sent to the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States has received and heard with great interest and sympathy the telegram sent to it by your General Assembly. Our General Assembly has just voted to continue the Committee on Cooperation. We pray God's blessing upon the effort of our joint committees to find a way for the organic union of our two churches.

1942, pp. 32, 88. The Presbytery of Knoxville respectfully presents the following overture to the General Assembly:

The General Assembly has placed the administration of the missionary and educational work with Executive Committees and has authorized these Committees to cooperate with the agencies of other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches wherever the work will be advanced threby.

These Executive Committees represent the entire Church in the fields they are appointed to serve. As the question of church union is a controversial one, the Presbytery of Knoxville expresses the sincere conviction that it would not be wise for any Assembly agency to be associated with the work of the Committee on Cooperation and Union, which has its own distinctive responsibility.

[Answered] in the affirmative.

p. 87. We recommend that the report of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union be received as information.

p. 129. [Excerpt from the report:] Real progress is being made in our negotiations with the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. They (the sub-committees) say they have reached understanding on many matters, and are now at work making a preliminary draft of a plan of reunion for the study of the Permanent Committee and their Department in joint session. This study will be made by the joint Committees sometime during the church year 1942-43.

p. 88. Overture from the Presbytery of Enoree, asking that the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union be changed to the Permanent Committee on Cooperation, answered in the negative.

1943, p. 61. Touching the report of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union, including the printed copy of the proposed "Plan for the Reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the Presbyterian Church in the United States," your committee, after careful consideration, begs to report as follows:

In view of the fact that this proposed Plan of Reunion is only the first draft of a report prepared by a sub-committee of our Permanent Committee working with a similar sub-committee from the general committee of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., and that due to limited time available for its consideration, it has not received careful study and approval by the whole committee; and inasmuch as it is obviously the unanimous judgment of the whole committee as well as of the sub-committee that it would be unwise for the Assembly to take any action at this time which might precipitate a church-wide discussion of this highly controversial matter in the stress of the war emergency;

We therefore recommend:

That this whole question be left in the hands of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union for careful study and consideration, and that the committee be authorized and directed to continue its explorations along the lines laid down, and in accordance with instructions given by former Assemblies.

Inasmuch as the general circulation of the printed Plan of Reunion in its present form might precipitate premature and needless discussion and might prejudice or delay unduly the prospect of ultimate agreement on any plan, no provision should be made for further distribution of the proposed plan until it has been approved by the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union.

1944, pp. 79, 144. [Report of Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union was received as information. It is as follows:]

We would report progress in the work of the Permanent Committee:

First, a special sub-committee, appointed to study and analyze the Proposed Plan of Reunion, was not able to agree on recommendations to this Permanent Committee; but papers, carefully prepared by the individual members of the said sub-committee, have been received and placed in the hands of the drafting committee for consideration with a view to a revision of the Proposed Plan.

Second, acting under the authority of the 1943 General Assembly, we have issued for study and suggestion the Plan of Reunion submitted to that General Assembly, our Permanent Committee having by unanimous vote accepted it as a basis of study worthy of careful and prayerful consideration by our ministers and members.

1945, p. 70. (a) That the Assembly's Permanent Committee on Co-operation and Union be continued with instructions to proceed upon the lines already begun under the direction of previous Assemblies "to explore and search in suitable ways and means of bringing into one body all branches of our Presbyterian family" (See minutes 1940, page 67).

(b) That the Permanent Committee on Co-operation and Union endeavor to perfect as soon as practicable the plan for the reunion of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

(c) That presbyteries and sessions be requested to continue to send to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly suggstions which they believe would improve the proposed plan of union. All such suggestions should reach the Stated Clerk not later than the first of November. The Chairman informs us that the plan has already been revised in a number of important respects in response to suggestions which have been received.

(d) That overtures 22-31 and 59, from the Presbyteries of Harmony, Savannah, Congaree, Florida, Central Mississippi, Meridian, Augusta, Asheville, Pee Dee, Montgomery and Roanoke, requesting, in one form or another, that the Permanent Committee on Co-operation and Union be dissolved and that negotiations looking toward union be discontinued, be answered in the negative.

(e) That overture 32, from Winston-Salem Presbytery, be answered by reference to the action of this Assembly taken above directing the Committee on Co-operation and Union to continue "to explore and search in suitable ways of bringing into one body all branches of our Presbyterian family."

1946, pp. 33, 69. That overture requesting protection of property in case of church union, be answered as follows:

That the General Assembly refer the matter of protecting the property rights of congregations, presbyteries and synods in the event of a reunion between the Presbyterian Churches U.S. and U.S.A., to the Committee on Cooperation and Union for further study and with the instruction that every effort be made to protect these rights more adequately than is provided for in the present plan. Also that the following proposed substitute for Section 9 in the Concurrent Declarations of the Proposed Plan of Reunion be referred to the Committee on Cooperation and Union for careful study:

"Recognizing that, in the consummation of this proposed union, the principles of religious liberty and self-determination should be respected and desiring to avoid hurtful and costly litigation, the high contracting parties hereby solemnly agree and covenant that no advantage shall be taken of previous decisions of ecclesiastical or civil courts to forcibly dispossess any constituent unit of either of the two ecclesiastical bodies of title to or possession of such property as they may hold at the time of such union. It is further agreed that due provision shall be taken to assure to each minister of both of the ecclesiastical bodies any equity which he may have in annuity, pension or ministerial relief funds being administered by the ecclesiastical body to which he belongs at the time of the union. It is understood by this statement that the minister's equity in the Minister's Annuity Fund in the Presbyerian Church in the United States, includes the 2½ per cent paid in by him personally, plus the 7½ per cent paid in by his church or churches for him, plus his proportionate part of the accrued liability fund as figured by the actuaries for him at the time of the setting up and the raising of the said accrued liability fund.

"To fully effectuate the purpose of the foregoing agreement it is solemnly covenanted that any individual congregation, presbytery or synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States which, by a majority vote of such body at a special election called for decision of that question, on twenty days' notice thereof, declines to consent to unite under this Plan of Union, and elects to remain outside of said union,

and which, within one year after the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States at which such Plan has been approved and the union made effective, shall transmit to the Stated Clerk of the said General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or to the Stated Clerk of the Assembly of the United Church a certified copy of the minutes of such presbytery, or synod, then and in that event such congregation, presbytery or synod shall automatically and by virtue alone of its own declaration be thereafter an independent or separate organization, with independent, full and complete title, both legal and equitable, to its properties, real, personal and mixed, which property was held by it or held in trust for it as of the date of the adoption of this Plan of Union; and such body shall have full, complete and plenary power to enjoy, use or dispose of, in its sole discretion, any and all property, held by it as aforesaid, in any way or manner it may choose; and both contracting parties hereto solemnly covenant and firmly bind themselves and the new Church to this agreement as a principle of law, equity and Christian comity, any decisions heretofore rendered by the courts, whether civil or ecclesiastical, to the contrary notwithstanding."

1946, p. 69. We recommend:

1. That the General Assembly approve the report of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union expressing the purpose and intention to present the revised and completed plan of union to the 1947 General Assembly.

2. That overtures 18, 19, 20, 21 requesting in one form or another that the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union be dissolved and that negotiations looking toward union be discontinued, be answered in the negative.

3. That overture 23 requesting the General Assembly to discontinue negotiations looking to organic union solely with the Northern Presbyterian Church and to renew the invitation to all Presbyterian and Reformed Churches to participate in negotiations looking to some form of Federal Union, be answered in the negative.

1947, p. 91. 2. That the recommendations of the Committee on Cooperation and Union 1-4 under Section IV of its report, be adopted. (See Appendix, p. 175.)

3. That the Assembly sends down the above recommendations without at this time expressing either approval or disapproval of the plan of union.

4. We recommend that overture (No. 38) with reference to an amendment of the Book of Church Order for protection of church property of churches not desiring to enter the union be submitted to the presbyteries together with the plan for Reunion for their study and comment.

1948, pp. 30, 63. Your committee has carefully considered the majority and minority reports of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union and recommends that the following actions be taken:

1. That for a period of five years the entire plan of reunion with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., be held in abeyance, and that during this time the committee confine its activities to exploring avenues of acquaintance and cooperation only, except that the committee shall complete the plan by March 1, 1949, and have the same printed in sufficient number to supply any request.

2. The above action is the answer to overtures 23-34 and 79.

3. This Assembly wishes to express to our brethren of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., its sincere appreciation of the confidence they have expressed in us by the recent action of their Assembly.

1949, p. 75. [Plans for "acquaintance and cooperation" approved.]

1949, p. 155. [Committee on Cooperation and Union continued under reorganization of Assembly agencies and committees, and made responsible for relations with other denominations and with interdenominational organizations.]

1950, pp. 37, 86, 87. II. The report of the Committee on Cooperation and Union (See Appendix, p. 131).

1. In accordance with the 1949 Assembly letters were sent to other Presbyterian and Reformed bodies asking them to consider a larger union of all churches of the Presbyterian family. Favorable replies have been received from two churches and others are expected. We recommend that the Committee on Cooperation and Union pursue these replies with all diligence.

2. In accordance with the instructions of the 1949 General Assembly the committee has carried on an extensive program of acquaintance with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

We recommend that this program be carried on during the coming year.

[Overtures against union were answered by reference to 1948 five-year "in abeyance action."]

1951, p. 63. That the Assembly approve the continued use of the avenues of cooperation and acquaintance as outlined (in the) reports of the past two years. (See Appendix, page 147.)

1951, pp. 64-66. The following communication was received from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America:

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brethren:

The 163rd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, meeting in a time filled with uncertainty and concern, sends to you, our brothers and sisters in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, our love and the assurance of our prayers. It is our hope that this message to you will be given not only to your General Assembly but also to your presbyteries and congregations. We covet a reply that may be given to our presbyteries and congregations, since our General Assembly shall have adjourned before your own convenes.

For many years we were one united church, worshipping and praying and working together for the conversion of our nation and world. We celebrate next year one hundred and fifty years of home missions effort to bring America to Christ. It is fitting that we celebrate together for we have wrought together.

This is the ninetieth anniversary of the tragic General Assembly when our fathers were separated to go their own ways and to witness that division which, while healed in the nation we both love, has not been healed in the Church we love even more. Our fathers have long ago found themselves one in the Church Triumphant in heaven.

During that General Assembly in 1861 and the years which have followed, some words have been spoken, articles written, charges made, and resolutions adopted which have not been worthy of our Lord Jesus Christ or His servants. Believing that before reconciliation can be had there must be forgiveness, we, therefore, as a General Assembly, humbly ask forgiveness of you for whatever we as a church or whatever our people have done which has been unworthy of our Saviour or which has wounded you, our brethren (St. Matthew 5:23, 24).

In the long years which have intervened since our house was divided, misunderstandings have developed. We, therefore, wish to bear this word of testimony to you. As a Church we hold the same Confession of Faith and we held the same Confession during the years we were together. We desire no reunion with any Church that does not confess Jesus Christ as Lord, as set forth in our common Confession and in the historic creeds of the Christian Church, and as revealed in the Word of our God.

We wish also to affirm clearly that for us Jesus Christ is the sole Head of the Church. We, with you, rejoice in a common love for and loyalty to our nation, but

we give our supreme loyalty as Christians to no earthly order but to Jesus Christ and to that Kingdom over which He rules as King. The following article was added to our ordination and installation service for ministers by the General Assembly of 1950:

"Do you believe in One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and do you confess anew the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and acknowledge Him Head over all things to the Church, which is His body?"

As a Church we have enjoyed these recent years of fellowship with you. Over seventeen hundred of our churches and over two hundred fifty thousand of our people are in the states where your three thousand and six hundred churches and seven hundred thousand people are located. We are confident of your Christian fairness and have come to think of a possible reunion, not in terms of one Church "swallowing" the other, but in terms of each having more room in which to expand. We want no superimposing of one Church on the other. We like to picture our coming together as two seas being joined. We believe that the ocean currents which ultimately will bring us together are those of the living God, the love and prayer of Christ, the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit, the need of the world for the gospel, and our common brotherhood.

We welcome the United Presbyterian Church as a prospective partner in our reunion plans. We know the United Presbyterians as splendid Christian neighbors and friends. We are glad to be engaged with you and with them in a special program of acquaintanceship and fellowship during this five year period. We trust that the way will now be open for all three of us to develop further the Plan of Reunion. We hope and pray that God's healing, reconciling love will then lead us together to the House of our God and to the Church of our fathers where we shall find in each other an answer to our Blessed Saviour's prayer that we might all be one.

Cincinnati, Ohio
May 30, 1951

HARRISON RAY ANDERSON, *Moderator*
HENRY BARRACLOUGH, *Recording Clerk*
RALPH WALDO LLOYD, *Permanent Commission on Interchurch Relations.*

We recommend the following reply to this communication and ask the Assembly to request our stated clerk to mail copies of both communications to the pastors and clerks of sessions of all our churches and make additional copies available where they are desired for distribution to the people.

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dear Brethren:

The 91st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. has been deeply touched by the genuinely Christian communication which you addressed to us from Cincinnati, Ohio, May 30, 1951. We acknowledge this message by sending our love and the assurance of our prayers to you, our brothers and sisters in Christ.

We, like yourselves, are the children of fathers who did what they thought was right in the tragic days when our nation and our church were both rent asunder. We rejoice that the nation is long since one in fact; and, we believe that there is now more genuine understanding between the two parts of the divided church than at any previous time since 1861. We thank God for the ever stronger ties which bind us together in Christ Jesus.

We acknowledge that from our side during 1861 and in the years which followed, some words have been spoken, articles written, charges made, and resolutions adopted

which have not been worthy of our Lord Jesus Christ or his servants. We freely grant the forgiveness you beg in this respect, and humbly ask you to forgive us for whatever our Assembly or our people have done which was unworthy of our dear Lord or which has wounded you, our brethren, in this same Lord.

We feel that the five year period now being devoted to a special program of acquaintanceship and fellowship is richly rewarding to us all. We are most happy to have our brethren of the United Presbyterian Church working with us in this program. During the past year our beloved Moderator, Dr. B. R. Lacy, Jr., was cordially received in many parts of your Assembly. At the same time your distinguished moderator, Dr. Hugh I. Evans, was a blessing to large numbers of our people. We hope Dr. H. Ray Anderson and the present moderator of the United Presbyterian Church may visit often in the South during their term of office. We are convinced that acquaintance on both sides is essential to any real reunion of our Churches. May God guide us all, and have His own way in perfecting the plans now being made for which so many of us entertain high and prayerful hopes.

Without reservations, and with great rejoicing in our hearts for your fellowship in the Gospel, we greet you as our brethren in Christ.

1952, pp. 66-67. Our Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union has followed the wishes of the 1949-1950 Meetings of the General Assemblies "to seek a basis for promoting the larger objective for which this committee was originally constituted, etc."

The coming of the United Presbyterian Church of North America into negotiations looking towards possible union has created new phases of study.

We recommend:

1. That the Permanent Committee be authorized to proceed in conjunction with the corresponding committees of these churches to complete a plan of union; to make such recommendations concerning it to the 1953 General Assembly as the Permanent Committee may deem wise; and to have the plan printed and distributed in such quantity and at such time as the Permanent Committee may deem advisable in relation to any recommendations it may plan to make to the 1953 General Assembly.
2. That the General Assembly approve the action of the Joint Conference of the three committees meeting in Cincinnati March 12-14, 1952. (See Appendix, page 144.)

[This concerned comity.]

1953, pp. 106-108. 1. That the Plan Providing for Union be received and transmitted to the presbyteries, and made available for study and comment to other organizations and individuals in the Church requesting it.

2. That your committee be instructed to make such further revisions as it, with the representatives of the other two Churches, may agree upon after consideration of the suggestions which are received up to November 1, 1953.
3. That your committee be instructed to reprint the Plan, including revisions referred to above, and submit it to the General Assembly of 1954. [Actual text not printed in Minutes.]
4. That the Stated Clerk be instructed to docket for consideration of the 1954 General Assembly the question: Shall the revised Plan proposed by the Permanent Committee be approved and recommended to the presbyteries for their advice and consent, in accordance with provisions of Paragraph 168 of the Book of Church Order?
5. That the above actions be conditional upon substantially the same actions being taken by the 1953 General Assemblies of the other two Churches.
6. That we encourage our Committee on Cooperation and Union to conduct an educational program on the Plan of Union.
7. That there shall be complete freedom of discussion of the plan in presbyteries, or open meetings, and, where open discussions are planned that there shall be an

opportunity afforded for those of different viewpoints to express their opinions, if they so desire; representation for either side to be of the choosing of that particular side.

8. That the church papers and individuals shall be urged always to keep their statements in accordance with the facts involved and in the light of Christian love and mutual forbearance.
9. That the attention of the members of the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union be called to the following:

A. We feel it expedient, in negotiating with representatives of the other denominations, to work out as far as possible a plan for locating and merging the boards and agencies of the three denominations *before* the Plan of Union is presented to the Assemblies for action, rather than leaving all these important matters to be disposed of subsequently by a special commission of fifty, as now planned.

B. Such instruction to our committee shall not be construed as opposition to, or approval of, union, but it shall be understood as an expression of our earnest desire for more definite information on the important question of *how* boards and agencies of the three denominations may best be consolidated and *where* they should be located.

C. We further suggest that the Permanent Committees consider according congregations in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America the same privileges accorded congregations in the U. S. and United Presbyterian bodies in the Supplemental Covenant and Agreement, thereby dispelling the present implication that the two smaller churches are being asked to "join" the U. S. A. Church.

1954, pp. 65-67. WHEREAS, 15 years of conference and negotiations have resulted in a Plan of Union agreed to by representatives of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Plan itself is based upon vision of a great national Presbyterian Church, which we believe will deepen the devotion, increase the efficiency, and strengthen the witness of our people; and

WHEREAS, the Plan is based upon the historic beliefs and practices of the Presbyterian Church and contains the fundamental doctrines and basic polity of our Church; and

WHEREAS, the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. have already voted to send the Plan down to their presbyteries for a "grass root" vote, we believe that it would show only good faith on the part of our Church which originally initiated the conferences and negotiations;

THEREFORE, we recommend the adoption of the following recommendations: (as presented by the Permanent Committee on Cooperation and Union)

1. That the 1954 General Assembly receive and approve the Plan and recommend it to the presbyteries for their advice and consent, in accordance with the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, Par. 168.
2. That the 1954 General Assembly give an affirmative answer to the following Categorical Question (Plan of Union, page 14):

   Shall The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, The Presbyterian Church in the United States, and The United Presbyterian Church of North America, be united to form The Presbyterian Church of the United States

   (a) On the doctrinal basis of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme standard, acknowledged as the inspired Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and upon the subordinate standards now held by the three negotiating Churches, viz., the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Short-

er Catechisms, together with amendments thereto herewith submitted, all of which amendments have been hitherto adopted by one or more of the negotiating Churches;

(b) On the governmental basis of the Book of Church Order which consists of the Directory for Worship, the Form of Government, and the Book of Discipline, herewith submitted;

(c) On the basis of the Constitution of the united Church which consists of the subordinate standards named in (a) and of the Book of Church Order named in (b) above; and

(d) On the basis of the Concurrent Declarations numbered 1-15 inclusive and the Supplemental Covenant and Agreement?

3. That the 1954 General Assembly *recommend* to each presbytery:

(1) That upon receipt of the Plan of Union from the General Assembly for its "advice and consent," each presbytery refer the Plan to a standing or special committee for study and report.

(2) That the committee, after carefully considering the Plan of Union and noting its revisions, and after earnestly and prayerfully seeking to discover God's will for the church, report to a stated meeting of presbytery prior to the taking of a vote, not before January 1, 1955.

4. That each presbytery be instructed that its vote is to be "yes" or "no" on the Categorical Question precisely as it is worded on page 14 of the Plan of Union, as Revised, Nov., 1953. [Actual text not printed in Minutes.]

1955, p. 69. We hereby certify to the General Assembly that on the Categorical Question concerning the plan for union, our presbyteries voted: "Yes," 42; "No," 43; and "Tie," 1. Since a constitutional majority of our presbyteries failed to vote in the affirmative, the plan for union has failed of adoption.

1955, p. 70. 1. That the Committee on Cooperation and Union be dissolved with thanks for their faithfulness in carrying out the mandates of recent General Assemblies.

2. That the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and the United Presbyterian Church be thanked for their response to the invitation of our General Assembly to draw up a proposed plan of union, and especially for their readiness to enter into union with our Church on the basis of the plan developed by the committees of the three Churches.

3. That these two General Assemblies be informed that the rejection of the Plan of Union by the vote of the presbyteries of our Church is not to be interpreted as a lack of confidence in their Churches, or as a lack of desire for closer Christian fellowship; but is due to the conviction of a constitutional majority of our presbyteries that the interests of Christ can best be served by the continued existence of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., as an independent body.

4. That the General Assembly express the hope that the cooperative efforts between the three bodies which have developed through the years may be continued and extended as may seem desirable.

5. That the General Assembly authorize and encourage its Boards and other agencies to explore and carry out, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, as much joint and cooperative activity within the sphere of their responsibility as may advance the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(4) THE REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA.

1. 1871-1956.

1874, p. 507. [Ed note: Correspondence with the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America was opened, 1871, p. 12. A paper adopted by both General

Synod and our General Assembly, 1874, p. 507, saw each affirm the confessional statements of the other and called for "a union not organic, but nevertheless a union real and practicable." Plans for joint work in publication, home missions, foreign missions and education were put into effect, 1875, pp. 25 ff. These arrangements lasted but a few years. The probable major cause of their not being pressed further may be found in the organization of the Western Section of the Alliance of Reformed Churches which promised multi-denominational relations.]

1897, p. 34. With regard to the resolution offered by Rev. Dr. Molloy, nominating a committee to consider the question of organic union with the Reformed Church in America, which was referred to your Committee on Foreign Correspondence, we would respectfully say that we deem it inexpedient to appoint such a committee at this time.

1902, p. 291. In answer to an overture from pastors and ministers in Nashville, Tenn., concerning the appointment of a committee to consider the advisability of organic union with the Reformed Church of America, the Assembly was of the opinion that a question of such grave importance should come before the Assembly in a more official manner, and deemed it inadvisable to take action until the desire of the two Churches is more definitely known.

1903, p. 468. Seven overtures have been placed in the hands of the Committee of Foreign Correspondence—one each from the Synods of Tennessee, Alabama and Missouri, and one each from the Presbyteries of Maryland, Brazos, Fort Worth and Red River. These all ask the General Assembly to appoint a Committee of Conference to meet a similar committee of the Reformed Church in America (popularly known as the Dutch Reformed Church) to consider the whole question of closer fraternal relations and the possible organic union of these two Churches.

We recommend that the Assembly reiterate again, as it has done in the past, its entire confidence in the doctrinal soundness of the Reformed Church in America; its appreciation of the noble testimony which this body of Christians has borne to the spirituality of the Church of Christ; its genuine and warm affection for these brethren, and the Assembly's readiness to appoint such a committee of conference whenever the General Synod of the Reformed Church shall indicate that such a committee would be agreeable to it.

There has been placed in the hands of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence the letter of the Rev. Peter Crispell, conveying, by the appointment of the General Synod of the Reformed Church of America, the greetings of his Church to ours.

We recommend that the General Assembly express its gratification and pleasure at these assurances of affection and good will, and designate the Rev. J. R. Graham, D.D., a commissioner of the Presbytery of Winchester, to communicate, by letter or otherwise, to the General Synod of the Reformed Church the action of this Assembly concerning the appointment of a committee of conference, and also to convey to these brethren the hearty salutations of our own Assembly.

2. 1957 et seq.

1957, pp. 30, 65. The Presbytery of Westminster respectfully overtures the General Assembly through its Committee on Interchurch Relations to explore the possibility of union with the Reformed Church of America.

Answered by referring the matter of exploring the possibility of union with the Reformed Church of America to the Permanent Committee on Interchurch Relations for study and report at the next General Assembly.

[Ed. note: No report appears to have been made.

Action of General Synod of the Reformed Church in America in 1961 instructed its Executive Committee to investigate the possibility of union with our Church. Representatives of that Executive Committee and of our Committee on Inter-Church Relations met; then the two full committees met and recommended to both judicatories the Joint Resolution of 1962.]

1962, pp. 22, 33, 71, 89. I. It is recommended that the "Joint Resolution" recommended to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and to the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America be adopted:

A RESOLUTION
prepared by
The General Synod Executive Committee of the Reformed Church in America
and
The Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations of the
Presbyterian Church in the United States

I. We recommend to our respective judicatories for consideration and adoption that:

the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States affirm their common purpose, as branches of the holy catholic Church, to seek together a fuller expression of unity in faith and action.

We are moved by a desire to give more effective witness to the Gospel, and especially to the Reformation emphasis on the authority of Scripture and the Sovereignty of God as expressed in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Trusting the Holy Spirit, we reaffirm our readiness to be led into whatever forms of church life and work are revealed as God's will for us.

Such common affirmation and endeavor are not new to us. In 1874, a plan of cooperation between our two churches was adopted. The preamble of this plan stated:

"That we fully recognize it to be the duty of the followers of our Lord Jesus Christ to seek and embrace all proper means of manifesting such degree of unity in the faith of the Gospel as may exist among them; and that this unity may, in our view, be effectually manifested by us in the absence of outword ecclesiastical uniformity, with which it ought never to be confounded, and which ought never to be purchased at the cost of truth."

Our churches stated in 1874 that "we have good reason to believe that the way is happily opened, under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit and holy providence for such intimate cooperative alliance as will prove comfortable and useful on both sides." Our fathers spoke of "a union, not organic, but nevertheless a union real and practical"—that is to say, unity of faith and action for the sake of mission.

In 1874 both churches affirmed their mutual recognition of each other's doctrinal standards, for the Reformed Church in America—the Belgic Confession, the Articles of the Synod of Dort, and the Heidelberg Catechism; and for the Presbyterian Church in the United State—the Confession of Faith, together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as "orthodox expositions and noble monuments of faith expressed by the Reformed Churches."

Linking our heritage with the present, we have in more recent times worked together for over a decade in close cooperation in the field of Christian Education and in the development of the Covenant Life Curriculum. We also share in united missions in Iraq, Taiwan and Mexico, as well as in other church councils at home and abroad.

II. We believe that we should now study and explore together the following suggested areas of common concern:

1. Doctrine and Polity, Worship and Liturgy
2. World Missions and Ecumenical Relations
3. Christian Education, including higher education
4. Theological Education, including exchange of students and professors
5. A nationwide strategy for Evangelism and Church Extension
6. Communicant referrals and mutual pastoral care, including Chaplains and Armed Forces personnel
7. Stewardship Education and Cultivation
8. Interchange of Ministers and Church Workers, including consideration of pensions and annuities
9. Men's Work, Women's Work, and Youth Work
10. Christian Social Concern and Action
11. Reciprocal studies of denominational administrative and organizational structure
12. Exchange of pulpits, conference leaders, consultants and advisors
13. Use of official church papers to acquaint our entire constituencies with the life and work of both churches, including church publications and communications media
14. Development of personal acquaintance through exchange of groups of fraternal delegates to the General Synod, the General Assembly, Synods, Presbyteries and Classes, to Men's, Women's, and Youth Assemblies and Conferences

III. In consideration of the above, we recommend that the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States each authorize by its own procedures a special committee of twelve persons to constitute a Joint Committee:

1. to engage in joint conferences to study and explore areas of common concern;
2. to initiate correspondence and discussions between our Boards and Agencies having responsibilities in these areas;
3. to report annually beginning in 1963 to the General Synod and to the General Assembly the results of these studies and explorations; and
4. to recommend further steps to the General Synod and to the General Assembly toward fulfilling our common purpose as stated in this resolution.

This joint resolution is presented with earnest prayer that God may lead our Churches to joint action which will witness more effectively to the Gospel of Christ our Lord.

Respectfully submitted,
The General Synod Executive Committee
of the Reformed Church in America
and
The Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations
of the Presbyterian Church in the United States

1963, pp. 94 ff. In accord with the directive stated above "to report annually beginning in 1963 to the General Synod and to the General Assembly the results of these studies and explorations" and "to recommend future steps to the General Synod and to the General Assembly toward fulfilling our common purpose as stated in this resolution" the Joint Committee hereby respectfully presents this report.

Meetings

Three meetings of the Joint Committee have been held—
Holland, Michigan, June 28 and 29, 1962
Nashville, Tennessee, September 27 and 28, 1962
New York City, January 24 and 25, 1963

Mr. Henry Te Paske was elected secretary.

The Joint Committee elected the two chairmen and the two stated clerks to form an executive committee, which has held several additional meetings and conferences.

Organization

After a good deal of study and experimentation, the Joint Committee was organized into three subcommittees as follows:

Subcommittee "A"—"Doctrine, Liturgy and Christian Action"

Rev. Dr. J. Sherrard Rice—*Chairman*
Rev. Dr. Gerrit T. Vander Lugt—*Vice-Chairman*
Rev. Dr. Marion A. Boggs
Judge John A. Fulton
Rev. Dr. Howard G. Hageman
Rev. Dr. Warner L. Hall
Rev. Dr. Norman E. Thomas

Subcommittee "B"—"Polity and Organizational Structure"

Mr. Arad M. Riggs—*Chairman*
Rev. Dr. J. J. Murray—*Vice Chairman*
Rev. Dr. Henry Bast
Mr. Royal E. Cabell
Rev. Dr. Marion de Velder
Rev. Dr. James A. Millard, Jr.

Subcommittee "C"—"Committee on Cooperative Relations between Program Boards and Agencies, and on Personal Exchanges for Acquaintance"

Rev. Dr. Andrew R. Bird, Jr.—*Chairman*
Mr. Ekdal Buys—*Vice-Chairman*
Dr. Irwin J. Lubbers—*Vice-Chairman*
Mr. John E. Bryan
Mr. B. Hoyt Evans
Rev. Dr. Alton H. Glasure
Mr. Henry Goodpasture
Rev. Mr. Chester Meengs
Dr. Roger Murray, II
Mr. Henry Te Paske
Rev. Dr. Raymond Van Heukelom

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although little more than a half year has passed (at the time of the writing of this report) since the Joint Committee came into being, the work already accomplished by our subcommittees gives happy promise of greater things to come, that through the exchange of communications, ideas, and fellowship, through study and cooperative effort, our two churches will be led "to seek together a fuller expression of unity in faith and action." We affirm with gladness and appreciation the shared conviction that we have rediscovered a broad meeting ground both in theology and church government. Separated by national origin as we have been and by regional distance, it seems evidence of grace that our two churches are extraordinarily close to one another in the Presbyterian polity and the Reformed faith which we both share. As in the challenging present we survey together the lessons of the past and the adventure of the future we believe that while we have only made a beginning this in itself could prove to be of great significance in the life and work of our two churches.

We are very much encouraged by the fact that so many of our denominational leaders are taking serious and thoughtful interest in our conversations and are responding generously to opportunities for mutual acquaintance and for sharing of policy and program. We express our appreciation especially to Mr. Ben Hartley, editor of "The Survey" and to the Reverend Dr. Louis Benes, editor of "The Church Herald", who have given not only ample space but also their own thoughtful study and counsel.

The Joint Committee respectfully makes the following recommendations to the General Assembly and the General Synod:

1. We commend to the attentive study of the General Assembly and the General Synod and all the local churches, courts, boards, institutions and agencies, the joint resolution, as stated above, which is the mandate of our committee. Our experience in these months has led us increasingly to appreciate its wisdom and strength.
2. We recommend the continuance of the Joint Committee. While this is necessarily only a partial report, we believe that the work done both in fact and in promise has intrinsic value. We covet for the people of our two churches the inspiration and enrichment the members of the Joint Committee have already been privileged to share in our fellowship and study together.
3. We recommend that the General Assembly and the General Synod commend to the people of our two churches the following program of study to the end that as many as possible may share in the adventure of our mutual acquaintance:
   A. The history of our two churches, as revealed in the study of our doctrinal standards and through books such as "The Story of Southern Presbyterians" by the Rev. Dr. T. Watson Street and "Lily Among Thorns", by the Rev. Dr. Howard G. Hageman.
   B. The present organizational structure and regional distribution of congregations, Synods, institutions, boards and agencies, as compared in the newly prepared Manual.
   C. The present trends and emphases as may be indicated through a reading of the "Survey" and the "Church Herald", and various other publications and reports.
   D. A frank and critical appraisal of the differences in faith, theology, polity, cultural views, etc. if and where they exist.
   E. An equally frank and critical evaluation of the similarities in theology, polity, cultural views, etc. if and where they exist.
   F. The consideration of ways and means by which our two churches might "seek together a fuller expression of unity in faith and action . . . moved by a desire to give more effective witness to the Gospel, and especially to the Reformation emphasis on the authority of Scripture and the Sovereignty of God as expressed in the Lordship of Jesus Christ."
4. Though "we see through the glass darkly" and cannot know what lies ahead we are mindful that we are walking together on a road made both holy and compelling by our Lord's prayer, "That they may be one". We ask the General Assembly and the General Synod to commend the work of our committee to the people of our two churches for their prayers which we need and ask and for their thoughtful concern as together, "Trusting the Holy Spirit, we reaffirm our readiness to be led into whatever forms of church life and work are revealed as God's will for us."

1963, pp. 27, 37, 93. That conversations now being conducted with the Reformed Church in America be continued.

1963, pp. 93, 172. [See Summary of cooperation and union activities, 1960-1963, this Digest, Part VII, C, 9.]

1964, pp. 132 ff, 141 ff. . . . Thus, the Joint Committee, having previously agreed that "cooperation alone is not sufficient to express the degree of unity that already exists between us," was led to adopt the affirmation which introduces recommendation 11.

1—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and the General Synod approve the theological statement, "The Witness of the Reformed Churches."

2—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and the General Synod encourage the pastors and the people of our two churches to subscribe across denominational lines to the *Church Herald*, the official paper of the RCA and to the *Presbyterian Survey*, the official paper of the PCUS, and also to the several unofficial papers and bulletins that are available.

3—WE RECOMMEND that Assembly and Synod direct the continuance and extension of our fellowship, conversations, studies and exchanges in all areas which offer opportunity for joint action by the two denominations; and that the boards and agencies of both denominations be warmly commended for their wholehearted cooperation and the joint action already in effect.

4—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and the General Synod direct the Board of Church Extension and the Board of North American Missions, or their duly designated officers, to study the possibility of joint establishment of new federated or union churches in geographic areas where the interests of the two denominations meet, and if in the judgment of the two boards such projects should be considered feasible:

a—To state general geographic areas where such joint action may best be undertaken.

b—To devise and recommend appropriate procedures for the said Boards to follow in the joint establishment of such churches.

c—To prepare and present suitable forms of constitutional amendments if necessary to their establishment.

d—To send their reports of such study to the Joint Committee for inclusion in its report to the 1965 General Assembly and General Synod.

5—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and General Synod direct their respective Boards of World Missions to make a study of the feasibility of operating their missionary programs as a joint enterprise, and to request that they send their reports of such study to the Joint Committee for inclusion in its report to the 1965 General Assembly and General Synod.

6—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and General Synod express approval of action already taken by their respective Board of Annuities and Relief and Board of Pensions in providing an adequate arrangement between the two churches to enable ministers to transfer from one communion to the other without loss of earned and other benefits.

7—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and General Synod direct and instruct their respective responsible groups to make arrangements for joint conventions of women's organizations, men's organizations, and youth fellowships of the two churches, and further request these responsible groups to keep the Joint Committee advised of their progress for inclusion in future reports to the General Assembly and General Synod.

8—WE RECOMMEND that the Committee on Assembly Operation of the PCUS be directed by the General Assembly and the Executive Committee of the RCA be directed by the General Synod to make whatever plans necessary to hold the regular sessions of the General Assembly and of the General Synod in th same community at the same time with certain public meetings held jointly, and that these concurrent and partially joint sessions be held in the year 1967.

9—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and the General Synod approve the exchange of fraternal delegates between the presbyteries, classes, and synods whenever possible, and offer the services of the Joint Committee to coordinate such exchanges.

10—WE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and the General Synod instruct their Boards of Christian Education, in consultation with the institutions of higher education, to devise adequate ways and means of encouraging the exchange of college, seminary, and post graduate students and professors, without the loss of scholarships or loan funds, and to send their report to the Joint Committee in time for inclusion in its report to the 1965 General Assembly and General Synod.

11—We make these recommendations with the realization that they are fragmented and incomplete unless seen in the context of a larger purpose and direction. We wish now to say that we have had candid and extended discussions and have made lengthy and detailed studies. We have found such large areas of agreement in theology, worship, and polity that we have been led to the conclusion that there are no major impediments between our two denominations in these basic fields.

If, therefore, the practical problems of our separate life and work can be resolved through these and other studies and if our conviction is correct that we can witness to the Gospel, and especially to the Reformation emphasis on the authority of Scripture and the Sovereignty of God as expressed in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, more effectively together than we can separately, we affirm prayerfully and hopefully that we envision the union of our two churches. We believe that the varied patterns of ethnic, regional, and historical identities which are found within both our denominations will be enriched and more mightily used for the Kingdom's work within the larger context of faith and witness that such a union would bring.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the General Assembly and the General Synod instruct the Joint Committee of Twenty Four and the several Boards and Agencies mentioned above to consider "a more effective witness" as the focus of these joint studies and the possibility of the union of our two churches as the framework of suggested action.

1965, pp. 47, 79, 81, 139. [Excerpt from report adopted:] The Committee examined the practices of the two denominations in the light of their confessional statements to determine what evidence, if any, there is of how close together the Churches are or how far apart, and this report is appended hereto for consideration. The Committee carefully considered the question of enlarging the conversations to include other Reformed communions. From the outset the Committee has been aware that the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Reformed Church in America have longstanding and close relationships with the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. It was concluded that, in view of the involvement of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in the Consultation on Church Union, wherein a number of Churches, including the Protestant Episcopal, the United Church of Christ, the Methodist Church and others, are considering a Plan of Union, and in the light of the progress made by the Joint Committee in its deliberations during the past three years, the present conversations should not be enlarged. It is the carefully considered judgment of the Joint Committee of Twenty-Four that the most genuine potential for advance of Church union for both our denominations at the present time lies in continuing with integrity these conversations which began in 1962 and which are looking increasingly toward the union of the two denominations.

During 1964 communications were sent to the major Boards and Agencies of the two denominations requesting a study and consideration by the Boards and their executive staffs of the question of whether or not practical problems of our separate life and work could be resolved and particularly whether or not our denominations would be enriched and more mightily used for the Kingdom's work within the larger context of faith and witness that a union of the two denominations might bring. Written reports from each of the Boards have been received and, in addition, representatives of each Board met with the Joint Committee. As a result of this consultation, it appears

conclusively that there are no fundamental practical difficulties presented by a union of the denominations. There would be in fact real advantages to union in many areas in the life and work of the two Churches, such as the nurture of the local congregations in the field of Christian education, an increased ability to meet the needs of congregations in the specialized fields of inner city ministry and rural parish, and larger opportunity in the fields of stewardship and evangelism. The Committee and the Board representatives realized that union of the two Churches might not necessarily bring economies in financial operation. While this and related practical matters are vitally important, the main concern has been our determination to be led to seek a more effective witness together than we are able to fulfill in our separateness.

Your Committee, after three years of study, exploration, consultation with Boards and Agencies of our respective Churches, and earnest prayer seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recommends that the General Assembly and General Synod . . .

(1) instruct the Joint Committee to begin drafting a Plan of Union for possible presentation to General Assembly and General Synod not later than 1968;

(2) authorize the Joint Committee to call on persons from various areas in both communions to assist in preparing the first drafts of sections of a Plan of Union;

(3) and authorize the Committee to circulate to our Presbyteries and Classes the preliminary draft of sections of the plan, requesting that the Presbyteries and Classes send their suggestions concerning the draft to the Joint Committee for their consideration in the completion of their assignment.

We urge that during the time of preparation of the Plan of Union the people of our two Churches make increased use of every opportunity for mutual acquaintance, and we call attention to the plan for a simultaneous meeting of the two highest courts in 1967, approved by the General Assembly and the General Synod in 1964. We earnestly request that the people of our two Churches be called upon to offer their counsel, to share their concerns, and to support the Joint Committee in their prayers, as we seek together a more effective witness, guided, sustained and disciplined by the Holy Spirit.

(5) THE INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SAVANNAH, GA.

Negotiations with the Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah, Ga.

1909, p. 64. The Assembly [sent] to the Independent Presbyterian Church, of Savannah, Ga., the following letter, and Rev. James Y. Fair, D.D., of the Presbytery of Savannah, [was appointed] to carry the same to the church.

"To the Independent Presbyterian Church, of Savannah, Ga.

"DEAR BRETHREN: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, now in session in the city of Savannah, Ga., sends you fraternal greeting and would hereby express to you its pleasure in your loyalty to the Presbyterian faith and its appreciation of your co-operation in the enterprises of this Assembly. We would express, also, our satisfaction in the fact that a common heritage of faith, sentiment and tradition is held alike by you and by us, and that your local habitation is in the midst of our own territory. And we would hereby cordially extend to you by these presents and through our representative, Rev. James Y. Fair, D.D., of the Presbytery of Savannah, appointed to convey this to you, our cordial invitation to consider the advisability of coming into organic relationship with our body."

1910, p. 12. [The following response was received:]

Whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States through their representative, Rev. James Y. Fair, D.D., has cordially invited the Independent Presbyterian Church to consider the advisability of coming into organic union with their body; and

Whereas prayerful consideration has shown that our people are not sufficiently in accord on that important question to justify the hope for greater usefulness, be it

Resolved, by the Independent Presbyterian Church in meeting assembled:

1. That Rev. Jas. Y. Fair, D.D., as representative, be requested to convey to the brethren of the Presbyterian Church in the United States our fraternal greetings, and say that the way is not clear for the acceptance of their kind invitation.

2. That we highly appreciate the relations existing between our brethren of the Southern Church and ourselves, and declare our purpose to continue them and to work with and through their organization for carrying the Gospel to the neglected regions of our country and to the earth's remotest bounds.

(6) THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA.

1. No negotiations initiated in 1910.

1910, p. 30. Your Committee on Foreign Correspondence, having carefully considered the overture from certain individuals touching the appointment of Committees of Conference with the United Presbyterian Church, make the following recommendation, viz.:

That, as we have no direct request from either individuals or the body of the United Presbyterian Church for conference upon this subject, we see no reason for action at this time. However, we assure the brethren of that Assembly of our readiness at any time to confer with them upon the subject of closer relations.

2. Negotiations of 1912-1915.

1912, pp. 13, 23. In response to a communication and three overtures on the subject—

We recommend to the Assembly the appointment of a committee of conference to confer with a similar committee, which we trust may be appointed by the United Presbyterian Assembly, to ascertain whether a basis of union of the two Churches is practicable and, if so, to report the said basis to their respective Assemblies for their consideration and action thereon.

1913, p. 23. The report of the Committee on Conference with the United Presbyterian Church of North America, was taken up, and was read by Rev. R. C. Reed, D.D., Chairman.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, the report was docketed for consideration by the next Assembly. It was further ordered that the report be printed in the Minutes of the Assembly and be given all due publicity.

The Committee was continued until the next Assembly, and the Assembly expressed its appreciation of the services of the Committee.

Rev. R. C. Reed, D.D., was requested to notify the United Presbyterian Church of North America of our action.

The report is as follows:

Your Committee, appointed by the last Assembly to confer with a similar Committee of the United Presbyterian Church in reference to the organic union of the two bodies, would respectfully report as follows, viz.:

Your Committee held a meeting in the city of Nashville, Tenn., in the month of September, 1912, for the purpose of coming to an understanding as to the propositions which it would be proper for us to make in a joint meeting of the two Committees. After a day of earnest conference, a paper was adopted covering all the points which,

in the judgment of your Committee, should be considered in the joint sessions of the Committees.

On the 4th day of December, 1912, in the parlor of the Ebbitt House, Washington City, the Committees met and entered into conference at 10 a.m. The paper adopted by your Committee was presented. A similar paper, previously adopted by the Committee of the United Presbyterian Church, was also presented. These papers furnished the materials of a conference lasting through the whole day. The object of each Committee was to present, not individual views and preferences, but what was believed to be the views and preferences of the Church represented. A beautiful spirit of fraternal love and confidence marked the discussions, and the utmost frankness characterized the interchange of ideas. It is to be regretted that not all the members of either Committee were present. There were, however, a majority of each Committee present, and they agreed, without a dissenting vote, to recommend to the two Assemblies a basis of union. As to the principles involved in this basis there was no difference of opinion, but there was not perfect agreement touching the wording of one of the articles. In the hope of reaching a perfect agreement on this point, a joint meeting of the two committees was held in the city of Atlanta, Ga., on the evening of May 13th, 1913. This conference was also characterized by perfect candor. While on one or two points the Committees could not see eye to eye, they unanimously agreed to lay before each Assembly the fruits of their labors as a basis of union between the two bodies.

In accordance with this agreement, your Committee respectfully presents to your venerable body the following as the basis agreed upon, viz.:

A SUGGESTED BASIS OF UNION

Believing in the essential oneness of the Church of Christ; remembering the historic lines that bind us to revered ancestors who witnessed valiantly for the truth as it is in Jesus and through whom has come to us a common heritage of Christian faith and doctrine; desiring to prove faithful in the custodianship of this inheritance and aiming only for the glory of God in the higher advancement and wider extension of His kingdom upon earth, we, the members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the members of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, do find a common standing ground in the following statements; and upon the basis of these fundamental truths we covenant to join our ecclesiastical bodies in organic unity:

I

The doctrinal standards now held in common by these two Churches, viz.: the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, shall be the doctrinal standards of the United Church.

II

The standards are to be interpreted in their natural and obvious meaning, and no one shall be authorized to teach or preach in the United Church who cannot give an unqualified assent to the doctrinal system contained in these standards.

III

The United Church would bear emphatic testimony to the following doctrines as essential parts of the aforesaid system:

(a) The integrity of the Holy Scriptures. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are to be received as the very word of God, and their authority is to be recognized as the only infallible rule of faith and life.

(b) "Our Lord Jesus Christ is not only the Son of God in respect to His natural, necessary and eternal relation to the Father, but also the true and supreme God, being one in essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit."

(c) "Our Lord Jesus Christ, besides the dominion which belongs to Him as God, has as our God-man Mediator, a two-fold dominion with which He has been invested by the Father as the reward of His sufferings. These are: a dominion over the Church, of which He is the living head and lawgiver, and source of all that divine influence and authority by which she is sustained and governed; and also a dominion over all created persons and things, which is exercised by Him in subserviency to the manifestation of God's glory in the system of redemption and the interests of His Church."

(d) As to the constitution of the person of our Redeemer, the Scriptures plainly teach that He was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary and was born without a human father. He lived a life of perfect obedience, and by the shedding of His blood made full atonement for sin and purchased redemption for His people.

(e) "The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son does, by a direct operation accompanying the Word, so act on the soul as to quicken, regenerate and sanctify it; it is His to take of the things of Christ and show them unto men; and without His direct operation the soul would persist in rejecting the truths of God's Word and would refuse to yield to the motives which it presents." In His gracious work, the Holy Spirit is the revealer of Christ, the interpreter of His word, and the comforter of the believer.

In addition to these essential doctrines, the United Church would lift into prominence:

(1) The mission of the Church. We believe that the Gospel of the Son of God is the only hope of a sinful, dying world. We recognize in the commands of Christ the urgent call to the evangelization of the world, and we bow before the imperative duty of sending the message of the Word for a witness among all nations.

(2) The exclusively spiritual character of the Church's mission. This union is based on the statement of our common Confession of Faith, viz.: "Synods and Councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical; and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary; or by way of advice for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate."

(3) The exclusively spiritual character of the mission of the Church does not imply that the Church owes no duty to civil society. On the contrary, it is the imperative duty of the Church, through its members as citizens of the civil commonwealth, to apply the principles of Christianity to all the political, social and industrial conditions of society.

IV

The supreme judicatory of the United Church shall be a General Assembly, the official title of which shall be "The General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of North America," it being understood and agreed that this shall not affect local and historic names of churches, presbyteries and synods.

V

As to the basis of representation and in the conduct and the proceedings of the first General Assembly, the Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in the United States shall be authoritative.

VI

The subordinate courts of the Church shall continue to use provisionally the book of rules under which they have hitherto been governed.

VII

The synods and presbyteries shall remain as at present constituted, until such times as it shall manifestly appear that some change is needed for the best interests of the cause and Kingdom of Christ.

VIII

All executive agencies shall continue as at present, and congregations shall continue to send their contributions through the customary channels. But these executive agencies shall co-operate with each other as far as practicable in the circumstances, and shall seek to devise some method by which, with the authoritative action of the General Assembly and the approbation of the whole Church, they can become completely identified. Before, however, such a complete consolidation takes place, careful steps shall be taken, after consultation with competent attorneys, to safeguard and preserve all property rights affected by the union of the Churches.

IX

There is a difference in the historic faith and practice of the two Churches touching the matter of praise in the worship of God. The one Church holds the belief that the Book of Psalms is the perfect and divinely accredited manual of praise, and as such is to be used in worship to the exclusion of all devotional compositions of uninspired persons.

The other, while believing that the Psalms of Scripture were designed for permanent use in the Church, and should have a large place in Christian worship, yet hold that other compositions that are in harmony with the teaching of Scripture may, with propriety and profit, be used in congregational singing.

This difference is frankly recognized; but, holding our respective views, in the forbearance of love, we suggest the following as a practicable basis:

We believe that the Psalter of the Bible, the Psalms of David, is an inspired manual of praise and the Spirit of God indited these songs to be used in the worship of the people of God to the end of time. The United Church will, therefore, take immediate steps to introduce to all its congregations by endorsing and recommending the Psalms of the Bible in the best metrical version as a divinely accredited book of praise. But, while strongly commending the use of the Psalms, it is agreed that each church in our respective synods shall be allowed in the matter of congregational singing the same liberty which it now enjoys.

Finally, recognizing that it is impossible to make specific provision for all points of difference that may arise, it is understood that these Churches enter the union in the spirit of mutual confidence and Christian love, and with a sole view to the honor of Christ and the extension of His Kingdom. It follows from this that the law of Christian charity as expounded by the Apostle Paul must be our guide: "Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but judge ye this rather that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way." "Let each of us please his neighbor for that which is good unto edifying," "doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others."

1914, p. 35. [From report of Select Committee on Closer Relations of Churches holding the Presbyterian System:]

We beg to report:

1. On the question of union with the United Presbyterian Church. There have been placed in our hands the papers on this subject taken from the docket, upon which it was placed by the last Assembly, and three overtures—from the Presbytery of East Alabama, urging the prosecution of a plan looking to union; from the Presbytery of South Carolina, expressing itself as opposed to such union; and from the West Hanover Presbytery, asking that affirmative action upon the subject be deferred.

Your Committee, after thorough discussion and prayerful deliberation, believing that the matter has been before the Church long enough for it to know its mind, through considerations of Christian courtesy and candor, without suggestion as to the action to be taken, would recommend:

That the proposed basis of union of the Presbyterian Church in the United States with the United Presbyterian Church of North America, as adopted by the Joint Committee of the two Assemblies, be sent down by the Assembly to the constituent presbyteries of our Assembly (United States) for their adoption or rejection.

1915, p. 80 d. [On the matter of basis of union with the United Presbyterian Church: 1 Presbytery voted in the affirmative, 16 in the negative, and 68 made no reply.]

3. Negotiations of 1926-1930.

1926, p. 82. In response to overtures from the Presbyteries of St. Louis, Birmingham, Lafayette and Upper Missouri, the Ad-Interim Committee already appointed by this Assembly to confer with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church on closer relations was appointed to confer also with [a similar Committee of] the United Presbyterian Church. [The request was made of the United Presbyterian Church to appoint a Conference Committee.]

1927, p. 41. [Committee continued] in order that the correspondence may be brought to a definite conclusion.

1928, pp. 36, 152. Report adopted.

[Ed. note: The report included a tentative Basis of Union much less detailed than that of 1913 above. Presbyteries were asked to offer suggestions. The Committee was continued.]

p. 46. Overture from the Presbytery of Mecklenburg, asking that the negotiations be discontinued, answered in the negative.

1929, pp. 62, 138. [The Assembly approved the Basis of Union and sent it down to the presbyteries for their advice and consent.]

[Ed. note: This was an even simpler Basis. Of the U. S. Church 32 presbyteries had approved on the matter sent down in 1928, while 8 were unfavorable; United Church: 29 approved; 8 unfavorable.]

1930, p. 44. [The vote of the presbyteries on the final form of the Basis of Union: for union, 37; against union, 29; postponing action, 25; no action taken, 1.]

1944, p. 79. [The Committee on Cooperation and Union was instructed to give special consideration to union with this Church.]

1946, pp. 32, 69. That overture requesting negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church looking toward union, be answered in the affirmative, with the understanding that this undertaking is not meant to limit in any way our present negotiations with the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

1950, pp. 86, 132. [Committee issued invitation to United Presbyterian Church to consider union of all churches of the Presbyterian family.]

1951, p. 148. [The United Presbyterian Church entered negotiations toward union with the U.S.A. and U.S. Churches.]

[Ed. note: Following failure of the plan of union of 1955 on our part, the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. consummated a union, the resultant body being titled The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.]

(7) THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

[Ed. note: Formed by union of the Presbyterian, U.S.A. and United Presbyterian Churches in 1958.]

1960, pp. 23, 78. From the Moderator of the U.P.U.S.A. Church to all Reformed Churches in the United States concerning unity.

That the Communication from U.P.U.S.A. Church be received as information and a fitting response be made by our Moderator.

1960, pp. 27, 77. [Overtures:] 9. WHEREAS, the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America are now united;

WHEREAS, we, the Presbyterian Church, U. S., were the initiators of the original proposal for a three way union, from which we drew back;

WHEREAS, the year 1961 will be the Centennial of our beginning as a regional church;

WHEREAS, it is deeply pressing upon our consciences, that in this our Centennial Season of Spiritual Devotions, we can only propose cooperation with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America;

WHEREAS, in its recent meeting, the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America extended an open invitation to other Presbyterian bodies; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Presbytery of the Southwest overture the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to appoint an ad interim committee to enter into negotiations with, and prepare a plan for union with, the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

10. WHEREAS, it appears that many advantages might be claimed by the organic union between the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, both in our common mission to this nation and in our mission abroad; be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Presbytery of Brazos does hereby overture the 100th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States meeting April 28, 1960 and following in Jacksonville, Florida to appoint an appropriate committee to enter into negotiations with, and to prepare a plan for union, and to take all appropriate steps to inform our church of the advantages of union with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

1. With reference to Overtures 9 and 10 that the following be adopted:

(a) In this 100th year of the organization of our church and with the approaching centennial celebration of its founding, we are saddened that the division which came to our American Presbyterian family with a divided nation 100 years ago has not been healed even though the nation has long since been made one.

(b) We reaffirm the hope and prayer often expressed by previous Assemblies for the greatest possible unity in our Presbyterian family.

(c) We commend and encourage congregations, presbyteries, synods and agencies at all levels that are finding appropriate ways and means to increase Presbyterian cooperation and united efforts in their respective areas.

(d) At the Assembly level the Committee on Inter-Church Relations is instructed to confer with the corresponding body in the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and other Presbyterian bodies as to ways in which present tensions, where they exist, may be eased, where cooperation may be extended and made more fruitful, and to arrange, where advisable, for meetings of representatives of our boards and agencies for further exploration of ways and means of a greater united effort.

(e) In light of this foregoing course of action, Overtures 9 and 10 (See page 27.) are answered in the negative, with the hope that through the experience of such cooperation we may be led more clearly toward the restoration of the household of our faith.

1961, pp. 28, 72. [Answer to overture asking union with United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.:]

That since it appears that the U.P.U.S.A. Church will be involved in discussions that attempt to construct a plan of union with some denominations of different dogma and polity than belong to our understanding of and commitment to the Reformed Heritage, and since it appears that only the most limited benefits could be expected at this time from any explorations dedicated to devising a plan of union with the U.P.U.S.A. Church, Overture No. 18 be answered in the negative.

1962, pp. 23, 71, 73. It is recommended that the General Assembly answer Communication 2, from the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America regarding church union, by respectfully declining their invitation in the words of the 101st General Assembly (Minutes 1961, p. 72) "it appears that only the most limited benefits could be expected at this time from any explorations dedicated to devising a plan of union with the U.P.U.S.A. Church."

1962, pp. 28, 73. It is recommended that in reply to Overture 13 from the Presbytery of Missouri and Overture 14 from the Presbytery of Louisville, requesting our General Assembly to re-open negotiations regarding union with the U.P.U.S.A. Church, the General Assembly reaffirm the action of the 101st General Assembly (Minutes, 1961, p. 72) which read as follows:

"It appears that the U.P.U.S.A. Church will be involved in discussions that attempt to construct a plan of union with some denominations of different dogma and polity than belong to our understanding of and commitment to the Reformed Heritage, and . . . it appears that only the most limited benefits could be expected at this time from any explorations dedicated to devising a plan of union with the U.P.U.S.A. Church."

And we recommend further that Overtures 13 and 14 be answered in the negative.

1963, pp. 93, 172. [See summary of cooperation and union activities, 1960-1963, this Digest, Part VII, C, 9.]

1964, pp. 42, 84. That overtures 40, 41, 42 asking for a committee seriously to enter into conversations with a committee of the U.P.U.S.A. Church looking toward union with that body be answered as follows:

That the 104th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States reaffirm the conviction of the 103rd General Assembly. (See minutes page 94) "That ultimately the Presbyterian and Reformed communions in the United States should present a united life and witness according to The Reformed faith and Presbyterian order," and that we find these overtures in this spirit.

Therefore (a) the General Assembly instructs the Ad Interim Committee on conversations with the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America to investigate with the like committee of the Reformed Church the advisability of expanding conversations to include the U.P. U.S.A. Church and other Reformed Churches looking toward ultimate union. (b) and the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations be advised of the increased urgency of conversations and understanding with the U.P. U.S.A. Church and other Reformed Churches and be instructed forthwith to explore differences and similarities with the U.P. U.S.A. Committee and committees of other Reformed churches wishing such an exploration. (c) and that the General Assembly take grateful recognition of the progress in unity among Reformed churches under the Alliance of Reformed churches.

1965, pp. 23, 40, 81. [Answer to Communication from the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. inviting to union with that body, and to overtures to the same effect:]

That Overtures 53, 54 and 56 [asking for union with the U.P.U.S.A. Church] be answered in the negative; that our church continue to explore possible union with the Reformed Church of America, and that all possible means of cooperation and unity with the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., continue.

The communication from the Moderator and Clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America be answered by the Moderator and the Stated Clerk in the light of the action of our Assembly regarding our relation to their church. (See reply to Overtures 53, 54, 56.)

E. CO-OPERATION AND COMITY.

1. Comity among: the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.; Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.; Cumberland Presbyterian Church; Presbyterian Church in Canada; and the General Synods of the Reformed Church in America; Reformed Church in the U. S.;

1896, p. 573. Your Committee on Foreign Correspondence, to which was referred the communication from "The Western Section of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System," respectfully report that they have carefully considered the same, and recommend the adoption by this Assembly of the "Plan of Co-operation" submitted in said communication, which is as follows:

The Boards and Committees of Home Missions, Church Erection, Freedmen's Missions and Sabbath School Work of the American churches in "The Alliance of the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System," both in the United States and Canada, recognizing, with gratitude to God, their substantial unity, both in faith and polity, do agree upon the following principles of action for their guidance in their work, viz.:

1. That in the work of all these Boards, as related to each other, the authority of the church courts is to be recognized as final.

2. That there shall be no interference with churches, mission, or Sabbath Schools at present existing, unless by voluntary agreement between the denominations directly concerned.

3. That, ordinarily, no churches, missions or Sabbath Schools shall be established in small communities where the field is fully occupied by other Presbyterian or Reformed Churches.

4. That the supreme judicatories of the several churches recommend their church members, when moving into new communities, in which there is no congregation of their own church, to unite, for the time being, with some other Presbyterian or Reformed Church, if such there be.

5. That if cases of difference of opinion arise in connection with the work, they shall be referred for consideration and amicable adjustment to the missionary authorities of the denomination directly concerned.

6. The delegation of this General Assembly to the Council of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches to convene in the city of Glasgow is instructed to bring to the attention of the Council the basis of representation in the Council and the matter of the expenses of the Alliance, with the view of reducing expenses, if possible, and of making an equitable distribution of the same among the several bodies represented in the Alliance.

1897, p. 32. This Assembly expresses its great satisfaction that the plan of cooperation in Home Missions brought to the attention of the last Assembly by this committee of the Alliance has been adopted by the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, as well as by our own, and by the General Synods of the Reformed Church in America and the Reformed Church in the United States.

2. Cooperation with the Reformed Church in America.

[Ed. note: After correspondence with this body had been opened (1871, p. 12), plans were laid and put into effect (1875, pp. 25 ff.) for cooperation in publication, home missions, foreign missions and education. The publication arrangement whereby our Committee issued joint materials for use by both bodies lasted but a few years. The other activities have been gradually taken over by other agencies in which both bodies participate (such as the Western Section of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches.)

Relations between the two bodies have been always most cordial. The original plan was called: "a union not organic, but nevertheless a union real and practicable." (1874, p. 507)]

3. Cooperation and Comity with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.

[Ed. note: Many efforts in these regards appear in the Minutes. As they concern specific and practical matters and involved no essential principle save the desire to avoid conflict in the labors of the two bodies, this Digest merely lists the references where such actions may be found.

1881, p. 389.
1883, pp. 19, 50, 57.
1884, p. 198.
1889, pp. 596, 650. [Specific Plans of Cooperation adopted.]
1892, pp. 425, 440.
1893, p. 29.
1894, pp. 194, 236, 238.
1895, pp. 385, 407.
1903, p. 494.
1904, p. 34.
1905, p. 25.
1906, pp. 16, 29, 38.
1907, pp. 16, 20, 54.
1911, p. 41.
1914, pp. 35, 63.
1915, pp. 21, 30, 41, 76.
1916, pp. 19, 25.
1917, p. 53.
1919, pp. 44, 52, 69j.
1920, pp. 24, 80e, 169.
1921, pp. 59, 62.
1922, pp. 26, 191.
1928, p. 44.
1929, pp. 41, 148. [This report cites 5 rules of comity as adopted by the Assembly of 1911, whereas only the first of these was adopted.]]

1955, p. 70. That recommendation 8b in the same section [of report of Committee on Cooperation and Union] be referred to the Board of Church Extension for such action as it may deem wise; and that the Board be authorized to appoint a Committee on Comity, which shall be available for consultation with any presbytery, or synod, or their committee, if or when desired, and that this committee shall be author-

ized to meet with similar committees of the United Presbyterian Church of North America and of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and of other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches when necessary, to consider problems of broad import in this field, and to make reports and recommendations to the General Assembly through the Board of Church Extension.

[Recommendation referred was:] 8 (b) That the Assembly establish a Committee on Comity, consisting of one member of the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations, one member of the Board of Church Extension, and one other member elected at large, who shall be available for consultation with any presbytery or synod, or their committees, when desired, and that this committee shall be authorized to meet with similar committees of the United Presbyterian Church of North America and of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and of other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches when necessary, to consider problems of broad import in this field, and to make reports and recommendations to the General Assembly.

[Ed. note: This action was taken upon the failure of the plan of union of 1955.]

4. Comity with the Associate Reformed Church.

[See this Digest above, under "Union" with A. R. P., 1919 ff.]

[Ed. note: No evidence appears in our Minutes that the A. R. P. Church ever adopted the principles of comity in 1922, p. 192.]

5. Executive Secretary of Home Missions recommended to Presbyteries and Synods as an advisory member of their committees on comity.

1917, p. 46. That the General Assembly recommend to the various synods and presbyteries the advisability of inviting one, or both, of our Secretaries of Home Missions to become an advisory member of their Committee on Comity for counsel and assistance in promoting co-operation, exchange of churches, and to prevent overlapping.

6. Procedure with the United Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. in problems of relations.

1960, pp. 23, 78. We do not deny the need for a common Presbyterian witness in our Nation's capital nor intend to disassociate ourselves from a strong witness there. In the event our sister churches should discover the advisability of creating a center geographically and jurisdictionally independent of any local congregation where the Presbyterian Alliance in America can advance the cause of Christ, we suggest that the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations enter into conversations with the U.P.U.S.A. church and other such communions as may be required, and bring definite recommendations before our General Assembly.

1962, pp. 26, 73. It is recommended that Overture 10 from the Presbytery of St. Louis, Overture 11 from the Presbytery of Northwest Missouri, and Overture 12 from the Presbytery of Potosi concerning problems of relations between the courts of our Church and the U.P.U.S.A. Church be answered in the affirmative by adopting the recommendations from these overtures, which are similar and read as follows:

(1) That the General Assembly concern itself with the problems of relations between the courts of our Church and the UPUSA Church, which problems are increasingly acute in this Synod and Presbytery.

(2) That the General Assembly instruct its Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations to seek communication with Synods and Presbyteries; to inform the Assembly of its findings; to take initiative in assisting the Synods and Presbyteries in the discussion and resolution of their problems.

(3) That the General Assembly also instruct its Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations to enter discussions with the U. P. Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations so that a common approach to problems may be developed and possible solutions proposed to both general and specific issues as will be of help to Synods and Presbyteries of both Churches.

1962, pp. 74, 121. That the recommendations of the Permanent Committee in Subsection 3 of Section V entitled "Special Matters Concerning Relations With the U.P.U.S.A. Church" be adopted.

The Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations recommends to the General Assembly that:

(1) The General Assembly concern itself with the problems of relations between the U.P.U.S.A. Church and this Assembly, its Synods and Presbyteries and congregations, which problems the Permanent Committee feels to be widespread and of increasing acuteness especially in such Synods as Missouri, Kentucky, Texas, Florida and Louisiana.

(2) The General Assembly affirm that proper procedure in these matters of Inter-Church Relation is

(a) For the Board of Church Extension to deal with problems of comity in the locations of churches at the denominational level with the Board of National Missions of the U.P.U.S.A. Church.

(b) For the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations to maintain communication with the Synods and Presbyteries of our Church in order that a total picture of problems of inter-church relations be brought to the Assembly's attention.

(c) For the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations to take initiative in assisting Synods and Presbyteries in discussion of and resolution of problems.

(d) For Synods of the U.S. Church to deal with Synods of the U.P.U.S.A. Church and that Presbyteries of the U.S. Church deal with Presbyteries of the U.P.U.S.A. Church rather than assume levels of responsibility properly belonging to higher courts.

(e) For Synods and Presbyteries of our Church to inform the Assembly through its Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations of inter-church developments within their boundaries.

(f) That the General Assembly instruct its Committee on Inter-Church Relations to enter immediately into discussions with the appropriate body of the U.P.U.S.A. Church, seeking to survey the total picture of relations between the two churches to develop a common method for approaching inter-church problems, to seek possible solutions to both general and particular issues, and to offer advice on such issues to the Synods and Presbyteries of the respective churches.

(3) The General Assembly request the General Assembly of the U.P.U.S.A. Church to take parallel action by giving authority and responsibility to its Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations to undertake joint action with the U.S. Church's Committee on Inter-Church Relations as set forth in #(2) above.

F. PARTICIPATION IN COUNCILS, ETC.

1. Alliance of Reformed Churches through the World holding the Presbyterian System.

[Ed. note: Our Church has been a constituent of the Alliance since its establishment in 1875. Delegates have been appointed to each of the Councils of the Alliance, which are held quadrennially. The 16th Council was scheduled for Geneva in 1941, but had to be abandoned.

From 1875 thru 1888 the Alliance functioned only in its Council meetings. In 1889 the Western Section came into being as the "Western Executive Commission" of the Alliance, its members being chosen by the Council of 1888 in London.

The Western Section continued thus, as an executive commission only, until 1925. When the Council of Reformed Churches in America merged with the Western Section in 1926, the new Western Section was composed of representatives elected by the constituent bodies, and began to hold regular annual meetings.

Since 1926 our Church has chosen delegates to the meetings of the Council and representatives to the Western Section.]

See this Digest, Council of the Reformed Churches in America.

1874, p. 483. A committee was appointed to whom were referred certain papers relating to a General Presbyterian Council.

p. 518. The report of the committee concerning a General Presbyterian Council was taken up, and, after discussion, the following substitute, offered by Rev. H. M. Smith, D.D., was adopted:

In answer to the overture from a committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and from ministers of other Presbyterian churches, touching a conference of representatives of the various Presbyterian bodies throughout the world, with a view of "coming into formal communion with each other, and of promoting great causes by joint action," this Assembly respectfully submits that we most heartily sympathize with every desire to advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. Nevertheless, in forming relations with other bodies, we are to be governed by our recognized principles of government. We must, therefore, respectfully decline this request, since, in our judgment, church courts, as such, cannot recognize the principle of an irresponsible alliance. The only question we can properly consider is the principle of co-ordination with courts constituted according to our Presbyterian form of government.

1875, p. 46. Overtures from the Presbyteries of Louisville, Florida, Lexington and East Hanover. These overtures concur in asking this Assembly to revoke the action of the last in regard to the proposed confederation of Presbyterian churches, and to adopt measures favorable to that scheme.

Resolved, That this Assembly appoint a committee on the confederation of Presbyterian churches of the world, with authority to correspond with similar committees of other Presbyterian bodies in reference to the Constitution to be proposed for such a General Council; and if the committee deem it wise and practicable, appoint a delegate or delegates to the proposed conference to be held in London, on the ---------- day of July, 1875.

1876, pp. 204, 225. The Rev. Stuart Robinson, from the committee appointed by the last Assembly in relation to a proposed confederation of Presbyterian churches of the world, made a report, and also another report concerning his attendance as a delegate upon the meeting of the Presbyterian Alliance in London last July.

[Ed. note: These reports were received and were considered at length in connection with certain overtures bearing on the same subject. Whereupon the following from the Committee on Bills and Overtures was adopted by a vote of 78 to 39.]

Overtures from Transylvania Presbytery, expressing the hope that the General Assembly will decline to enter the proposed council; from the Presbytery of Louisiana, asking the Assembly to reconsider the subject of the Pan-Presbyterian Council, and, if it seems best to them, to repeal resolutions passed at the St. Louis Assembly; from

the Presbytery of Memphis, approving the action of the last General Assembly in appointing a committee on the confederation of the Presbyterian churches of the world, and expressing the wish that all needful steps be taken to put in operation the plan adopted in July, 1875, by the delegates assembled in council.

Your committee, after the consideration of these overtures and the subjects presented in them, recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

Resolved, 1, That this Assembly hereby expresses its approval, in general, of the proceedings of the conference held in London in July last, composed of the representatives in a large portion, some 15,000 congregations, of the Presbyterian churches of the world.

Resolved, 2, The Assembly approves of the general tenor of the Constitution of the Alliance providing for a General Presbyterian Council, to be held every three years.

Resolved, 3, That this Assembly will appoint delegates to represent the Presbyterian Church in the United States in the General Council, to be held in Edinburgh in 1877, provided that this appointment of delegates shall not be understood as pledging any funds of the Church to defraying the expenses of the delegates to the council.

Resolved, 4, That the delegation so appointed shall select from their own number members to prepare any paper concerning the condition and position of our Church, to be spread upon the records of the council; and, in case the delegates be unable to attend the council, they are hereby authorized to represent our Church by such official letter as they may agree upon.

p. 237. The following paper, offered by the Rev. Dr. Hoge, was passed with but one dissenting voice:

Resolved, That in appointing delegates to the General Presbyterian Alliance, it is with the distinct declaration that it is not to be regarded as another and a higher court, but as an assemblage of committees, appointed by the several churches which they represent, for the purpose of joint conference and joint report, and for such action only as belongs to an association of delegates thus constituted.

[Ed. note: The report of the committee appointed by the General Assembly of 1875 on the confederation of the Presbyterian churches of the world is found in the Appendix to the Minutes of 1877, page 487. The report of Rev. Stuart Robinson, D.D., delegate to the conference held in London, July 21-23, 1875, to frame a Constitution for a General Presbyterian Council, is found on page 489 of the Minutes for 1877. The resolutions adopted by the Assembly of 1876 (see above) are substantially the same as those recommended in the report of the above committee.]

1877, pp. 492 ff. [The Constitution adopted for the Alliance is as follows:]

Whereas churches holding the Reformed faith, and organized on Presbyterian principles, are found, though under a variety of names, in different parts of the world; present united by no visible bond, whether of fellowship or of work;

And whereas, in the providence of God, the time seems to have come when they may all more fully manifest their essential oneness, have closer communion with each other, and promote great causes by joint action, it is agreed to form a Presbyterian Alliance, to meet in general council from time to time, in order to confer upon matters of common interest, and to further the ends for which the Church has been constituted by her Divine Lord and only King. In forming this Alliance the Presbyterian churches do not mean to change their fraternal relations with other churches, but will be ready, as heretofore, to join with them in Christian fellowship and in advancing the cause of the Redeemer on the general principle maintained and taught in the Reformed Confessions, that the Church of God on earth, though composed of many

members, is one body in the communion of the Holy Ghost, of which body Christ is the Supreme Head, and the Scriptures alone are the infallible law.

I. DESIGNATION.—This Alliance shall be known as "The Alliance of the Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian System.

II. MEMBERSHIP.—Any church organized on Presbyterian principles, which holds the supreme authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in matters of faith and morals, and whose creed is in harmony with the consensus of the Reformed Confessions, shall be eligible for admission into the Alliance.

III. THE COUNCIL.—1. *Its Meetings.*—The Alliance shall meet in general council once in three years.

2. *Its Constituency.*—The Council shall consist of delegates, being ministers and elders, appointed by the churches forming the Alliance; the number from each church being regulated by a plan sanctioned by the Council, regard being had generally to the number of congregations in the several churches, the delegates, as far as practicable, to consist of an equal number of ministers and elders. The Council may, on the recommendation of a committee on business, invite Presbyterian brethren, not delegates, to offer suggestions, to deliver addresses, and to read papers.

3. *Its Powers.*—The Council shall have power to decide upon the application of churches desiring to join the Alliance; it shall have power to entertain and consider topics which may be brought before it by any church represented in the Council, or by any member of the Council, on their being transmitted in the manner hereinafter provided; but it shall not interfere with the existing creed or constitution of any church in the Alliance, or with its internal order or external relations.

4. *Its Objects.*—The Council shall consider questions of general interest to the Presbyterian community; it shall seek the welfare of churches, especially such as are weak or persecuted; it shall gather and disseminate information concerning the kingdom of Christ throughout the world; it shall commend the Presbyterian system as Scriptural, and as combining simplicity, efficiency and adaptation to all times and conditions; it shall also entertain all subjects directly connected with the work of evangelization, such as the relation of the Christian Church to the evangelization of the world, the distribution of mission work, the combination of church energies, especially in reference to great cities and destitute districts, the training of ministers, the use of the press, colportage, the religious instruction of the young, the sanctification of the Sabbath, systematic beneficience, the suppression of intemperance and other prevailing vices, and the best methods of opposing infidelity and Romanism.

5. *Its Methods.*—The Council shall seek to guide and stimulate public sentiment by papers read, by addresses delivered and published, by the circulation of information respecting the allied churches and their missions, by the exposition of Scriptural principles, and by defense of the truth; by communicating the Minutes of its proceedings to the supreme courts of the churches forming the Alliance, and by such other action as is in accordance with its constitution and objects.

6. *Committee on Business.*—The Council, at each general meeting, shall appoint a Committee on Business, through which all communications and notices of subjects proposed to be discussed shall pass. The Committee appointed at one general meeting shall act provisionally, so far as is necessary, in preparing for the following meeting.

IV. CHANGE OF CONSTITUTION.—No change shall be made in this Constitution, except on a motion made at one general meeting of Council, not objected to by a majority of the churches and carried by a two-thirds vote at the next general meeting.

2. Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

2a. Our Church participates in the origination of the Federal Council. 1904-1909

1904, p. 41. In answer to a communication from the National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers, asking for co-operation in the work of said Federation, your Committee recommends the following answer: The Assembly expresses its sympathy with the purposes of the Organization, but, in accordance with its well established custom in such cases, it declines to appoint the delegates asked for.

1905, p. 40. [Similar action.]

1907, p. 55. An overture, asking that admission to the Inter-Church Conference on Federation, be requested, and to appoint delegates thereto, at this meeting. It is recommended that this be answered in the affirmative. Adopted.

p. 58. On the overtures, asking for representation of our Church at the Inter-Church Conference on Federation to be held in 1909, your Committee recommends that these overtures be answered in the affirmative, and that the Moderator appoint thirteen representatives to the said Conference, their expenses to be borne by themselves. The Moderator, Rev. J. R. Howerton, D.D., was appointed chairman of the delegation.

1908, p. 15. The Rev. J. R. Howerton, Moderator of the last Assembly, reported that under the instructions of the Assembly he had appointed the following to represent our church in the National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers to meet in 1909:

Rev. H. E. Kirk, D.D., Rev. A. J. McKelway, D.D., Hon. M. F. Ansel, Mr. Samuel M. Inmann, Rev. J. W. Walden, D.D., Hon. R. T. Simpson, Rev. T. M. Hunter, D.D., Rev. J. B. Hutton, D.D., President E. R. Long, J. Farley, Esq., Rev. W. R. Dobyns, D.D., Rev. A. B. Curry, D.D., and Rev. Edwin Muller, D.D.

By appointment of the last General Assembly, the Rev. J. R. Howerton, D.D., is the chairman of this delegation.

1909, p. 52. Dr. A. J. McKelway, a member of the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, representing our Church, was heard concerning Church Federation, and the following was adopted:

"... we commend his willingness to undertake the raising of our Assembly's apportionment to increase the work and usefulness of said Council."

2b. Our Church refuses membership in the Federal Council—1911.

1911, p. 56. Touching the address of Rev. E. B. Sanford, D.D., Secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, to which we recommend the following:

The Assembly has heard with great pleasure the annual address of Dr. Sanford in behalf of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. We rejoice in the work that has heretofore been accomplished through the agency of this Council, and we pray that God may bless and guide the Council in its future work. But while we recognize the Council as a body which illustrates our unity in the faith, we do not believe that failure to cooperate in its special work would be, on the part of any of its constituent bodies, a denial of that unity. We stand ready at all times to cooperate with the Council in any work which, in our judgment, is vital to the interests of the Kingdom of Christ.

At the same time, we feel impelled, for what we deem sufficient reasons, to refrain for the present from cooperation with the Council as such.

2c. Our Church enters the Federal Council—1912, and remains in until 1931. Numerous protests during this period made to the Assembly, in the Assembly, and by the Assembly formally to the Council.

1912, p. 70a. We recommend that overtures, asking that we re-enter into formal relationship with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, be answered in the affirmative; that the Rev. W. S. Jacobs, D.D., be elected our representative on the Executive Committee, and that the Moderator of this Assembly be empowered to appoint delegates to the quadrennial to be held in Chicago in December, 1912.

1913, p. 47. [The relations of our Assembly with the Federal Council were debated without action.]

p. 67. An overture, asking that the Assembly do not withdraw from the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

In view of the foregoing action [See this Digest, under "Miscel. Deliverances of the G. A."], designed to secure a statement of the doctrinal position of the Presbyterian Churches upon the relation of the Church to Social Service (in part for its effect on the said Council), your Committee would recommend that this overture be answered in the affirmative, and further recommend that this Assembly now declare that by this action it does not as a Church court approve of the Social Service program presented by the Federal Council, and that it disapproves of the failure of the Federal Council to make it plain that its Social Service program was not intended to be adopted by the Churches as organized bodies.

[7 overtures asking withdrawal from the Federal Council were answered in the negative.]

[Report of delegates to second meeting of the Federal Council asked that the Assembly appoint members on the Commissions of the Council and make provision to pay our quota of the expenses of the Council. Both requests granted.]

1914, p. 48. The Standing Committee on Foreign Correspondence would report that there have come into our hands:

1. A Statement of Principles of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. We have given most careful attention to this statement of principles underlying and guiding the development of the work of the Council, and find such safeguards and limitations as to denominational autonomy of the constituent bodies that we can and do most heartily recommend their approval.

2. A summary of the report of the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, together with the address of its Secretary, Rev. Chas. S. Macfarland, before the Assembly.

We note with pleasure the report of its wide and general activities and commend its various lines of work as therein outlined.

We especially recommend the approval of the Council's program concerning an increase of chaplains in the United States Army and Navy, a campaign of religious activity and evangelism in connection with the Panama-Pacific Exposition, and the establishment of an office at Washington, D. C., with Rev. Henry K. Carroll, D.D., as Associate Secretary, in charge.

1915, p. 39. The Assembly has heard with pleasure the Rev. Dr. Charles S. Macfarland, Secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and we have had placed in our hands certain communications, together with the annual report of the Council.

We recommend the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the Protestant Reformation on the 31st day of October, 1917, in commemoration of the nailing of the theses by Martin Luther on the door of the Castle Church, Wittenberg.

We commend to the Church for their favorable consideration and co-operation, as far as possible, the work of the Federal Council through its Commission on Church and Country Life, calling attention to their program for the thorough investigation of present conditions and for the most of their plans to improve or provide a remedy.

We also strongly commend the report on Family Life, on the Lax Relations of the Church and Home, and the report of the Commissions on Sunday Observance.

While there are thus many things in the reports of the Council which we approve and heartily endorse, there are actions taken which so do violence to the historic and scriptural position of our Church that we can do naught else than decline to accept the responsibility for them and enter our protest. In some instances they are contrary to the doctrine of the separation of the Church and the State and the only proper attitude of approach which the Church has to the affairs of the State; in others they deal with matters that are wholly extraneous to the recognized mission of the Church on earth.

The note sounded for our forward movement in the Church is Evangelism. Is it not, then, of the greatest importance that we guard the pure evangel from accretions that may turn us aside from our great mission and dissipate our energies on the perishing things of time, when they should be concentrated on and consecrated to the mighty things of eternity?

Troublous times such as these caused that action in the Presbyterian Church which necessitated the birth of the Church South; should we not, then, most carefully guard against the age tendencies which are turning the forces of the Church into so many side channels and so weakening the force of her one supreme call to save men for time and eternity?

The matters which we would disavow are such as these:

Action concerning the European war:

"(P. 36.) The Federal Council hereby suggests to President Wilson and Secretary Bryan that they take steps at an early date to urge upon the governments of the world the need of a universal treaty, providing that the signatory powers agree to enforce the observance of the agreement upon the nation that transgresses the treaty by immediate military intervention."

"That steps be taken to secure similar action on the part of the Roman Catholic Church of the United States, appealing to the Pope, etc., to take similar action in the matter."

Again, "We express the hope that the Congress of the United States will give the several States of the Union the opportunity, according to the principles of our government, to vote for or against a constitutional prohibition amendment."

(P. 127.) Again, "The Country Church. * * * There is no solution of the problem of the country church apart from the reorganization of rural business."

Topics of investigation and report: "Social Effects of Co-operation"; "Promotion of Material Property"; "Educational Betterment"; "Promotion of Independence and Self-Respect"; "Promotion of Democracy"; "Solution of the Trust Problem"; "Promotion of Political Efficiency."

In view of these facts, your Committee is forced to one of two conclusions: Either that this Assembly should now sever its relations with the Federal Council, or that we postpone action with the hope that the said Council may yet regard the principles for which our Church stands; and we recommend that action be deferred for one year.

Further, that the sum of $311.00 be appropriated for the expenses of the Council, and that eleven delegates, with alternates, be appointed as requested for the General Council of 1917.

1916, p. 76. The Assembly has heard with pleasure the addresses of Rev. Dr. Chas. S. Macfarland, General Secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of

Christ in America, and of Rev. Dr. Wm. States Jacobs, a member of the Executive Committee of the Council from our Church, and there have also been placed in our hands the Annual Reports of the Council, together with certain other communications from that body.

It will be remembered that the General Assembly of last year placed on record its protest against certain actions of the Federal Council that were deemed to be in violation of our distinctive principles and historic position. See pages 39 and 40 of the Minutes for 1915.

We gather from representations made to the Assembly, and from the reports of the Council of 1915, that it is the desire of the Council to adjust satisfactorily the matters complained of, but inasmuch as it appears that the action of our Assembly was not laid formally and directly before the Council, and inasmuch as it is a matter of vital importance that we should have a definite and official reply from the Council with reference to these matters, if we are to continue to co-operate cordially in the work of the Council, we recommend that the Assembly repeat the protest of last year and direct the Stated Clerk to transmit this action to the Federal Council, and that, pending a reply, action looking to a withdrawal of our Church from the Council be deferred for one year. The Assembly also requests our representatives in the Council to take charge of this protest and see that it is properly presented.

We recommend further that the Assembly appoint a Permanent Committee of three members, to be known as the Committee on Federation and Comity, that shall be the official channel of communication between the Federal Council and our Assembly, and we would suggest as members of this Committee: Rev. Melton Clark, D.D., Rev. Wm. Crowe, D.D., and Rev. J. C. Molloy, D.D.

1917, p. 49. Your Committee note that, after respectful hearing and careful consideration by the Council of the Protest, it made answer as follows:

(1) That the Council recognizes with cordial appreciation the service rendered by the Presbyterian Church in U. S. and fully recognizes its high loyalty to principle and the emphasis it has placed on the spiritual function of the Church, and further that it was the effort and desire of the Council to respect the principles of its constituent members.

(2) That nothing is official which is sent out by committees or commissions unless adopted by the Council; that the things mentioned in the Protest have not been adopted by the Council.

(3) That no action taken by the Council becomes in the slightest respect binding upon any Church represented in the Council unless subsequently adopted by that Church, since by the Constitution of the Council "its province shall be limited to the expression of its counsel and the recommending of a course of action in matters common to the Churches."

(4) That the Council again clearly affirms its adherence to the absolute separation of Church and State.

We recommend:

1st. That the Protest and the answer of the Council and the report of the delegation appointed by the Assembly of 1915 be printed in the Appendix of the Minutes of the Assembly, (p. 179.)

2nd. That the Assembly express its appreciation of the spirit in which the answer to the Protest was made and that the Council conveyed its answer to us through a delegate, to wit: Rev. F. D. Kershner.

3rd. That the answer of the Council be accepted as satisfactory by the Assembly.

4th. Inasmuch as the Constitution of the Council and the Council's answer to the Protest affirm that the actions of the Council have only the force of recommendations, and not in the silghtest respect binding on the Churches represented in the

Council, that the Assembly deny any responsibility for actions of the Council until the actions are approved by the Assembly.

5th. That the Assembly's relation to the Council may be cordial, and that the historic position of the Assembly as to the spiritual nature of the Church may be safeguarded, that the delegation of this Assembly to the Council be directed to use their influence to have the Council avoid policies and actions which are in violation of our distinctive principles.

6th. That the messages from the special session of the Council being directed to citizens, no action be taken thereon.

1918, p. 36. Your Committee has read with care and with pleasure the report of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. We feel honored that the important office of the Chairman of the Executive Committee is occupied by a man of our own Assembly, one whom we ourselves have chosen as Moderator. We note with gratification that the Council is aiding effectively in the great work of ministering to the bleeding body of a suffering world and is also holding clearly before it the peculiar task of the Church, namely, the redeeming of the souls of men.

1919, p. 55. Touching the Reports of the Proceedings, the Declaration, and the Resolutions of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, its Message and other papers submitted: (a) That the Assembly note with special care the fact that in the Resolutions adopted by the said Federal Council at its meeting May 6-8, 1919, in Cleveland, Ohio, the Council repeats the acts against which the Assembly now utter its most emphatic protest against the Council's repeating the objectionable acts and violating its own agreement of 1916, touching the making of deliverances on political, industrial and other such objects; (b) that the Assembly ask that this protest be entered on the records and published with the proceedings of the Council. The objectionable acts of the Council passed May 6-8, 1919, violating its own former agreement, were its representing and affirming, as the belief of the Churches connected with it, certain views on political relations, international relations, labor and capital problems, wage questions and working days, woman's work, race problems, the making of laws and the enforcement of the same, treaties with foreign countries, women's full political and economic equality, and similar questions; (d) and that the Moderator appoint the requisite number of delegates to the Federal Council.

As to the matter of the payment of the expenses of delegates to the Council, referred to in the communications of Rev. Dr. Crowe, Vice-President, Rev. Dr. Chas. S. Macfarland, Secretary, and the overture of Memphis Presbytery, that this payment, as well as the payment of the assessment of our Church, be carefully attended to by the Assembly's Treasurer for the past year and for the year to come; and that the Assembly express its special appreciation of the work of Rev. Andrew R. Bird, of Washington, in connection with the General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains of the Federal Council.

1920, p. 13. [From report of moderator of 1919 Assembly concerning his ad-interim duties:]

"I had not been authorized to make such appointments, nor had any one else such authority. But it seemed to me that as long as our Church is an organic part of the Federal Council it is entitled to representation on its committees. I therefore assumed the authority to make the appointments subject to the approval of the Assembly."

p. 66. The annual reports of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, together with a number of other communications from that body, have been referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence.

One of these papers is the answer of the Federal Council to the communication of our General Assembly of 1919, touching the action of the Federal Council upon civil affairs. Our Communication called the attention of the Council to the fact that we had protested a number of times against resolutions of the Council on civil and political matters which we regarded as inconsistent with the historic principle of the entire separation of the Church and State.

The answer of the Council to our communication is a long and carefully prepared paper, rehearsing the successive steps in this correspondence and calling attention to Section 4 of the Constitution of the Council, which reads:

"This Federal Council shall have no authority over the constituent bodies adhering to it, but its province shall be limited to the expression of its counsel and the recommending of a course of action in matters of common interest to the churches, local councils, and individual Christians.

"It has no authority to draw up a common creed or form of government or of worship, or in any way to limit the full autonomy of the Christian bodies adhering to it."

The Council insists that it has endeavored in the actions of the general body, and also of its various commissions, to adhere to the principles announced in this section of the Constitution, and it says:

"It is our judgment that with a proper understanding of the situation, there is no real line of cleavage between the principles of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Constitution of the Federal Council."

It further says:

"We would, however, remind the General Assembly that while in agreement upon these fundamental principles, the various constituent denominations vary in their emphasis and vary at times in the application of these principles to concrete and practical issues.

"We would remind the Assembly that this same difference of emphasis and difference in practical application obtains also within the constituent denominations themselves, as illustrated by the action of the General Assembly itself, which on one occasion took action on the question of prohibition quite contrary to the action of a previous Assembly."

Touching the action of our General Assembly in regard "to the treatment of social questions on the part of the Church," the Council also insists that it has not taken any action inconsistent with the position of our Assembly, and in connection with this makes the following statement:

"In a body like the Federal Council, which unites thirty-one denominations, it would be too much to expect that every particular action taken should express the unanimous judgment of these bodies in every case, and it is for this reason that wise provision was made, as above noted, whereby 'the action taken does not become in the slightest respect binding upon any Church represented in this Council unless that Church, through its own separate and specific approval, elects to make it so.' "

We recommend to the General Assembly that, while continuing our relation with the Federal Council, we reaffirm our loyal adherence to the principle of the separation of Church and State, and reserve the right to protest in the future to any action or actions of the Federal Council, or any of its commissions, which, in our judgment, are not in accordance with this principle and with Section 4 of the Constitution of the Council itself, which has been quoted above.

We also recommend that the present representatives of our Church in the Council be re-elected.

1921, p. 34. The General Assembly has listened with profound interest to the address of Dr. Robert E. Speer, President of the Federal Council of the Churches of

Christ in America, setting forth the new and larger plans adopted at the fourth quadrennial meeting of the Council held in Boston in December, 1920, looking to the coordinating of the work of the Constituent Churches in matters of common interest and the prosecution of work that can be better done in union than in separation.

We recommend that the Assembly express its approval in general of these plans as outlined in the address and as set forth in the report of the Council, and its desire to co-operate in all practical ways in the effort to realize the end for which the Council is organized, which is to manifest the essential spiritual oneness of the Evangelical Churches of America in Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour, and to promote the spirit of fellowship, co-operation and service among them.

Heretofore the expenses of the Council have been largely met by private contributions, but at the Boston meeting it was decided to ask the Constituent Churches to assume responsibility for an annual expense budget of $300,000 to be equitably divided among them.

We recommend that the Assembly express approval of this method of financing the Council, and that the question of our equitable apportionment and the method of providing it be referred to the Assembly's Standing Committee on Systematic Beneficence.

We recommend that in accord with the spirit of the Assembly's action in 1919, the Assembly's Treasurer be directed to pay the expenses of the two representatives who attended the quadrennial meeting of the Federal Council in Boston December 1 to 6, 1920.

We recommend that the following be appointed as representatives from our Church to the Federal Council, to continue from this time until after the next quadrennial meeting succeeding this meeting of the Assembly: . . .

p. 43. An appeal of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America for an appropriation to meet its expenses has been referred to this Committee. We recommend that the General Assembly appropriate $5,000 out of its funds for this purpose.

1922, p. 33. In answer to a personal letter from Dr. T. H. Law, thirty-seven presbyteries have sent up overtures to the Assembly concerning the Federal Council; as follows: Thirteen request the Assembly to withdraw the whole, or a part, of the $5,000 appropriation to the support of the Federal Council; nine to withdraw from the Federal Council; thirteen approving of the Federal Council and the appropriation; and two decline to answer.

There are two propositions before the Committee touching the Federal Council: Shall our Church withdraw from the Federal Council? If we remain in the Federal Council, what appropriation shall be made for its support?

In view of the fact that the Federal Council is the only organization which unifies Protestant Christianity in the U. S. of America; furnishes a medium of accomplishing certain desirable things which we as a Church are debarred from undertaking; and makes it possible for us to combine our efforts with the thirty other constituent bodies in such work as general evangelism, restoration of devastated churches in Europe, relief of distress caused by famine, solving race problems, and other matters of similar nature, we would recommend that the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. do not withdraw from the Federal Council; but that our representatives be instructed to protest against any action of the Council that does not jealously guard the spirituality of the Church and recognize as its supreme mission the preaching of the Gospel.

In view of the fact that the Federal Council is including in its budget of expenses, causes that do violence to the conscience of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, as well as to its tradition, therefore, this Assembly declines to make any appropriation for the work of said Council at this time.

1923, pp. 28, 29. In answer to overtures asking that the Assembly make an appropriation to the work of the Federal Council, in view of the action of the last Assembly in declining to make such an appropriation; and in answer to overtures from the Presbyteries of Mecklenburg, Fayetteville, Pine Bluff, Ouachita, West Hanover, Central Mississippi, and South Carolina, asking the Assembly to withdraw from the Federal Council, we recommend:

1. The Assembly decline to withdraw from the Federal Council.
2. $750.00 be appropriated for the work of the Council.
3. Our representatives be instructed to zealously safeguard the spirituality of the Church and bear witness in all their deliberations to the fundamental and historic positions of our Church touching matters political.

1924, p. 44. Overtures asking withdrawal from the Federal Council.
[Answer: The Assembly reaffirmed the action of 1923.]

1925, p. 50. Overtures asking severance of relations with the Federal Council answered in the negative. Representatives elected.

p. 67. Representatives instructed. [See this Digest, Conf. of Faith, Ch. XXXI, Par. IV, Sec. 10.]

p. 93. The Council included in the Assembly's budget.

1927, p. 39. Overtures requesting the Assembly to withdraw from the Federal Council, answered in the negative. At the same time we take occasion again to restate our historical position regarding the spiritual character of the Church, its duty being, under its sovereign Lord and Head, to preach the Gospel to every creature and not settle matters of a civil or political nature, and that the Assembly urge our representative in the Council to continue to witness against all actions and activities of the Council that transgress the principles above stated.

1928, p. 44. [Overtures asking for the withdrawal of our Assembly from the Federal Council answered in the negative,] while reaffirming our historic position in regard to the spiritual nature and extent of church power.

1929, p. 78. Overtures asking the Assembly to sever its connection with the Federal Council, answered in the negative.
Overture asking the Assembly to instruct its representatives to continue to bear faithful testimony against the actions that are contrary to the position of our Church, answered in the affirmative. In doing so, we take occasion to again restate our historic position regarding the spiritual and redemptive mission of the Church.

1930, p. 73. That the overtures touching severance of all relations with the Federal Council be answered in the negative, they having been based apparently upon a misapprehension of some of the facts of the case, but that at the same time the Assembly again enjoin upon its representatives in the Federal Council, and especially upon its members of the Council's Executive and Administrative Committees, to testify to and uphold the distinctive principles of our Church; that the Assembly specifically direct its members of those Committees to inquire fully into and report to the next Assembly concerning the radio activities and radio personnel of the Federal Council, or any other phases of its work to which objection has been made or which have been alleged to be contrary to truth and righteousness and to the God-given principles for which our Church has been a witness.

1931, p. 38. [The report asked of our representatives on the Federal Council was received as information.]

p. 47. The minority report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations, recommending that the Assembly withdraw from the Council was adopted by a vote of 175 to 79.

p. 51. Resolution of Friendliness: Although the Seventy-first General Assembly in session at Montreat, N. C., has seen fit to withdraw at this time from the Federal Council of Churches in America, we wish to express our fraternal love for the Council and its representatives. We deplore any unfortunate expressions to the contrary, which may have occurred from the floor of the Assembly.

p. 66. [This withdrawal was cited as answer to 11 overtures touching our relation to the Council. All these overtures opposed either membership in the Council or specific policies of the Council.]

2d. Our Church remains out of the Federal Council—1932-1940.

1932, p. 58. [Overtures from 9 presbyteries, asking renewal of relations with the Federal Council; overtures from 7 presbyteries, asking reaffirmation of the position taken in 1931.]
[Answer:] That we do not at this time reopen for discussion the question of re-entering the Federal Council of Churches in America. This action is our answer to overtures [above].
Note—the vote on the adoption of the recommendation was 198 for and 68 against.

1933, p. 47. [Overtures, touching re-entry into the Federal Council, answered] by the appointment of an Ad Interim Committee to study the whole question and report their findings to the next Assembly.

1934, p. 35. [Majority and minority reports of the Ad Interim Committee were read. The majority report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations (to which had been referred the Ad Interim report), which was signed by 13 members, was read; and it was announced that 7 members of the committee had signed a minority report recommending that our Church do not re-enter.] By a vote of 170 to 79 the Assembly declined to re-enter the Federal Council.

p. 61. [Overtures asking that the Presbyterian Church U. S. re-enter the Federal Council were answered] in the negative. [Overtures from the Presbyteries of West Hanover, Asheville, Montgomery, Abingdon and Bethel, asking that the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. shall not re-enter the Federal Council,] answered in the affirmative.

1937, p. 64. Overtures. That in reply to [these] overtures the question: "Shall our General Assembly re-enter the Federal Council?" be sent down to the presbyteries with the request that they make answer to the next General Assembly.

1938, p. 55. Whereas the presbyteries have voted 48 "No" to 38 "Yes", (2 not voting) on the question sent down by the 1937 Assembly, we, therefore, recommend that the church do not now re-enter the Federal Council of Churches.

1940, p. 66. Overture, asking that the Assembly effect the re-entrance of our Church into the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America be answered in the negative.

2e. Our Church again in the Federal Council—1941 et seq.

1941, p. 39. [Communication from the Federal Council conveying invitation to us to rejoin the Federal Council, and offering that the President of the Council appear in person and extend the invitation.] We recommend that the General Assembly wire Dr. Weigle, inviting him to appear and present the invitation.

p. 63. Overtures, asking the Assembly to consider the advisability of re-entering the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, we recommend that they be answered in the affirmative, which means that we re-enter the Federal Council.

[Ed. note: A minority report, declining to re-enter, was defeated 160 to 109. An amendment to add "provided a majority of the presbyteries approve" was lost, 133 to 112. The majority report was adopted, 154 to 101.]

1942, p. 88. Overtures, asking the Assembly to sever its relation with the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, answered in the negative.

p. 87. [Vote on the above:] 190 to 60.

1942, p. 93. Resolution:

1. Whereas, The Federal Council affirms that one of its aims is to develop interest in the World Council, therefore, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States hereby petitions the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America to place itself upon the doctrinal basis of a World Council of Churches; to place its secretarial personnel upon this basis and to call this basis to the attention of each minister, speaking under its auspices, for his appropriate regard.

2. In accord with her doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture, the Presbyterian Church in the United States hereby declares that she does not accept any pronouncement of the Federal Council, its agencies or secretaries which go beyond the teachings of Holy Scripture as part of the official position or testimony of the Church as law or recommendations binding the consciences of her members but only as the opinion of representative Christian gentlemen.

[Ed. note: This Basis is: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of Churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour:"]

1943, pp. 29, 59. In answer to Overtures numbered 15-19 [all opposing membership in the Federal Council] dealing with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, we would recommend that the General Assembly answer these overtures in the negative, because it is unwise to agitate this matter further during the period of war; but at the same time that this General Assembly registers its judgment that because of the wide difference of opinion in our Church and the vital importance of this question the General Assembly should ultimately submit it to the presbyteries after the close of the war.

That the overture of the Louisiana Presbytery be denied on the ground that the official reply of the Executive Committee of the Federal Council to a resolution addressed to it by the 1942 General Assembly is a satisfactory reply to this overture. Said reply reads as follows:

Reply to Overture from Presbyterian Church
in the U. S. concerning
Doctrinal Basis of Federal Council
(submitted by the Advisory Committee
to the
Executive Committee
September 18, 1942)

The Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, having given careful consideration to the resolutions to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. concerning the doctrinal basis of the Council, records its understanding of the Council's position as being in full accord with that of the World Council of Churches. In the preamble to its Constitution the Federal Council avows its faith in Jesus Christ as "Divine Lord and Saviour," which is an affirmation of the deity of Christ, in keeping with the historic faith of Christianity.

Each minister who serves as a secretary of the Federal Council has been ordained in accordance with the doctrinal standards of one of the Evangelical Churches which hold membership in the Council and is responsible to that denomination for his loyalty

to its doctrinal standards. The Executive Committee of the Council is well assured that its secretaries are in full accord with these doctrinal standards.

The Council expects that the utterances of its secretaries and of ministers speaking under its auspices will not be at variance with its Constitution. However, no secretary of the Council and no minister speaking under its auspices can make any pronouncement in its behalf. The Executive Committee, made up exclusively of representatives officially appointed by the denominations, has the sole authority to make pronouncements for the Council.

The Executive Committee of the Council confirms the understanding of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. that the Federal Council can formulate "no law or recommendations" which are "binding upon the conscience" of the members of the constituent churches. This is in accord with the Constitution of the Council which declares that the Council has "no authority over the constituent bodies," and specifically that it has "no authority to draw up a common creed or form of government or of worship, or in any way to limit the full autonomy of the Christian bodies adhering to it."

p. 60. That the following communication be sent by our Stated Clerk to the proper officials of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States takes cognizance of the reply made on Septemeber 18, 1942, by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council to the resolution sent by the 1942 Assembly. In this reply we note this paragraph: "The Council expects that the utterance of its secretaries and of ministers speaking under its auspices will not be at variance with its Constitution. However, no secretary of the Council and no minister speaking under its auspices can make any pronouncement in its behalf. The Executive Committee, made up exclusively of representatives officially appointed by the denominations, has the sole authority to make pronouncements for the Council."

However, since that time, certain members of the staff of the Council have been quoted as speaking on behalf of the Council without the authority of the Executive Committee.

This Assembly would therefore request the Executive Committee of the Council to call to the attention of each member of the staff and each radio speaker the contents of this action of September 18, 1942, so that the clear intent of this reply shall in the future be observed by all concerned.

We also request the Executive Committee to take action so that in the future no book or pamphlet shall be published having the name of the Federal Council unless and until said book or pamphlet has been duly approved by the Publication Committee and authorized by the Executive Committee.

1944, pp. 31, 32, 78. [Four presbyteries overtured the Assembly to withdraw from the Federal Council; two presbyteries asked that the question be submitted to the presbyteries immediately.]

[Answer] it is unwise to agitate this matter further during the period of war; but at the same time that this General Assembly register its judgment that because of wide difference of opinion in our Church, and the vital importance of this question, the General Assembly should submit it to the Presbyteries after the close of the war.

1945, pp. 29, 71. That overtures 13-18, requesting the Assembly to withdraw from the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, be answered in the negative.

1945, pp. 30, 71. That overture 19, requesting that the question of severing relations with the Federal Council be referred to the presbyteries, be answered in the negative.

1946, pp. 34, 71. That overtures 29, 30, 31, requesting our Assembly to withdraw from the Federal Council, be answered in the negative.

1947, pp. 32, 91. [Overtures asking to withdraw, and overtures asking submission of the question to Presbyteries. The Assembly sent the question of membership down for vote by the Presbyteries.]

1947, p. 92. The General Assembly shall, through its regularly appointed representatives on the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, make clear to that body that it cannot and does not speak for the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., when its leaders or spokesmen make statements upon doctrinal matters which run counter to the standards of our Church.

1948, pp. 31, 62. 1. That overture 35 and overture 75, to withdraw from the Federal Council, be answered in the negative.

2. That the first part of overture 36 to remain in the Federal Council be answered in the affirmative and that the second part of the overture be answered as follows: That the former Assembly Moderators attending this meeting (Drs. John R. Cunningham, P. Frank Price, Charles L. King, Frank C. Brown, George Summey, and the present moderator, C. Darby Fulton) prepare a statement interpreting to the church our reasons for remaining in the Federal Council and for continuing with our sister denomination in common action in this critical hour.]

1948, p. 62. [Presbyteries voted: 61 to remain in F. C. C.; 24 to withdraw; 1 tie vote.]

1949, p. 77. [Overtures to withdraw answered in negative.]

1949, pp. 35, 77. 1. That the report of our representatives be received and commended for study and that, in accordance with their recommendation, the Assembly approve the entrance of the Federal Council into the proposed National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and that in so doing the Assembly approve our Church's becoming a charter member of the National Council. This action does not affect the action which the committees of our Assembly may take relative to the National Council in those functional inter-agency councils of which they may be a member.

2. That, in view of the decisive action of the presbyteries in the Church year 1947-1948 and of the 1948 General Assembly, with reference to the Federal Council, overtures 31A and 32, requesting our withdrawal from the Council, be answered in the negative.

1950, p. 78. Inasmuch as the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and/or its commissions have from time to time expressed opinions, issued statements, and advocated policies tending toward political socialism in this country and contrary to our time-honored principles of free enterprise and representative democracy, which this General Assembly believes to be totally at variance with the beliefs of our people, we therefore vigorously dissent and completely disassociate ourselves from any such deliverance or action of the Federal Council.

Note: It is understood that this resolution refers to past opinions, statements and policies of the Federal Council and has nothing to do with future opinions, statements and policies of the National Council.

3. The National Council of Churches of Christ in America.

1947, pp. 27, 90. From Rev. J. Quinter Miller, Associate General Secretary, Federal Council of Churches of Christ, presenting the proposal to create the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, and requesting the General Assembly to approve the merger of eight agencies to form the Council.

In answer to the recommendation from the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America requesting action of our Church as one of its constituent members with

respect to the proposed creation by merger of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America, we recommend that while our Church reaffirms its desire to cooperate as far as possible with the inter-church agencies involved, we do not feel at this time that the way is clear for us to approve the proposed creation of the National Council.

1949, p. 77. Your committee has carefully considered the report of the representatives of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., to the Federal Council of Churches, together with overtures 31 and 32, relating to the Federal Council, and recommends:

1. That the report of our representatives be received and commended for study and that, in accordance with their recommendation, the Assembly approve the entrance of the Federal Council into the proposed National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and that in so doing the Assembly approve our Church's becoming a charter member of the National Council. This action does not affect the action which the committees of our Assembly may take relative to the National Council in those functional inter-agency councils of which they may be a member.

2. That, in view of the decisive action of the presbyteries in the Church year 1947-1948 and of the 1948 General Assembly, with reference to the Federal Council, overtures 31A and 32, requesting our withdrawal from the Council, be answered in the negative.

1950, pp. 36, 89, 90. We recommend:

a. That the General Assembly adopt and send to the Committee on Further Procedure of the proposed National Council of Churches the following:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in session at Massanetta Springs, Virginia, in June, 1950, expresses to the Committee on Further Procedure of the National Council, concern at three points:

(1) The centralization of power resulting from the merger of several strong groups.

(2) The well-nigh unlimited power given to the Executive Committee.

(3) The absence of procedures concerning presentations before congressional committees, and the further absence of the mention of the rights of denominations to disassociate themselves from action of the Executive Committee and Council in which they, the denominations, cannot conscientiously concur.

It is the earnest desire of the Assembly that the National Council, through Regional Councils or by other methods, prevent an undue centralization of power which is bound to cause alarm.

The Assembly is opposed to the unlimited power being given the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee should only carry out the policies of the Council.

The Assembly would request that the National Council take proper steps to see that its representatives are not constantly appearing before congressional committees. It is the judgment of the Assembly that representatives should not appear unless specifically authorized to do so by the Council. The Assembly further requests that the National Council see to it that representation on the Council, and especially the Executive Committee, be from all sections of the country. Too frequently the actions of Executive Committees and Councils are those of only a few representatives living near headquarters. Too frequently the pronouncements of these few men on Social and Economic questions are at variance with the convictions of the constituencies they are supposed to represent.

The Assembly values the right it has had under the Federal Council of disassociating itself from actions of the Council it does not support. The Assembly earnestly desires that this right be continued under the new National Council.

b. That overture 63, requesting that our representatives inform the Assembly of all actions of the Federal Council which are contrary to our established doctrine or policy, be answered in the affirmative.

c. That overtures 59-62 and 73, requesting that we withdraw from the Federal Council of Churches, be answered in the negative and are referred to recommendation "a" above.

1951, pp. 35, 68. [Several overtures on various aspects. Overture to withdraw answered in negative.]

1952, pp. 35, 68. [Overture to withdraw answered in the negative.]

1953, pp. 31, 106. [Overture to withdraw be answered in the negative.]

1956, pp. 31, 52. That overtures 28, 29, 35-37 and 50 [to withdraw] be answered in the negative.

That the Permanent Committee on Interchurch Relations be instructed to:

a. Investigate the specific charges made or implied in overtures 28, 29, 35-7, 50, submitted to the 1956 Assembly, and any other specific charges of a related nature submitted to the Permanent Committee on or before November 15, 1956;

b. Make a further study of the advantages and disadvantages of membership of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., in the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches;

c. Submit to the 1957 Assembly a complete report of such investigations and study with its recommendations.

1959, pp. 37, 72. Your Committee on Interchurch Relations, in considering overtures and communications relative to the Fifth World Order Study Conference and the National Council of Churches, recommends:

1. That overture 25, requesting the Assembly to "register its disapproval to the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. of the action taken by the World Order Study Conference, when they proposed—that Red China be granted diplomatic recognition by the United States Government and that they be admitted to the United Nations," be answered as follows:

a. The General Assembly unequivocally opposes the atheistic dictatorship and other evils of Communism, whether in recognized Soviet Russia or in unrecognized Red China.

b. The General Assembly deplores the misunderstandings resulting from publicity of the Fifth World Order Study Conference at Cleveland, Ohio, November, 1958.

c. The General Assembly reaffirms the right and duty of Conferences of Christians—laymen and ministers—to give free, prayerful and thoughtful consideration to moral and spiritual problems inherent in world relations.

d. The General Assembly registers its disapproval to the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. of the action taken by the World Order Study Conference, when they proposed that Red China be granted diplomatic recognition by the United States Government and that they be admitted to the United Nations.

1960, pp. 36, 79. [Resolution:] WHEREAS, our Confession of Faith teaches that "Synods and councils are to handle nothing but that which is ecclesiastical: and are not to meddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary; or by way of advice for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate."

AND WHEREAS, The National Council of Churches, its Commissions, and its Conferences make pronouncements on such matters as the alleged desirability of recognizing Red China, against the right to work legislation, against capital punishment, in favor of increasing the control of the Federal Government, its courts and its commissions, over the States, and these pronouncements are issued in the public press as the acts of the National Council of Churches and of its member Churches including our own.

AND WHEREAS our Book of Church Order provides that our Presbyterian Church in the U.S. cannot unite with any other ecclesiastical body except by vote of three-fourths of the presbyteries, and such a vote was not taken in uniting with the National Council of Churches (or the Federal Council), and yet this Council is an ecclesiastical body sending down to its member Church a particular version of the Bible (RSV), educational and promotional literature, and international, political, economical and sociological directions,

THEREFORE, be it resolved that this General Assembly direct its Permanent Committee on Interchurch Relations to appoint an ad-interim committee of six ruling elders who are mature lawyers or judges to consider the question as to whether or not it is constitutional for our Church to be a member of the National Council of Churches and whether or not we united with this Council in a constitutional manner, and to report their findings and recommendations to the next General Assembly.

That the Assembly answer the resolution in the negative, with the following statement:

First, the Council is clearly not an organic church body by its own admission and by that of its member churches. Thus our participation in the Council does not involve that union with another denomination requiring the three-fourths (¾) vote of our presbyteries. Whenever the Council does present matters to the churches for their consideration and make possible such cooperative studies as that resulting in the RSV of the Bible, it is clearly not a church or denomination but rather an association of denominations who hold a common faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour and share common goals and purposes.

Secondly, it should be pointed out that the National Council of Churches is not authorized, by its own admission, to speak *for* its member churches, but rather, from time to time, it does speak *to* them and to our society. We feel that the Council's prophetic voice is very much needed in our day, but like any prophetic voice, it must be weighed and evaluated by the individual Christian conscience.

Thirdly, the Confession of Faith, chapter 33, paragraph 4, affirms that Synods and Councils should handle and conclude only matters of an ecclesiastical nature or in extraordinary cases. We interpret this as giving Christians, both as individuals and in groups, a mandate for speaking, in the spirit of the prophets and in the spirit of our Lord, on any issues that concern the life of man under God.

The National Council of Churches is certainly not perfect. There is much about it that can and should be improved. But we deplore the unmerited attacks made on the National Council which result inevitably in a distrust and weakening of the Christian witness in our land and throughout the world. We regard our united work with other Christians as being of paramount importance in today's world and we urge our representatives on the National Council to support, encourage, and sustain this vital effort.

1962, pp. 28, 73. [Overtures to withdraw answered in the negative.]

pp. 74, 119. That the recommendations of the Permanent Committee in Section II, 2, entitled "National Council of Churches" be adopted.

(a) That the General Assembly direct its boards and agencies to include in their annual reports to the General Assembly a section listing all staff persons and others suggested by the board or agency to the National Council of Churches and their function in the National Council.

(b) That, recognizing representatives appointed by the General Assembly or by General Assembly's Boards or Agencies are representatives of the Presbyterian Church U. S., the General Assembly authorize the Permanent Committee on

Inter-Church Relations to be the endorsing agency for all members of our church who serve on the National Council of Churches or units thereof.

(c) That the General Assembly direct the boards and agencies of our Church to require all staff persons and others suggested by the board or agency to report to the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations within a month of a meeting of a unit of the National Council of Churches as to matters of importance to the whole church, and especially as to proposed pronouncements, that the Permanent Committee may have and transmit to our General Assembly a complete picture of the services of the National Council of Churches to our Church.

(d) That Presbyterian U. S. representatives to the National Council of Churches be appointed to serve from one triennial of the Assembly to the next triennial.

(e) That the General Assembly authorize the Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations to name two representatives of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. to the National Council of Churches to serve on the General Board of the Division of Life and Work.

(f) That the General Assembly affirm: "Programs, pronouncements, and policies of the National Council of Churches are produced through democratic processes in representative assemblies. Under such circumstances it is improbable that all such programs, pronouncements, and policies be always uniformly agreeable to all participating communions. Responsible participation does not in any way obligate or bind the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. to endorse or approve of the actions and positions of the National Council of Churches. However such actions and positions always should be given our serious and prayerful consideration."

1963, pp. 27, 93. That Overture 13, regarding withdrawal of our Church from membership in the National Council of Churches, be answered as follows:

"Whereas we believe there is a need for such a council as the National Council of Churches, and

"Whereas we believe that our representation on the National Council of Churches may serve as a corrective for any excesses that may ever arise, and

"Whereas we believe there is much that the National Council of Churches does with which we are in agreement and which we could not do by ourselves or through other organizations,

"Therefore we recommend that this overture be answered in the negative."

1964, pp. 40, 84. 1. That overture 33 regarding the supervision of the programs of the National Council of Churches be answered as follows:

Whereas the National Council of Churches is restructuring its organization and

Whereas our own representatives have participated in the structural changes, we answer this overture in the negative.

2. That overtures 34, 35, 36, 37 and 48, all concerning withdrawal from the National Council of Churches, be answered in the negative.
3. That overture 38 requesting that the Inter-Church Relation Committee prepare a concise, factual, pictorial, and up-to-date document on the National Council of Churches and also requesting increased financial support to the National Council of Churches be answered in the affirmative.
4. That Overture 39 requesting additional financial support to the National Council of Churches be answered in the affirmative, and that the General Assembly through our Permanent Committee on Inter-Church Relations request our General Council to give favorable consideration to increased financial support to the National Council of Churches.

1964, p. 83. We recommend that the General Assembly instruct our representatives to the National C. C. to continue to convey our concern that some activities of the Commission on Religion and Race are ill advised, and that in the future the Commission consider the conscience of local ministers and sessions and consult with and seek to work more closely with local ministers, councils of churches and dedicated Christians, as we believe this course offers a far better way of solving our racial tensions.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States declares that the policies, activities and pronouncements of the Commission on Religion and Race should be interpreted as representing the policies, activities and pronouncements of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to the extent, and only to the extent, that the same are consistent with previously approved action and policy of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

The Committee recommends that the Assembly say to the churches within its jurisdiction and under its pastoral concern that it is not unmindful of the difficulties they are encountering in connection with the diligent effort the National Council of Churches is making in behalf of human rights; and that the Assembly make the following suggestions to its churches:

That they remember that every pronouncement—whether by Council, Church or individual—stands under the judgment of the Word of God, and that they be influenced by any pronouncement to the extent to which it conforms to the Spirit and the Word.

That they judge every recommendation in the same light, remembering that recommendations are to be accepted and followed on the basis of conscience enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

That they take a firm but loving stand—without regard for pressures other than the pressure of the gospel—guaranteeing to every person, regardless of race or class, access to their schools, churches and other institutions.

The Assembly acknowledges its failure in not communicating to its churches the full story of the service of the National Council and in not furnishing our churches with our own literature concerning the Council. We are suggesting that immediate steps be taken to provide for such communication and literature.

1965, pp. 38, 81. That Overture 49, regarding withdrawal from the National Council, be answered in the negative. (Committee vote: 19-13). (Those in the minority are not making a minority report, but were assured opportunity to be heard as individuals.)

1965, pp. 37, 46, 81. [Overture 43] from the Presbytery of Nashville:

In view of the unrest in our Church in connection with our membership in the National Council of Churches, the *Presbytery of Nashville* overtures the General Assembly to exert its influence toward achieving the following ends:

(1) That a reorganization be effected which will make the National Council of Churches more responsive to its member denominations, including a meeting of its General Assembly more often than once every three years.

(2) That its executives be definitely accountable for statements and actions to some clearly identifiable superior body.

(3) That some means be found to distinguish clearly between official positions and actions of the National Council of Churches and the things that are said and done at innumerable conferences, workshops, retreats, etc., held under NCC auspices.

(4) That the National Council of Churches or its subsidiary bodies refrain from endorsing particular political parties or candidates.

(5) That the General Assembly give assurance that the suggestions and criticisms made by our highest court are heard by the National Council and that some published

answer be given by the Council to the statements and suggestions made by our General Assembly.

[Resolution] from Cecil W. Brearley, Jr., requesting to the Assembly to respectfully request the General Board of the National Council of Churches to amend its standing rules pertaining to the making of policy statements: to the Standing Committee on Inter-Church Relations.

[Overture 65] from the Presbytery of Birmingham:

The Presbytery of Birmingham respectfully overtures the 105th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., meeting at Montreat, N. C., in the following terms:

The mission of the church is to engage in a ministry of reconciliation on behalf of our Lord, Jesus Christ. As a vital part of this ministry of reconciliation, we feel that a truer understanding of Alabama's position by other sections of the church and of the nation is essential.

1. We recognize that

2. In sincere repentance we accept responsibility for our own sins. We are aware of great injustices done to both Negro and white citizens in Alabama. We confess that we have done too little to change these injustices and have done it too late. We are aware of the fact that we are a part of the larger community of our denomination, a fact that we recognize and appreciate, and we therefore desire to have the understanding and good will of men in all parts of the church.

3. We plead for your understanding of the magnitude of the task we face in Alabama, and the strength of evil men we face here. We call to your attention that there are both just aims in the Negro's quest for equality and unjust methods being used to attain these aims. The gathering together of excited people for the purpose of so-called non-violent demonstrations has led in every case in Alabama to violence by law enforcement officers, demonstrators and sometimes by others.

4. We call your attention to the fact that Christians must understand the involvements of power politics.

5. We plead especially for your understanding about the difficulty of our relationship to the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A., in the churches of Alabama. We live in an overwhelming environment of those whose denominations do not belong to the N. C. C. The call by the Commission on Religion and Race on March 7th for outside ministers to enter Selma to demonstrate has caused untold resentment and has inflamed the opinion of churchmen of all persuasions in Alabama.

6. We protest the use of the name of the National Council of Churches by a subordinate body, the Commission on Religion and Race, in this call and ask the General Assembly to convey this protest to the proper authorities of the N. C. C.

7. We recognize that it is primarily our responsibility as Alabama Christians to work to change unjust laws, to insist on fairness on the part of public officials, and to seek to correct unjust situations. But the efforts of men of good will in Alabama are often hindered by such actions as that of the Commission on Religion and Race, the exploitation of the situation by national news media, and the inflammatory expressions of public officials, both state and national, and intemperate statements of church officials and leaders.

We plead for your help in seeking ways of genuine reconciliation in Alabama.

[Answers:]

That Overture 43 concerning the organization of the National Council be answered in the affirmative. ("Published" deleted from section (5) in the overture).

That Overture 65 be answered as follows: The General Assembly recognizes the spirit of confession and repentance of the Presbytery of Birmingham expressed in this Overture; that without approving or disapproving, we recommend that this message be transmitted to the National Council of Churches; and that we assure the Presbytery of Birmingham of our love, sympathy and encouragement in these difficult days.

The resolution of Cecil D. Brearley, Jr., Commissioner from Congaree Presbytery, concerning voting quorum of the General Board of the National Council be answered in the affirmative.

4. The World Conference on Faith and Order.

[Ed. note: The first invitation to participate in such a conference came from the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church (1911, p. 56). The Assembly immediately appointed representatives. Subsequently we have maintained at least one representative, and have appointed delegates who attended the two general Conferences, at Lausanne in 1927 and at Edinburgh in 1937.

Our Assembly has also had part in the Conference on the Life and Work of the Churches of the World. These two bodies (Faith and Order and Life and Work), under a Joint Executive Committee, sponsored the forming of a World Council of Churches. The Assembly accepted membership in this Council under certain conditions.

The purpose of the Conference is expressed: "The purpose of the (Edinburgh) Conference on Faith and Order was to try to find in the varieties of Christian creeds, and in the diversities of Christian practices, the underlying unity which binds us together." (1938, p. 155.)

Mention in the Minutes of the Assembly of the work of the Conference between the general Conferences is very slight.]

5. Conference on the Life and Work of the Churches of the World.

[Ed. note: This Conference was proposed at the preliminary meeting of the World Conference on Faith and Order, held in Geneva, August 1920. Our Assembly (1921, p. 34) immediately agreed to participate; and has continued its participation until the present.]

6. The World Council of Churches.

1938, p. 55. Your committee considered the statement concerning the World Conference on Faith and Order held in Edinburgh, Scotland, August 3-18, 1937, which was attended by six representatives from our churches. We note the proposal for a World Council of Churches designed to exhibit in a visible way the Spiritual Unity of the Church of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

It is recommended:

(1) That the General Assembly endorse in principle the idea of a World Council of Churches upon the conditions set forth by the Edinburgh Conference; that membership shall be open only to those churches which acknowledge Jesus Christ as God and Saviour and that the autonomy of no church will be disturbed.

(2) That Rev. Homer McMillan and Rev. J. R. Cunningham, who were elected by the Edinburgh Conference as members of the Continuation Committee, be elected by this Assembly as its representatives on the World Conference on Faith and Order.

(3) That it be understood that this endorsement of a World Council of Churches does not commit the General Assembly to any definite action, but that its acceptance of membership is to depend on the detailed plans which are to be submitted to the Assembly for approval.

1939, pp. 55, 149 ff. That the General Assembly express its willingness for the Presbyterian Church in the United States to cooperate with the World Council of Churches and provide for its proportionate share of the Council's expenses and arrange for representation as necessary. However, in accepting membership in the Council, the General Assembly make clear that the Presbyterian Church in the United States reserves the right to withdraw at any time should the revision of the Constitution,

changes in the Confessional basis, the Council's activities, or for any other reason that, in the judgment of the Assembly, make it expedient to do so.

[Ed. note: What was here adopted was *only* the recommendations of the report given in full on page 149. The full report contains the history of and Constitution for the World Council.]

1940, pp. 66, 158. During the period from April 1939 to April 1940, 26 church bodies have accepted membership, bringing the total number to 59.

1941, pp. 63, 196. That the General Assembly renew its approval of the organization of the World Council of Churches, which is designed to present to a divided world the united spiritual testimony of the Christian churches of all lands; and

That the General Assembly make the requested annual appropriation for the expenses of this movement.

1942, pp. 88, 172. Report of the World Council of Churches received as information.

[Excerpt:] The particular present day ministry of the World Council of Churches to the churches in a world at war is to keep churches of all countries in touch with one another, even across war frontiers; provide Christians in all the nations with accurate information concerning religious conditions and needs in "occupied" lands; and to help as it is able to relieve the physical distress of the victims of oppression and want.

1945, pp. 70, 175. [Report of representatives:]

The World Council of Churches

(In the Process of Formation)

The Constitution of the World Council of Churches defines it as a "fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour." Eighty-five churches in twenty-five countries have accepted the invitation to become members of this world fellowship of Christian believers. The formal organization of the Council has been delayed on account of conditions due to the great war that has reached into almost every land. Yet it seems providential that a world organization of Christian churches should have been initiated prior to the outbreak of hostilities to meet the unprecedented needs of a universal conflict, when peaceful nations are being destroyed by ruthless invaders and Christian churches torn asunder and the people wounded and scattered by this evil persecution, and bring help and comfort to those in distress.

A grievous loss has been suffered in the death of Archbishop Temple on October 26, 1944. As Chairman of the World Council Provisional Committee his wise and inspiring leadership had carried the World Council program forward since it was first proposed at the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences in 1937. The responsibility now falls on Dr. Marc Boegner, head of the Union of Reformed Churches of France, who has been Chairman of the small Administrative Committee. He presided at the meeting of members of the Provisional Committee held in London November 6, at which, for the first time since the war, members from the Continent and from America met with those from Great Britain. Three members of the Provisional Committee will visit the U.S.A. in May, Dr. Boegner, the Bishop of Chichester, and Dr. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary, to plan for a still more representative meeting either in Europe or in the United States as soon as war conditions permit.

The American Committee for the World Council of Churches,—taking the place of the joint Executive Committee of Faith and Order and Life and Work,—is composed of representatives directly appointed by the churches themselves, each church having proportionate representation is now the directing body of the Council's activities in this country. The Southern Presbyterian Church is given two representatives with alternates on the American Committee. It was agreed that the present principal

and alternate would be recognized as principals until the meeting of the General Assembly when two alternates would be appointed.

To direct the gathering and distribution of the great sums which will be needed for relief and reconstruction of the devastated countries of war-torn Europe, a Commission on World Council Service has been set up. Dr. Robbins W. Barstow, formerly President of Hartford Theological Seminary, was elected Director. Dr. Homer McMillan was appointed the Southern Presbyterian representative on this Commission. The work of this Commission, already involving a budget of $1,230,000, will represent the most active interest of the World Council, as the churches of America respond to the appeal to help their sister churches in Europe to secure and support ministers, reconstruct dispersed congregations, provide places of worship, Christian orphanages, Christian homes, Homes for the Disabled and the support of widows and children of war victims.

Great progress has been made in perfecting the plans for the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid which is already beginning to distribute funds to help the distressed churches of the continent. The Church of Scotland has appointed its former Moderator, Dr. J. Hutchinson Cockburn, to represent it in the Department at Geneva and some eight to ten churches in this country have arranged to have a special representative at Geneva to aid in this work of relief and reconstruction.

The previous activities in Geneva have been continued—distribution of Bibles, aid to refugees, and the invaluable press service (International Christian Press and Information Service) which has kept the Churches supplied with dependable information as to church affairs in other countries all through the years of war. The Chaplaincy work for prisoners of war has been extended to America, where Pastor Carl E. Wenngren of the Church of Sweden has been sent to care for the religious needs of German prisoners.

Dr. William Childs Robinson, of Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia, was appointed by the American Committee to membership on the Theological Commission which with a similar Commission representing the British and Continental churches will sutdy questions of Faith and Order in the Ecumenical movement.

The growing activities of the World Council of Churches with which the Presbyterian Church in the United States has been associated since its inception calls for larger financial support by the constituent churches. The appropriation of our Church has only represented a token gift. To carry its proportionate part of the expense of the various committees and commissions, the Southern Presbyterian Church is asked for $1,400. The representatives on the Council expressed the hope that this amount can be granted.

We recommend:

(1) that the General Assembly elect two principals with an alternate to each, to the American Committee of the World Council of Churches.

(2) that an appropriation of $1,400 be made to meet the expenses of the various commissions or committees of the World Council of Churches for 1945-1946 as the proportionate share of the Southern Presbyterian Church.

6. Financial support of Councils by various methods.

1945, pp. 30, 71. The Presbytery of Augusta overtures the General Assembly to cease contributing to the support of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America from the assessment of the churches. Otherwise, many churches are forced to support an extra-denominational agency against their consciences. Answered in the negative.

1946, pp. 34, 71. The Presbytery of Augusta hereby respectfully overtures the General Assembly of 1946 to cease contributing to the support of the Federal

Council of Churches of Christ in America from the assessment on the churches. Because of this practice, many of our churches are forced to support an extra denominational agency against their conscience. If the General Assembly decides to continue supporting the Federal Council, Augusta Presbytery hereby respectfully overtures that such support be put into the budget, as the Northern Presbyterian Church does.

Answered as follows:

We recommend that the General Assembly direct the Stewardship Committee to place the Federal Council in the budget after the present year.

1948, pp. 32, 62. That overtures 37 and 38 concerning the sources of the support of the council be answered in the negative. By way of explanation we call attention to the following action of the 1947 General Assembly: "The last General Assembly directed the Stewardship Committee to place the Federal Council in the Benevolent budget. As the total Benevolent budget of the church is in excess of $3,000,000 and, as the budget of the Federal Council is $1,500, this would mean that the askings of the Federal Council would be five hundredths of one percent of the Assembly's budget. After the budgets of the synods and presbyteries are added this would mean approximately two hundredths of one percent of the budget of the local church. The committee believes that such an asking is entirely impractical and recommends, pending other arrangements, that the General Assembly continue to provide its support for the Federal Council from the Treasury of the General Assembly.

1948, pp. 38, 84. That overture 65, asking that a special tax of one cent per capita be made for the contribution of our church to the World Council of Churches be docketed for consideration by the 1949 General Assembly since action then will be in ample time to put the tax in effect by April 1, 1950, the date suggested, and since there may be additional information available to the Assembly by the time of the next meeting.

1949, p. 84. a. The Assembly has referred to this committee recommendation 3 of the report of the Standing Committee on Finance, Budget and Rules, with the request that we recommend a satisfactory method for securing the $20,000.00 designated for the Federal Council, the World Council, the Western Section and the Lord's Day Alliance. We recommend that the Stated Clerk of the Assembly apportion this amount to the several presbyteries in an equitable division; that he notify the stated clerks of presbyteries of their specific allotment with the Assembly's request that every presbytery secure its assigned portion by such method as may best suit its local condition, but with the Assembly's suggestion that if possible, it shall be secured from general funds available in the churches rather than by special appeal and offering.

b. In preparation of the publicity material to be used in presenting the details of this $20,000 to the presbyteries and churches, the Stated Clerk shall collaborate with the Assembly's representatives of these causes, the cost of which publicity shall be prorated among the beneficiaries.

c. Of the amount sent to the Federal Council from our church, the Assembly instructs the Federal Council to earmark (25%) twenty-five per cent for the Southeastern Inter-council office in Atlanta, Georgia, with the stipulation that an amount of not more than $1500 shall be so allocated to the Atlanta office.

1950, p. 83. The 1949 General Assembly referred to the General Council for answer overture 31-b: "If the above overture to withdraw from the Federal Council should be answered in the negative, we respectfully overture the General Assembly to provide a method whereby the Federal Council shall be financially aided without compelling any church to give its support contrary to its conscientious scruples."

We recommend that this overture be answered in the affirmative and that we place in the budget an Inter-Church Agency Fund which, because it does not contribute to the Equalization Fund, will not receive aid from this fund.

1965, p. 75. That the General Council be instructed to make a study of the various methods of giving financial support to the National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches, Lord's Day Alliance and Religion in American Life, and report to the next meeting of the Assembly.

INDEX

ABSENTEE presbyters, 89
Accused, Counsel for, 227
Address to Churches, 25
Adjudicated case, reopening not allowed, 230
Adult non-communing members, relation to church, 223
Adventist Church, 45, 254
Alabama Presbytery, A.R.P. Church, union with, 336
Alcohol, beverage, 142 ff., 163, 168
Alliance of Reformed Churches, Western Section, 373
  plan of cooperation proposed, 451
Alteration of minutes, 69
Alternate may take place of principal, 112
Amendment, irregular enactment, 218
Amendments to Book of Church Order, 53
  to Confession of Faith, 3
Amusements, Worldly, Pastoral Letter on, 136
  deliverances on, 192 ff.
Annuity Fund, presbytery may require minister to enter, 211
  vacant churches urged to pay dues, 210
Apostles' Creed, History of, 44
  proposed change in, refused, 44
Appeal, complaint and memorial, rights of
  estopped by approval of minutes of lower court by higher court, 230
Appeals,
  appearance required, 232
  (financial) by outside agencies, 275
  lower courts not parties, 226
  notice required in writing, 231
  possible only after judicial trial, 231
  right of, stopped by approval of minutes by higher court, 230
  withdrawn, appellate court determines whether recorded, 231
Appellant and appellee defined, 225
Appellant must appear unless satisfactory explanation, 232
Appellants,
  Baird, Rev. E. T., 287
  Bethel Presbytery, 340
  Central Mississippi Presbytery, 352
  Charleston Presbytery, 303
  (DuBose, Rev. H. C., 233)
  Eastern Texas Presbytery, 323
  Field, Rev. Lloyd B., 333
  Greer, Rev. Baxter D.D., 306
  Gregg, Rev. F. W., 340
  Hoge, Rev. E. T., 311
  Indian Presbytery, 306
  Lafayette Presbytery, 318
  Machen, A. W., 342
  Ouachita Presbytery, 302
  Overstreet, Rev. G. C., 320
  Pippen, Rev. W. W., Jr., 343
  Robbins, Rev. F. E., 323
  Robinson, Rev. D. P., 297 ff.
  Robinson, Rev. Stuart, *et al.*, 288
  Turner, W. S., 291 ff.
Appellants—*Continued*
  Western Texas Presbytery, 304
  White, Rev. J. E., 290
  Williamson, R. B., 285
Appellate action based on ecclesiastical law without passing judgment on the merits of the case, 230
Applauding, Assembly disapproves, 282
Approval of minutes by higher court stops appeal, complaint, etc., 230
Arbitration (international) advocated, 161
Armaments, reduction of, 161
Armenia, petition for independence, 158
Assembly, General,
  actions receiving criticism, 39
  biennial meeting refused, 112
  cannot bind succeeding Assembly, 200
  cannot direct lower courts as to offerings, 81, 121, 135, 274
  cannot fix permanent meeting place, 112
  deliverances, basis for, 8
  digest of actions, 132
  negative actions imply contrary interpretation, 114
  no one may speak for, 114
  organization of, 108
  powers of, 113 ff.
  prayer for, 119
  relation to theological seminaries, 128
  sets conditions for meeting, 113
  union effected only by Assembly, 134
  way for matters to be brought before, 119-121
Assembly, Westminster, sketch of, 3
Assembly of God Church, 145
Assistant Pastor, may not succeed Pastor, 208
  not elected by congregation, 203
  not member of Session, 77, 203
Associate Pastor may not succeed Pastor, 208
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod,
  cooperation and comity, 450
  union with Alabama Presbytery of, 366
  union with Kentucky Presbytery of, 368
  union with Synod attempted, 383 ff.
Atrocities in Belgian Congo, 159
Auburn Affirmation, objection to signers, 342
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 131

BACON, E. E., complaint of, 291
Baird, Revs. E. T., & S. J., matter of, 287
Baird, Rev. E. T., appeal of, 287
Baird, Rev. S. J., complaint of, 287
Baker, Rev. B. W., complaint of, 352
Baker, C. A., complaint of, 295
Baptism, administration of,
  Campbellite, 20, 24
  immersion valid, 17, 18
  in extremis, 25
  invalid, 20 ff.
  of children of non-professing parents, 19

Baptism, administration—*Continued*
of children of suspended members, 19
of infants, 19, 20
of Quakers, 20
Roman Catholic, 20, 23
Swedenborgian, 24
Unitarian, 20
valid, 16
Bedinger, Rev. E. W., complaint of, 311
Belief, Brief Statement of, 3
Bell, S. M., complaint of, 347
Benevolences, how raised and distributed, 81, 121, 135, 274
for councils of churches, 475
Bethel Presbytery, appeal of, 340
Beverage Alcohol, Temperance and Prohibition, 142 ff.
Bible, versions of, 5
Blackburn, Rev. John C., complaint of, 345
Book of Church Order, revisions of, 53
"Book of Common Worship", 55, 276
ordination vows therein may not be used, vows in Book of Church Order mandatory, 216, 277
Bookout, H. F., complaint of, 334
Bounds,
court meeting out of, 104
General Assembly, 111
Minister laboring outside, 90
Synod cannot work within bounds of another Synod, 107
Brief Statement of Belief, 3
Buchanan, Frank J., complaint of, 357
Budget, many ways to handle, 64
Buildings, Church,
on owned property, 62
use denied Universalists, 45

CALDWELL, Rev. Wm., *et al.*, complaint of, 313
Call, form of pastoral,
change must be approved by congregation and presbytery, 210
definite remuneration, 209
"larger parish", 210
limited term inadmissible, 210
manse, 209
vacant church asked to pay M.A.F. dues, 210
Call to definite work, requirement for ordination, 205
Called meeting of presbytery, ten day notice, 103
what Ruling Elders sit, 89, 103
Campbellite Baptism, invalid, 20, 24
Candidates for Ministry,
authority of presbytery, 99, 205 ff.
care in receiving, 206
condition for ordaining, 205
"extraordinary candidate", 212
Independent Church, Savannah, 99
pastoral letter on, 136
race no bar, 100
relation to State during war, 185
required missionary service refused, 207
should attend our own seminaries, 128, 207
Candidates for public office not endorsed by Assembly, 188
Canfield, Revs. I. W. & W. Q., complaints of, 287, 288
Cannon, Rev. J. F., *et al.*, complaint of, 330
Capital punishment, 170
Cases without process,
confession of disaccord with "system of doctrine", 214, 304
contumacy in presence of court, 228
discipline without trial illegal, 229
Casey, Rev. Thompson E., complaint of, 351
Catechism, Shorter, to be taught, 43
Bibles for reciting, 43
Catechisms, amendments to, 43
"Catholic" in Creed, 44
Censure of members, power of session, 78
Central Treasurer of Benevolences for General Assembly, 121, 135, 274
Chaney, Rev. J. M., complaint of, 318
Charleston Presbytery, appeal of, 303
Charter for General Assembly, 111
Children, attendance on Worship, 260
misuse of, 183
of non-professing parents, 19
of the covenant, 19
Christian Economics, 165
"Christian Science", 55
Church,
and State, 184 ff.
courts (see "Courts, Church")
dismissed to another denomination, 98, 99, 322 ff.
dissolved, 99
"Distinctive Principles" paper, 39
name not to be used by outside organizations, 123
non-political, 39, 41, 329
"non-secular character", 25, 38 ff., 309
periodicals ("church papers") not endorsed, 124
property, (see "Property, Church")
title of, 110
under jurisdiction of only one presbytery, 73
without elders, enrolled, 61
without pastor, 99, 210
who may belong, 61
Church building, on owned land, 62
use denied Universalists, 45
Church Court (see "Court, Church")
Church membership, only rules for, 61, 80
Church paper, official, to give both sides of controversial matters, 125
Church property (see "Property, Church")
Church schools, state support, 186 ff.
Church union (see "Union with other bodies")
Church unity, 56 ff.
divisions not sinful per se, 59
Church-by-Side-of-Road, complaint of, 339
Churches without pastors, assigned to care of some Minister, 99
dues to Annuity Fund, 210

Circularization,
attacking Ministers or Church courts disapproved, 116
on pending subjects disapproved, 115
Citizens, duties to State, 13
Civic Righteousness, exhortation to, 167 ff.
Civil court, disobedience to not per se an offense, 223
improper for Church to address judiciary, 187
Civil disobedience, 170
Civil government, right of petition to, 309
Civil rights movement, 168, 170
Civil suits by Assembly agencies, 124
Clerk, Stated,
may give information on balloting of presbyteries, 218
privilege of floor, 123
Collections, how raised and distributed, 81, 121, 135, 274
pastoral letter on, 136
Colonization by churches, 61
Columbia Theological Seminary, 131
complaint of Rev. S. S. Laws, 309, 318
complaint of Rev. James Woodrow, 296
Comity and cooperation, 448 ff.
Comity between churches in remarriage, 15
Comity in location of churches, 450, 451
Commission,
determination of its jurisdiction subject to review by court creating it, 201
limited to work committed to it, 201
no original jurisdiction, 201
powers of, 201 ff.
See interpretations in judicial cases, 300, 307
Commissioners to General Assembly, (*See* also "representatives")
alternate may replace principal, 112
formal commission necessary, 113
may be chosen for two years, 112
method of appointing, 103, 327
Committee, Judicial,
cannot try case, 226
recommendations irregularly made equivalent of trial, 226
Communion (See "Lord's Supper")
Communism, 145, 468
charges against ministry, 146
Complaint,
must appear in person or by counsel, 234
who may represent, 314
Complainants,
Bacon, E. E., 291
Baird, Rev., S. J., 287
Baker, Rev. B. W., 352
Baker, C. A., *et al.*, 295
Bedinger, Rev. E. W., 311
Bell, S. M., 347
Blackburn, Rev. John C., 345
Bookout, H. F., 334
Buchanan, Frank J., 357
Caldwell, Rev. Wm., *et al.*, 313
Canfield, Revs. I. W. & W. Q., 287, 288
Cannon, Rev. J. F., *et al.*, 330
Complainants—*Continued*
Casey, Rev. Thompson E., 351
Chaney, Rev. J. M., 318
Church-by-Side-of-Road, 339
Cooke, Rev. J. J., *et al.*, 285
Douglas, Rev. John, 285
Dowman, J. K., *et al.*, 331
(DuBose, Rev. H. C., 233)
English, Rachel W., 348
Enslow, Joseph A., 306
Froelich, Rev. Arthur A., 350
Galloway, Samuel, 285
Gamble, Rev. W. A., 359
Gillon, Rev. W. R., *et al.*, 322
Graves, Rev. Z. B., 311
Hoge, Rev. E. T., 310
Holladay, Rev. J. M., 333
Hoover, Rev. Thomas B., Jr., 348
Hutton, Rev. J. B., 335
Jopling, Rev. R. W., 341
Killough, Rev. A., 335
Kissling, Rev. Albert J., 352
Knox, Rev. H. A., 339
Lafayette church, New Orleans, 332
Laws, Rev. S. S., 309, 318
Lehmann, Rev. J. W., 341
Lewis, W. W., 334
Lively, Robert A., 332
Long, J. B., 324
Luck, Rev. C. Coleman, 345
McKay, Rev. W., 294
McNeilly, J. B., *et al.*, 310
McPheeters, Rev. Wm. M., *et al.*, 309
Mecklenburg Presbytery, 298
Memphis Presbytery, 294
Marshall, Rev. Jas. W., 346, 347
Mayes, Rev. G. G., 341
McAllister, Rev. R. S., 290
McCurdy, Rev. A. H. P., 334
McCurdy, Rev. Robt. A., 334
McJunkin, Rev. J. E., 335
McLeod, Rev. J. W., 322
Miller, Rev. A. W., *et al.*, 285
Mills, Rev. W. H., 325, 341
Moore, Rev. James E., 342
Moore, J. H., *et al.*, 290
Orange Presbytery members, 347
Pippen, Rev. W. W., Jr., 342
Ramsay, F. M., 339
Ramsay, Rev. F. P., 296
Richardson, Rev. E. M., *et al*, 307
Robertson, Rev. J. P., 339
Ruff, F. G., 334
Russel, Dr. W. T., 300
Shaw, Rev. J. S., 310
Shaw, Rev. M. B., 290
Sinclair, Rev. James, 285
Sinnott, Rev. W. I., 325
Smoot, Rev. R. K., *et al.*, 290
Sory, W. H., 324
Stevenson, Rev. W. A., 339
Thurmond, N. D., 312
Wells, Rev., J. M., *et al.*, 312
West Columbia (S. C.) Church, 344
White, Rev. J. E., 291
Williams, Dr. Sidney, 350

Complainants—*Continued*
Woodrow, Rev. James, 296
Young, Col. Bennett H., *et al.*, 318, 320
Complaint,
cannot be made by a court, 233, 360
irregularity may be waived, 232, 287, 291, 296, 332, 360
judgment not set aside unless erroneous or unconstitutional, 234, 287, 359
made against specific decision, 232, 332
made to next higher court, 232, 286, 290, 334, 335
may be made on matters other than judicial trials, 232
must be authenticated, 232
not made against an agency of Church, 233
pending, not considered by next court, 232, 287, 310, 332
reference of, returned, 361
right of, stopped by approval of minutes by higher court, 230
sustaining in part, 234
withdrawn, appellate court determines whether recorded, 233
Concerts, suppers, etc., 274
Confession of Faith,
amendments to, 3
fatalism in, 6
foreordination in, 5
preface to, 3
Conformity, worldly, defined, 196 ff.
Congo atrocities, 159
Congregation, meeting of, 62
property of, 62, 74
Congregational meeting,
clerk elected by congregation, 62
may be called for any proper purpose, 62
session only may call, 62
voters in, 62
Conscientious Objectors, provisions for, 159
Constitution of Church, declared, 3
"Consultation on Church Union", 134, 380, 447
Controversial matters, official Church paper to give both sides, 125
Contumacy in court, case without process, 79, 228, 310
Cooke, Rev. J. J., *et al.*, complaint of, 285
Cooperation and comity, 448 ff.
Correspondence with other bodies, 365
Councils (Inter-Church),
Federal C. of Churches of Christ, 455
finance for, 475
National C., 466
of Reformed Churches in America, 373
World C. of Churches, 473
Counsel for accused, 227
Country Church, pastoral letter on, 136
Court, Church,
change in meeting, 68
"extraordinary emergency" refers to stated meetings only, 68
general review and control permits judicial decision, 230, 306
government in own hands, 67
Court, Church—*Continued*
higher cannot amend record of lower, 69
may affirm what are offenses, 223
may err, 25
may not complain to superior court, 233, 360
may not delegate its powers, 67, 78
may waive irregularity in judicial case, 232, 287, 291, 296, 332, 360
meeting out of bounds, 104, 105
speaks not alone to its constituency, 56
"Covenant" theology, 47 ff.
Creed, Apostles, 44
"catholic", 44
"descended into hell", 44
history of, 44
Crime, 167 ff.
Cumberland Presbyterian Church,
union with attempted, 388

DANCING, deliverances on, 192 ff.
Days of
fasting, 265
thanksgiving, 266
Deaconess, no office, 67
Deacons,
cannot sell church property, 66
church must have, 65
elected as ruling elders must be ordained, 216
from other Presbyterian body, 217
limited term system, 217
may serve on committees in higher courts, 66
relation to session, 65
Debate, limitation of, deplored, 281
Debt of Church courts, 117
Delegation of powers by court improper, 67, 77, 78
Deliverances, General Assembly,
authority and force of, 72
basis for, 8
in thesi, nature of, 70 ff., 117 ff.
need not be voted on by Presbyteries, 115
not "lawful injunctions", 70 ff., 117 ff.
"Demission" an act of church court, 230
Deposed minister,
because of unsound mind, 99, 228, 288, 311
for contumacy, 228, 310
to be restored cautiously, 228
"Descended into hell", retained in Creed, 44
Desertion, ground of divorce, 14
Designated gifts,
and budget of local church, 81, 121, 135, 274
and church's apportionment, 81, 121, 135
"Diaconate, Doctrine of", paper, 64
Digest, Assembly's, 132
Directory, Ministerial, 133
Directory for Worship and Work, 235 ff.
revisions of, 53 ff.
Discipline, Rules of, 221 ff.
revisions of, 53 ff.
Discipline,
for profanity, 295

Discipline—*Continued*
for work on Sabbath, 303
of remarried divorced members, 15
pastoral letter on, 136
without trial after confession, illegal, 229
Dismissal of church to another denomination, 98, 316 ff., 319 ff.
Dismissal to another ecclesiastical body, church, 98, 99, 316 ff., 319 ff.
minister, 101
Dismission, letters of, 80
Dispensationalism, not in harmony with our Standards, 45 ff.
Displaced persons, 159
Dissenting minister, how handled, 100
Dissolution of pastoral relationship, 101, 323, 324, 341
Dissolved church,
by power of presbytery, 99
church is heard, 99
"Distinctive principles" of Church, 39
Divesting minister of office, 227, 304, 342 ff.
Divorce, grounds of, 14
Divorced Minister, 15
Divorced remarried members,
admission to church membership, 15
discipline, 15
Doctrine, error in,
pastoral letters on, 136
power of General Assembly, 114
Doctrine, System of,
confession of disaccord, 214
defined, 213
Douglas, Rev. John, *et al.*, complaint of, 285
Dowman, J. K., *et al.*, complaint of, 331
Drugs, 142 ff.
Dual membership of church forbidden, 73
Dual membership of minister forbidden, 90
DuBose, Rev. H. C., (appeal or complaint), 233

EASTERN Texas Presbytery, appeal of, 323
Ecclesiastical Peace Conference, 158
Economics, Christian, 165 ff.
Educational standards for ministry, 211
Elder, Ruling (*See* Ruling Elder)
Elect infants, 8
"Emergency" re meeting of Church court, 68
Emeritus, pastor, position honorary, 208
English, Rachel W., complaint of, 348
Enslow, Joseph A., complaint of, 306
Error in doctrine,
pastoral letters on, 136
power of General Assembly, 114
Evangelism, 146 ff.
and repentance, pastoral letters on, 136, 137
lay, 203, 290
purpose of sunday school, 268
work of, 267
Evangelist,
ordained by presbytery, 107
powers of, 63
Evolution,
deliverance re, 6 ff.
Rev. James Woodrow and, 6 ff., 296 ff.
Examination of candidate for ordination, 333
theological thesis means systematic theology, 211
Examination of ministers, mandatory, 91
presbytery may not delegate, 93
Executive Secretaries,
privileges of floor, 123
retirement at age seventy, 215
"Extraordinary candidate", 212

FAITH and Order, World Conference on, 473
Family, 180 ff.
Family Prayer, 267
pastoral letters on, 138
Family Religion, 266
Fasting and prayer, days of, 265
Fatalism in the Confession of Faith, 6
Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 455 ff.
Federal Union of Presbyterian Bodies,
proposed, 375, 402 ff.
plan outlined, 377, 406
disapproved by U.S.A. Church, 406
"Federated" congregations, 219
Fermented wine in Lord's Supper, 264
Field, Rev. Lloyd B., appeal of, 333
Financial obligations (excessive) of lower courts disapproved, 117
Flag, National, display in church, 165
Food, surplus, 171
Foreordination in the Confession of Faith, 5
Form of Government, 51 ff.
revisions of, 53 ff.
Foundation, Inc., Presbyterian, 111
Freedom, 146 ff.
Froelich, Rev. Arthur A., complaint of, 350

GALLOWAY, Samuel, complaint of, 285
Gamble, Rev. W. A., complaint of, 359
Gambling, deliverances on, 198 ff.
General Assembly (*See* "Assembly")
Gillon, Rev. W. A., complaint of, 322
Giving, (See "Benevolences"), 269
budgets, 64
higher courts and, 81, 121, 135, 274
pastoral letter on, 136
tithe, 270 ff.
"Glossolalia", 8 ff.
Government, Form of, 51 ff.
revisions of, 53 ff.
Government of local church by session, 78
Graves, Rev. Z. B., complaint of, 311
Greer, Rev. B. D. D., appeal of, 306
Gregg, Rev. F. W., appeal of, 340

HEALTH and healing, 147 ff.
Hell, Descended into, retained in Creed, 44
Heresy, presbytery must determine, 92
Hoge, Rev. E. T., appeal of, 311
complaint of, 310
Holladay, Rev. J. M., complaint of, 333
Holy Scriptures, responsive reading of, 261
Home, Religion in, 266
pastoral letter on, 136

Homes and hospitals, 275
"Honorably Retired" Minister, 91
Hoover, Rev. Thomas B., Jr., complaint of, 348
Hutton, Rev. J. B., complaint of, 335
Hygiene, Social, 180

IMMERSION, valid, 17, 18
Indebtedness of Church courts, 117
Indefinitely suspended minister should be so reported, 228
Independent papers, not endorsed by General Assembly, 124
Independent Presbyterian Church, Savannah, Ga., negotiations for union, 440
Independent Presbyterian Church, union with, 366
International relations, 158 ff.
in extremis, Baptism, 25
Infant Baptism, 19, 20
Infants, Elect, 8
Inspiration of Scriptures, 4
  and the seminaries, 4
Installation of minister,
  use of ministers from other presbyteries and denominations, 215
Inter-Church relations (comity, cooperation, councils, union, etc.) *See* 363 ff.
International affairs, 158 ff.
in thesi deliverances, nature of, 70 ff., 117 ff.
Irregular enactment of amendment, 218
Irregularity in Assembly's handling of judicial case, 226, 338, 341, 343, 346-347
Irregularity in form of judicial case waived, 232, 287, 291, 296, 332, 360

JOPLING, Rev. R. W., complaint of, 341
Judicial cases, 283 ff.
  end of litigation desired, 330
  irregularity in General Assembly's handling, 226, 338, 341, 343, 346-347
  irregularity in form waived, 232, 287, 291, 296, 332, 360
  re-hearing not allowed when adjudicated, 327, 342
Judicial Commission,
  determination of jurisdiction subject to review by court creating it, 201
  powers of, 201 ff.
Judicial Committee, Standing,
  recommendations irregularly made equivalent of trial, 226, 338, 341, 343, 346-347
Jurisdiction of Church courts limited, 73, 171
Jurisdiction, Original, 73
  not belonging to General Assembly, 338
  of presbytery over candidates, churches and ministers, 73, 95, 96, 223, 312
  (*See* Commission, powers of)

KENTUCKY, Presbytery, A.R.P. Church, union with, 368
Kentucky Synod, union with, 367
Killough, Rev. A., complaint of, 335
Kissling, Rev. Albert J., complaint of, 352
Knox, Rev. H. A., complaint of, 339
Ku Klux Klan, 169

LABOR, 165 ff.
Laboring out of bounds, 90
Lafayette church, New Orleans, complaint of, 332
Lafayette Presbytery, appeal of, 318
Law, 167 ff.
Law suits by Assembly agencies, 124
Laws, Rev. S. S., complaint of, 309
Lay evangelists, 203, 290
Laymen to fill agency positions instead of ministers when possible, 102, 124
Lay workers commissioning, 276
Legalizing meeting of presbytery held at different place, 104
Lehmann, Rev. J. W., complaint of, 341
Letter of dismission, effect when returned, 216
Letters, Pastoral, ordered by General Assembly, 136
Lewis, W. W., complaint of, 334
Liberty, Religious, 146
Limitation of debate deplored, 281
Limitation of pastorate inadmissible, 210
Limited term system for elders and deacons, 217
Liquor traffic, 142 ff., 325 ff.
Literature (Sunday school) unsound, pastoral letters on, 136
Litigation, end of desired, 330
Lively, Robert A., complaint of, 332
Lobbying, deliverance concerning, 42
Long, J. B., complaint of, 324
Lord's Day,
  discipline for work on, 303
  sanctification of, 237 ff.
  travel on, 294
Lord's Supper,
  administration of, 264
  fermented wine, 264
Lottery, deliverance against, 199
Louisville Theological Seminary, 131
Lower courts not parties to appeal cases, 226
Luck, Rev. C. Coleman, complaint of, 345

MACHEN, A. W., appeal of, 342
Mandatory language of Standards, 55, 237
Manses, importance of providing, 209
Marriage, 180 ff., 267
  instruction for, 180
  minors, 15
  mixed, 178 ff.
  with Roman Catholic, 178 ff.
Marshall, Rev. Jas. W., complaint of, 346, 347
Mayes, Rev. G. G., complaint of, 341
McAllister, Rev. R. S., complaint of, 290
McCurdy, Revs. A. H. P. and R. A., complaint of, 334
McJunkin, Rev. J. E., complaint of, 325
McKay, Rev. W., complaint of, 294
McLeod, Rev. J. W., complaint of, 322
McNeilly, J. B., *et al.*, complaint of, 310
McPheeters, Rev. Wm. M., *et al.*, complaint of, 309
Mecklenburg Presbytery, complaint of, 298

Member, church,
  dismissing and receiving, 80
  dismissing in blank irregular, 81
  in good standing, 63, 208, 291
  non-communing, 83, 223
  received by Session, 80
  receiving nominal, 63
  receiving Roman Catholic, 63
  receiving soldiers, 80
  reinstated when unused letter returned, 81
  Session must grant certificate, 80
  suspension of, 303
"Memorial", 230
Memphis Presbytery, complaint of, 294
Mental unsoundness, deposition for, 228, 288 ff., 311
Mercy, necessity and, work of, 13
Mileage system, Presbytery urged only to comply, 69
Military training, 161
Miller, Rev. A. W., *et al.*, complaint of, 285
Mills, Rev. W. H., complaint of, 331, 341
Minister, ordained,
  deposed to be restored cautiously, 228
  dissenting or doubting call, 100
  divested unwillingly, 304, 342
  divested without censure, 227
  examination by presbytery, 313 ff., 353 ff.
  examination mandatory, 91
  examination may not be delegated, 93
  from another denomination, 93, 94
  "honorably retired", 91
  in transit, 101
  laboring out of bounds, 90
  letter sent to presbytery to which dismissed, 100
  member of only one presbytery, 90, 421
  nomination as pastor need not be approved, 209
  not engaged in sacred calling, 101
  not in two communions, 103
  of other denominations in our pulpits, 68, 78, 94
  of other denomination may not moderate church court, 78
  of unsound mind, 228, 288 ff., 311
  ordination requirements, 205, 213
  presbytery judged as to qualifications, 92, 313 ff., 353 ff.
  presbytery has original jurisdiction over, 223, 224
  presbytery must begin process, 227
  received from foreign countries, 93
  received from other denomination, 93
  relation to church not in our connection, 102
  rights as presbyter, 89
  subscribes to ordination vows, 94
  transferred with territory, 91, 94
  who cannot be located, 91
  work not under court jurisdiction, 211
Ministerial Candidates (*See* Candidates)
Ministerial Directory, 133
Ministers' Annuity Fund,
  presbytery may require minister to enter, 211
Ministers'—*Continued* 485
  vacant churches urged to pay dues, 210
Ministry,
  educational standards for, 211
Minors, marriage of, 15
Minutes, alteration of, 69
  not amended after approval by higher court, 230
  published copy may be sent up for review, 69, 108
Missionary declaration of Church, 267
Missions of local congregations, 98
Missouri Synod, union with, 369
Mixed marriages forbidden, 178 ff.
Mob law, opposition to, 167
Moderator,
  changing meeting of court, 68
  must be elected by body over which he is to preside, 67
  of Session, 77, 78
  of General Assembly, not *ex officio* member of next Assembly, 199
  pro tempore not acknowledged, 68
Moore, Rev. James E., complaint of, 342
Moore, J. H., *et al.*, complaint of, 290

NAME of Church not to be used by outside organizations, 123
National Council of Churches, 466 ff.
National Flag, displayed in churches, 165
Necessity and mercy, works of, 13
Need, 170 ff.
Negative actions of Assembly imply contrary interpretation, 114
Negotiations with other churches, 363 ff.
Negro,
  our relation to, pastoral letter, 136
  slavery of, Church's position, 25 ff.
  Snedecor Synod, 87, 104, 105
  (*See* "Race", 171 ff.)
New and Old School, U.S.A., actions of, exceptions taken, 39
Non-communing members, 63, 83, 223
Non-Reformed church bodies, union with, 134, 371, 380, 447
Non-secular character of Church, 25 ff.
Notice of appeal (complaint) required, 231, 285
Notice of called meetings, 103
Nuclear warfare, 160

OBJECTORS, conscientious, provisions for, 159
Obscene literature, 180 ff.
Observance of Sabbath, 237 ff.
Offense, affirmed by Church courts, 223
Offerings, how raised and distributed, 81, 121, 135, 274
  General Assembly no authority to direct lower courts, 121
  tithe, 270
  worship of God by, 269
Officers, single board improper, 65
Official minutes may not be amended after approval by higher court, 230

Old and New Schools, U.S.A., actions of, exceptions taken, 39
Opening sermon may not be delivered by minister of another denomination, 68
"Optional forms", worship, 55, 277
Orange Presbytery members, complaint of, 347
Order, Book of Church, revisions of, 53
Order and Faith, World Conference, 473
Order of the Church, observance enjoined, 53
Ordination,
  call to definite work required, 205
  of candidate, presbytery must examine, 333
  of Deacon when elected Elder and vice versa, 216
  interpretation of requirements, 205, 213
  vows as stated in Book of Church Order mandatory, 216, 277
  vows, doctrines involved, 214
  vows subscribed to by Ministers, 94
Organic Union (*See* Union)
Original Jurisdiction, 73
  of a commission, 201
  of presbytery over churches, candidates and ministers, 73, 95, 96, 223, 312
  not belonging to General Assembly, 338
  (*See* Commission, powers of)
Original presbyteries and changes, 83
Original synods, 104
  changes in boundaries, 104 and 84 ff.
Other bodies (Church),
  relations with, 363 ff.
Ouachita Presbytery, appeal of, 302
Outposts of local congregations, 98
Outside agencies, financial appeals disapproved, 274
Outside organizations not to use name of Church, 123
Overtures to General Assembly, 119 ff.

PAMPHLETEERING disapproved, 115
Papers, church, not endorsed by General Assembly, 124
Parental Christian Training, pastoral letter on, 136
Papal representative of President, protest answered, 43, 178 ff.
Parliamentary Order, Rules of, 281 ff.
Pastor,
  call, 209-210
  change in terms of call, 67, 210
  limited term inadmissible, 210
  member of Session with vote, 77
  relation not lightly broken, 215
  remuneration stated in call, 209
  sabbatical leave, 210
  use of ministers from outside presbytery in installation, 215
Pastor Emeritus, merely honorary, 208
Pastoral letters of General Assembly, 136
Pastoral relation,
  dissolution of (instances), 323, 338
  not lightly broken, 215
Pastorate, term, inadmissible, 210
Patapsco, Presbytery of, union with, 367
Peace, War and International relations, 158 ff.
Pending question defined, 281
Periodicals, independent papers not endorsed by General Assembly, 124
Petition to civil government, right of, 309
Pippen, Rev. W. W., appeal of, 343
Pippen, Rev. W. W., Jr., complaint of, 342
Plan for Federal Union of Presbyterian Churches,
  proposed, 375, 402 ff.
  disapproved by U.S.A. Church, 406
Polygamy,
  complaint of Rev. S. S. Laws, 318
  deliverance on, 14
Poverty, 170 ff.
Prayer and Fasting, Days of, 265
Preaching, 164, 262
Premillenarianism, 45 ff.
Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in America,
  constitution proposed, 406 ff., 414 ff.
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 372-373
  cooperation and comity, 449 ff.
  disapproved federal union, 406
  negotiations looking toward union, 389 ff.
  organic union with declined, 395, 399, 402, 432
Presbyterian Foundation, Inc. (U.S.), 111
Presbytery,
  alone may test theological beliefs, 92
  cannot enroll Elder from church not appointing representative, 91
  cannot receive Church members, 80
  changes in, authorized by synod, 84
  duty to investigate rumors of unsoundness, 335
  has authority over candidates, 99, 206
  has jurisdiction over churches, 97 ff., 339
  has jurisdiction over its ministers, 100 ff.
  has power to dissolve church, 99, 339
  indebtedness, 117
  judges re qualification of Minister, 93
  may dismiss church to another denomination, 98, 99
  may dissolve pastoral relationship, 101
  may dissolve relation of Elder to church, 95
  may not group churches, 98
  may receive other bodies on authority of General Assembly, 133
  may require reports from Sessions, 82, 97
  meeting at different place legalized, 104
  meeting ordered by Synod, 106
  meeting out of its bounds, 104
  must begin process against minister, 223 ff., 227
  opening sermon not by minister of another denomination, 68
  original jurisdiction of, 95 ff.
  stated meetings of, 103
  to examine ministers, but not to delegate responsibility, 91, 93
  urged, not required, to comply with Assembly's mileage system, 69
  what Elders at called meeting, 89, 103

Presbyteries,
  changes of, 84
  indebtedness of, 117
  original, 83
Principal commissioner may be replaced by alternate, 112
Principles, distinctive, of Church, 39
Private judgment, right of, 71
Privileges of floor to secretaries, etc., 123
Process, cases without,
  contumacy in presence of court, 228
  discipline without trial, where confession made to committee, is illegal, 229
  confession of disaccord with "system of doctrine", 214, 304 ff.
Process instituted by session at its discretion, 226
Process may not be required of lower court by higher, 114, 225
Profanity, discipline for, 295
Prohibition and temperance, 142 ff.
  matter of Rev. W. I. Sinnott, 325 ff.
Property, church,
  deacons cannot sell, 66
  jurisdiction of trustees, 62
  relation of congregation's to denomination, 74 ff.
  rights of congregation, 74 ff.
Protest,
  made to body which took action, 234
  submitted at meeting at which action taken, 234
Protestant bodies, union of declined, 371, 380, 447
Protestantism, Romanism a menace to liberty of, 147, 177 ff.
Provisional or special Session, no such thing, 77
Proxy vote not allowed, 209
Public funds in Church schools, 184 ff.
Public Schools, Bible in, 184 ff.
  prayer in, 184 ff.
Public servants, commending not usual policy, 116
Pulpit, freedom of, 262

QUAKER baptism, 20

RACE relations, 171 ff., 294, 306
  pastoral letter on, 136
  (*See* "Negro")
Ramsay, F. M., Complaint of, 339
Ramsay, Rev. F. P., complaint of, 296
Reception of members, 63, 80
Record of Judicial Commission should be read (appellate court), 202
Records, official (of courts), 68, 108
  higher court, cannot amend record of lower court, 69
  (*See* "Minutes")
Reference, withdrawn, appellate court determines whether recorded, 231
Reformed Church in America,
  cooperation and comity with, 448 ff.
  union with, 432 ff.
Reformed Churches in America, council of, 373
Relations with other bodies, 363 ff.
Religious liberty, 146
Remarriage, comity in, 15
  Minister makes decision, 15
Remarried divorced members,
  admission to church membership, 15
  disciplined, 15
Remuneration of pastor,
  exception to rule, 209
  must be stated in call, 209
Reopening of adjudicated case not allowed, 113, 230
Repentance and evangelism, pastoral letter on, 137
Reports from Session, may be required by Presbytery only, 82, 97
Representatives to Church courts not instructed how to vote, 57, 82
Restoration of deposed minister, 228
Retired Minister, "Honorably", 91
Revision of Book of Church Order, 53
Richardson, Rev. E. M., complaint of, 307
Righteousness, civic, exhortation to, 167 ff.
Robbins, Rev. F. E., appeal of, 323
Robertson, Rev. J. P., complaint of, 339
Robinson, Rev. D. P., appeal of, 297
Robinson, Rev. Stuart, *et al.*, appeal of, 288
Roman Catholic, 63, 177 ff.
  baptism, 20, 23
Ruff, F. G., complaint of, 334
Rules of Discipline, 221 ff.
  revisions of, 53 ff.
Rules of Parliamentary Order, 281
Ruling Elder,
  at called meetings of presbytery, 103
  cannot be Elder in two churches at same time, 64, 77
  duties of in worship services, 62
  elected as deacon, must be ordained, 216
  from other Presbyterian body, 217
  Limited Term system, 217
  may be appointed to conduct services, 64
  membership in presbytery until next stated meeting, 89
  on Presbytery committees, 89
  presbytery may dissolve relation, 95
  representatives, not delegates, 82
Rumors, concerning soundness of minister, duty of presbytery, 335 ff.
Russel, Dr. W. T., complaint of, 300

SABBATH,
  discipline for work on, 303
  observance of, 237 ff.
  pastoral letters on, 136
  travel, 294
Sabbatical leave for pastor, 210
Salary, pastor's,
  congregation and presbytery must act, 210
  deacons cannot change, 66
School, Old and New, exception taken to actions of, 39
School, Sunday (Church)
  definition of, 269

School—*Continued*
evangelism its purpose, 268
Presbyterianism to be taught, 268
Schools, State support, 185 ff.
Scriptures,
inspiration of, 4 ff.
in seminaries, 4
responsive reading of, 261
Seal of the Church, 133, Title page
Secretaries, Executive,
privileges of floor, 123
retirement at age seventy, 215
Secular, non-, Church's character, 25 ff.
Segregation, 173 ff.
Seminaries, Theological, 125 ff.
caution regarding certain types, 95
charges against professors, how made, 224
definition of "standard" seminary, 93, 212
number of, 127
our students should attend our own, 128, 207
relation to General Assembly, 128, 224
Sermon, opening of court,
may not be delivered by minister of another denomination, 68
Session,
assistant pastor not a member, 77
duty to non-resident members,
government of congregation in its hands, 76
may not delegate sessional powers, 67, 77, 78
may not instruct representatives, 82
must grant certificate to member in good standing, 80
no meeting without sanction of pastor, 77
no provisional or special, 77
offerings, power over, 81, 121, 135, 274
pastor a member, 77
pastor without elder, not a session, 76
powers of, 78 ff.
record required by presbytery, 82
relation to deacons, 65
representatives to higher courts, 82
stated supply not a member, 77
to institute process at its discretion, 226
who may moderate, 78
worship responsibility, 81
Sessional records, 82
(*See* "Minutes")
Seventh Day Adventists, 45, 254
Sex, 180 ff.
Shaw, Rev. J. S., complaint of, 310
Shaw, Rev. M. B., complaint of, 290
Sinclair, Rev. James, complaint of, 285
Singers, professional and hired, 262
Singing in public worship, 262
Sinnott, Rev. W. I., the matter of, 325
Slavery, deliverance on, 25 ff.
Smith, Rev. Hay Watson, the matter of, 335
Smoot, Rev. R. K., *et al.*, complaint of, 290
Snedecor Memorial Synod, 104, 105
Social concern, 137 ff.
Social hygiene, 180
Social security, 42, 186
Soldiers,
reception of, 80
(World War I) pastoral letter on, 137
Sory, W. H., complaint of, 324
Spirituality and independence of Church
(*See* "Non-secular")
Standards for ministry, educational, 211
Standards of theological education, 126
State,
Church and, separation of, 184 ff.
duty of citizens to, 13
relation of candidates during war, 185
State and Church, 184 ff.
Stated Clerk,
privileges of floor, 123
retirement at age seventy, 215
may give information on balloting of presbyteries, 218
Stated meetings of presbytery, 103
Stated Supply,
not member of session, 77
part-time disapproved, 208
State support not accepted for church schools, 184 ff.
Stevenson, Rev. W. A., complaint of, 339
Stewardship, 136, 269
finances in local church, 21, 121, 135, 274
tithe, 270 ff.
Study by Minister may be in institution not approved by Presbytery, 103
Sunday (*See* "Sabbath")
Sunday school, (*See* "School, Sunday")
Suppers, concerts, etc., for church, 274
Supply (*See* Stated, Interim or Occasional)
Suspended Minister should be so reported, 228
Suspension of members, 303
Sustaining (complaint) in part, 234
Swedenborgian baptism not valid, 24
Synod,
legalizing meeting of presbytery held at different place, 105
may receive other bodies on authority of General Assembly, 133
meeting held out of bounds approved, 105
minutes sent to General Assembly, 108
opening sermon not by minister of another denomination, 68
powers of, 106 ff.
powers of Assembly over,
powers re Presbytery, 106 ff.
Snedecor Memorial, 104 ff.
union with other bodies not Synod power, 219
Synod of Appalachia, complaint returned, 361
Synod of South, United,
union with, 365
Synods,
changes in boundaries, 104 and 84 ff.
indebtedness of, 117
original, 104
System of Doctrine,
confession of disaccord with, 214
defined, 213
Systematic theology, thesis in, 211

TEMPERANCE and prohibition, 142 ff.
matter of Rev. W. I. Sinnott, 325 ff.
Ten day notice for called meeting of presbytery, 103
Term pastorate inadmissible, 210
Territory transferred with ministers, 91, 94
Thanksgiving, days of, 266
Theological Seminaries (*See* "Seminaries")
Thesis, systematic theology required, 212
Thompson, Rev. E. T., charges against, 224
Thurmond, N. D., complaint of, 312
Tithe, 270 ff.
Title of Church, 110
Tobacco, use of, deliverance on, 157
Trustees,
jurisdiction over church property, 62
not a governing board, 62
Tuberculosis, action on, 158
Turner, W. S., appeal of, 291

UNION Theological Seminary, 131, 224 ff.
Union with non-Reformed church bodies, 134, 371, 380, 447
Union with other bodies,
accomplished,
United Synod of South, 365
Independent Presbyterian Church, 366
Alabama Presbytery, A.R.P. Church, 367
Patapsco Presbytery, 368
Synod of Kentucky, 367
Kentucky Presbytery, A.R.P. Church, 368
Synod of Missouri, 369
attempted, 383 ff.
considered, 370 ff.
early papers on, 39 ff.
on Assembly level only, 134, 219
synod and presbytery may receive other bodies on authority of General Assembly, 133
Unitarian baptism invalid, 20
United Nations, 160
United Presbyterian Church,
negotiations for union with, 441 ff.
suggested basis for union, 442
United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.,
problems of relations, 450
union with declined, 445 ff.
United Synod of South, union with, 365
Unity of the Church, 56
divisions not sinful per se, 59
Universalists denied use of our church buildings, 45
Unordained, public teaching by, 204
Unsound mind, deposition of minister, 99, 228, 288, 311

VACANT churches,
assigned to care of Minister, 99
dues to Annuity Fund, 210
Vatican, representative of President, 42 ff.
Voters, defined, 209
proxy not allowed, 209
Vows, ordination, doctrines involved, form in Book of Church Order mandatory, 216, 255

WAR, 158 ff.
what preached in time of, 164
Wells, Rev. J. M., *et al.*, complaint of, 312
West Columbia (S. C.) Church, complaint of, 344
Westminster Assembly, sketch of, 3
White, Rev. J. E., complaint of, 391
Williams, Dr. Sidney, complaint of, 350
Williamson, R. B., appeal of, 285
Wine, fermented, in Lord's Supper, 264
Women eligible for office, 215
Woodrow, Rev. James,
and evolution, 7, 296 ff.
Word, preaching of, 164, 262
Work of Minister not under court jurisdiction, 211
Work, Directory for Worship and, 53 ff, 235 ff.
World Conference on Faith and Order, 473
World Council of Churches, 473 ff.
Worldliness, 136, 137, 192 ff.
Worldly amusements, 136, 192 ff.
Worldly conformity, definition of, 196
Worship, 259 ff.
order, 259
who may attend, 259
Worship and Work of the Church, Directory for, 235 ff.
revisions of, 53 ff.
"Worship, Book of Common", 55, 216, 276-277

YOUNG, Col. Bennett H., complaint of, 318, 320