

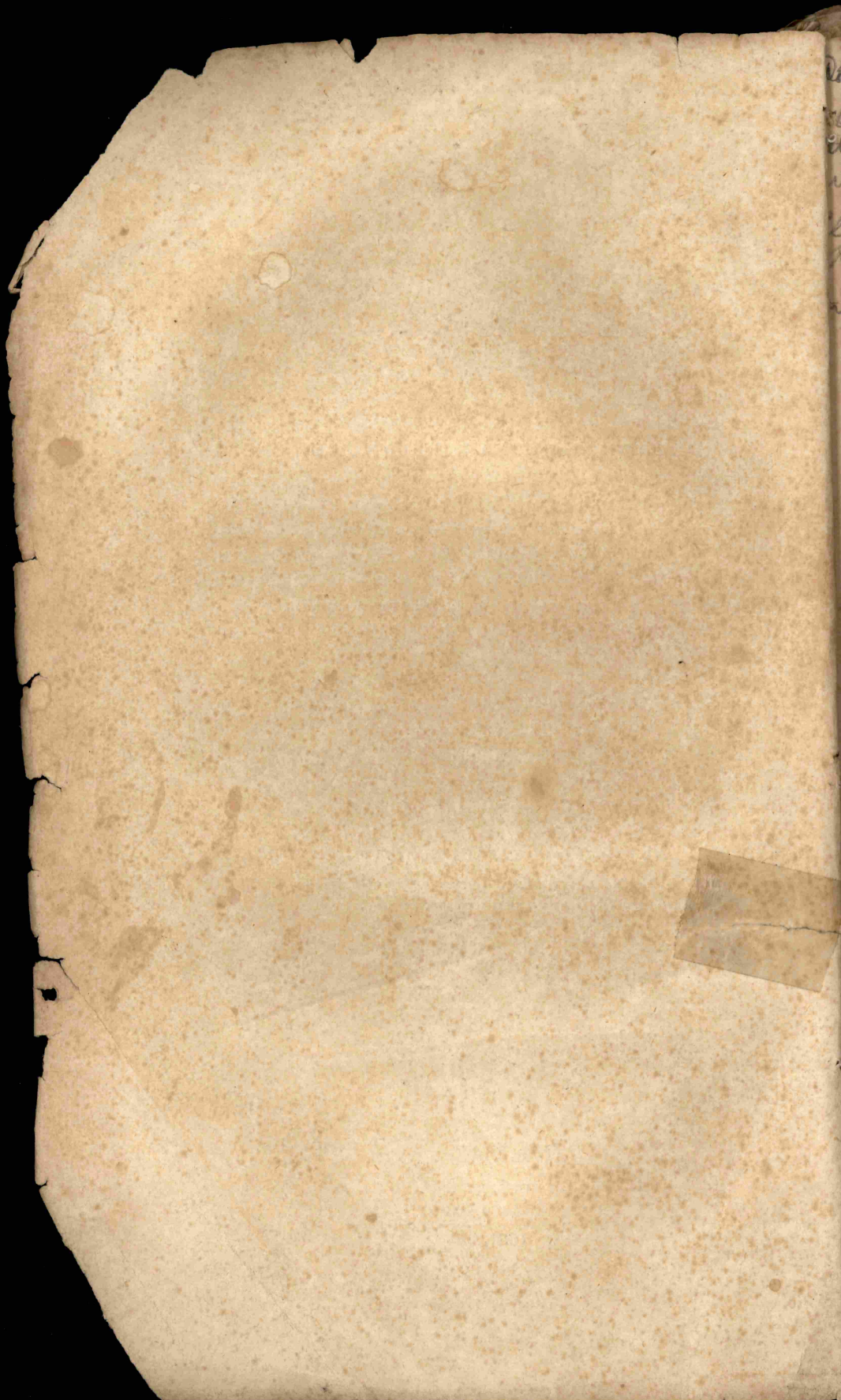
15493
NW
new
90-
calculus
17 42
the time
10

A

DEVELOPMENT
OF
FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES
JUSTIFYING A UNION WITH THE
TRUE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH.

BY CHRISTIAN Z. PAULISON, A. M.
MINISTER OF THE UNITED TRUE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCHES OF
HACKENSACK AND ENGLISH NEIGHBOURHOOD, N. J.

New-York,
PRINTED BY JOHN T. WEST & CO.
NO. 85 CHATHAM-STREET.
1831.



21/1830 Extra Session Classes of Harkness & Co. created by
 C. Z. Paulson examined on doctrine. Lesson 17
 class satisfied with his orthodoxy & now ready to receive him
 open arms and hearts into our communion & fellowship
 of Harkness
 English Night School
 Harkness & Co. Paulson accepted
 C. Z. Paulson installed minister churches English Night School 1831
 1832 Per C. Z. Paulson deposed by Classes of Harkness & Co.

A DEVELOPMENT, &c.

My object in presenting these pages to the public, is to exhibit my reasons for having connected myself with the religious association which is generally termed, "the Secession," but more properly, "the True Reformed Dutch Church."

For this step, I have no doubt, I will be censured by many, pitied by others, but for which I rejoice, and trust I will rejoice to the latest period of my life.

I think I have been led in this matter by such clear intimations of the divine will, that I trust it will not be a little thing, that will turn me from my purpose, or cause me to repent of the course I have taken.

If my heart deceives me not, I have reason to believe, that I am not influenced by any selfish motives in laying these pages before the public; but by a desire to glorify God, and benefit the cause of truth. I acknowledge the hand of God in the whole transaction.

As my personal religious exercises are intimately connected with those which I have had on the subject of separating myself from the corrupt judicatures of the Dutch Church, I shall proceed to a brief detail of the former, viewing it essential to a presentation of my conduct in its proper light.

I was the subject of religious exercises at the age of about thirteen. It was my father's wish to educate me for one of the three professions, probably for the work of the ministry, if it might be the Lord's will to give me the necessary gracious qualifications. At the time that I was visited with inward distress, his mind was much exercised on this subject. He did not wish to go forward without receiving some intimation of the divine will, that it was his duty so to do; and when I became the subject of exercises which were generally supposed to be of a gracious nature, he thought he received that token of the divine will which he sought, and he acted accordingly. My exercises were at times very distressing; my fears and terrors gave me no rest. My spirit was held for some length of time in awful bondage, but the cause of my distresses, I cannot in looking back, exactly define. I was much troubled with

the fear of dying; and with it was of course associated a sense of guilt. I began to make conscience of secret prayer, read religious books, and thought I took considerable pleasure in hearing the word preached. My inward distresses at length began to subside, and I was troubled to think, that with their departure, my state would be precisely what it was before. I made known my fears, and was directed to live by faith. This direction I did not fully understand; although it seemed for the time in a measure to satisfy me. I now have my doubts, whether Christ and his salvation were at this early period of my life applied to my soul. I know not whether God revealed Christ in me; but this much I can say, I felt a great desire to be led in the right way. My fears as to the genuineness of my exercises filled me with great inward distress. I had clearer views of divine truth than I had before, and thought I felt some degree of pleasure in associating with the pious, and listening to their religious conversation. But while I would not lightly overlook any thing the Lord may have done for me in the days of my childhood; while I would not despise the day of small things; I must now candidly avow, that I do not find any thing in the retrospect, that satisfactorily convinces me of the genuineness of my former exercises. I may have seen men as trees walking, but clear light was not communicated. I however offered myself for church membership, and was received on a confession of my faith, into the Reformed Dutch Church at Hackensack, then under the pastoral care of Dr. Solomon Frøeligh.

In looking back, I find it was not a very great while before I became the subject of sad declension: and although I cannot say that I ever since my first exercises, was entirely destitute of a sense of divine things, yet of this I am convinced, that the portion of my life which was spent in preparatory collegiate and theological study, was as to any prominent, palpable religious exercises, a perfect blank. Under the influence of this religious stupidity, I entered upon the solemn and responsible work of the ministry, and not until lately, was I, as I humbly trust, aroused from my sleep, and brought near to God.

I must observe then, that I was born again or re-converted, Matt. xviii, 3, Luke xxii, 32: if my heart deceives me not, on Saturday, November 12th, 1830. My mind for some weeks, and even months previous to this, was habitually sad and depressed under a view of my lamentable state, of my distance from God; and there were in

me at times strong desires to know the Lord better, and to be brought nearer to him. I was enabled at times, although not frequently, to mourn in prayer over this subject. I now and then formed the resolve that I would live nearer to the Lord, but alas ! I found that no strength of resolution would suffice to keep me steadfast in the way of holiness. My lusts domineered over me, and all I could do, was to sigh over chains which I could not break asunder.

On the Thursday preceding Saturday, November 12th, I experienced unusual meltings of soul in view of my sad condition, and my desire to be brought near to God was stronger than ever. My paramount desire was to have the Lord for my God. I felt myself a lost, an undone creature, if I had not God for a portion ; and if my heart deceives me not, it was on the aforementioned Saturday, in the evening, that he manifested himself to me in a way of grace. He revealed himself to me as the God of grace in the operations of his Spirit upon my soul, and my heart, my whole heart said, *Amen*. He humbled me under a view of his grace to me a sinner, and thus effectually broke the power and dominion of sin, and set my feet at large in a manner that I had never before experienced. The manifestations of his grace to me have increased ; and my frame of mind on Saturday, November 20th, was to me truly of an astonishing character. The light which he threw upon different parts of his word surprised me ; and the manifestations of himself to me, were so clear, that I could no more doubt of a work of grace upon my heart, than I can of the existence of the sun when he shines in the fulness of his strength.

The Lord's people now appeared in a light truly amiable, and I felt as though I could not be separated from them, but must take up my abode, live and die with them. I felt too, as though I could bear the reproach of Christ, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. The view which I had of the glory of God, and the wonders of his grace, lifted me far above the world ; I was borne up as on eagles' wings, viewing the world and all that it can boast of, as but dross, and not worthy to be compared to the pleasure derived from one glimpse of God's countenance. I thought I could dwell with God's people though I should be fed with but the bare necessities of life, if God sustained me and shed abroad his love

in my heart : and I this day resolved, that God's people should be my people, that with them I would dwell, and with them wish to be buried.

Truly I could say, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," and that the life of the believer "is hid with Christ in God." This I never before understood, although I had often thought about the former, and preached about the latter. I thought I discovered too wherein the Lord's people are distinguished from others who merely bear the name, and that grace is as far above nature as heaven is above earth, and that none can know the Lord, but those to whom he manifests himself. I discovered too, wherein the communion of saints consisted, realizing that they only can speak to one another of those secret things, which God by his special grace has wrought in their souls. I found too the preciousness of his word, and thought I discovered what it is to have the understanding opened, to a knowledge of the Scriptures ; and in reading the Scriptures, I could truly apply the words of the Psalmist, "How sweet are thy words unto me, Oh God, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." "The law of thy mouth is better unto me, than thousands of gold and silver." This I had never before felt, but now it was matter of heartfelt experience.

I discovered likewise the impossibility of preaching Christ and him crucified, while there is not a revelation of Christ in the soul ; and that although formerly my theory of the Gospel plan might have been correct, yet that I had never been truly prepared to preach it ; that I had been in a great measure ignorant of the peculiar exercises, troubles, sorrows and joys of the Lord's people ; and consequently, that I could not skilfully deal with weary souls, nor feed the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock. Although I might frequently have attempted it, and sometimes drawn a picture, which the experimental Christian would pronounce to be correct ; yet my feeble ability, in this respect was not owing so much to the teachings of God's Spirit, as to my having been conversant for a length of time with those who were truly the children of God.

I was convinced of another thing, about which before I merely speculated ; and that is the entire dependence of the new creature upon the influences of God's Spirit for the maintenance of the spiritual life. God taught me this, by withdrawing at intervals his hand from me, at least in a measure ; then I felt my weakness ; the heavenly vision had almost disappeared, and I found that the

divine manifestations were of such a nature that I hardly could conceive of them except when I was favored with them. I was obliged therefore to look unto God to continue what he had begun. I felt the more prompted thus to look unto God, because I found that the divine manifestations brought with them an inexpressible sweetness, serenity and composure, which I had never before experienced. I thought I could realize how possible it was for God to manifest himself to a sinful worm in such a wonderful manner, that weak nature would faint and sink under it. I did not experience such manifestations, but what I felt, evidently affected my frame; and I inferred that God could even on earth, give a vision of himself so delightful and transporting as would lead him in pity to frail nature, to continue it for but a little season.

There was in all this no excitement of the animal passions, because there was no exciting cause. My views were not the creatures of my own fancy, because they were such as I never before had conceived of. I have often in the days of my ignorance, endeavoured to imagine how the Lord's people were exercised, and to form an idea of spiritual affections, from what I knew of natural affections; I now saw it could not be done: and I perceived too that the unrenewed could not understand the work of divine grace upon the heart, and that unrenewed ministers could not faithfully preach about it. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." No wonder that Festus said to Paul, "Thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." Christ crucified is "to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them that are saved, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

I find that the manifestations of God's grace to the heart are very humbling. They fill the soul with a holy surprise, and we ask, "who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity." The words of the prophet Isaiah as quoted by Paul, forcibly apply to my case. "I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." The freeness of God's grace filled me with wonder. That he should have mercy upon unworthy me, appeared something almost too great to be believed or realized. I thought I realized in some measure what must have been the Psalmist's exercises, when in the last three Psalms his

mouth is filled with praise, and he so often repeats the words, "Praise ye the Lord, Praise ye the Lord," for when God manifested to me his great grace, I was obliged to give utterance to my heart's feelings by frequently saying, "I'll praise him, I'll praise him."

I find too, that the manifestations of God's grace to the heart of the sinner, can break the power of sin, and they only. When I received such manifestations of God's grace, then I bid the world farewell, although before I had been continually hankering after it, and endeavouring to find my pleasure in it; but, alas! I then sought in the world what it cannot give. The distant prospect of death always broke my schemes, and blasted my gourds; and I felt obliged to sigh out, oh! that I had a better portion; but I had it not.

When the Lord manifested himself to me, my heart was enlarged, and my willing feet ran in the way of his commandments. Oh! the manifestations of God's grace broke my chains, and turned my captivity. Over these chains I had often secretly sighed; and God in giving me so prolonged a view of my bondage convinced me, that my own power could not break it, and now as I believe that he has done it for me, I feel constrained to praise him for his great grace.

And now I feel a rest within which I never before experienced. I have frequently been constrained to say with the Psalmist, "Return to thy rest, oh my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." My troubled spirit rested in God, and felt a composure to which I had been a stranger. My spirit was like the troubled sea, on which there may be seen now and then a transient, calm, but which a little breeze soon ruffles. My greatest inward peace was, during the days of my distance from God, delusive and false. It had not its seat in the secret recesses of the soul; and although there might at times have been a smooth surface, yet the waters inwardly were always troubled. But what a change do I feel; a peace I can truly say, which the world can neither give nor take away; but this especially, when the Lord lifts upon me the light of his countenance; for when he hides his face I am troubled.

And here I feel constrained to look back and compare my former exercises in view of preparing for the pulpit with what they are now. Oh! how I dragged along in my search after sacred truth, before I knew, as I trust I do now, the preciousness of Christ's sal-

vation. I must confess I have been guilty of slighting the Lord's work, and for this I desire to feel ashamed and to abhor myself. I have been in the ministry four years and a half; and I must say, that those duties, which may properly be termed ministerial, were often a drudgery to me. I have known seasons indeed when I felt the influence of exciting causes which spurred me on, but I know not that the impulse I felt was gracious. While at Marbletown, where I first settled after I entered the ministry, I engaged just previous to my leaving there in a dispute with the Methodists, who were endeavouring to get up a revival (as the phrase is.) So engaged was I in the war, that I actually wrote and preached a sermon three hours and a half in length. My zeal almost consumed me. But I fear I acted under the influence of a natural spirit. My doctrinal opinions were opposed to theirs, and I was determined to defend them. My pride would not suffer me to shrink from the contest, but I fear the glory of God was not my ruling motive. I then fully believed, I thought, the doctrine of God's sovereignty in the dispensations of his grace, but my views of it are clearer now, and consequently my faith in it is more fully established. I know it to be a true doctrine from what the Lord has taught me in his wonderful dealings with me, and the arguments by which in the days of my ignorance I was led to maintain it, I believe to be just and conclusive.

But to return from my digression: I must say, that I was comparatively a sluggard in the ministry, until the Lord touched my heart: and now, if my heart deceives me not, I feel as though I could spend and be spent for the Lord. I think I have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and my heart desires the "sincere milk of the word, that I may grow thereby," and edify the flock of Christ. I believe the word of God contains inexhaustible treasures, and I feel as though my whole life, be it long or short, cannot be spent to better purpose than in an investigation of Gospel mysteries. In order to this I know and feel, that I need the continued aids of God's Holy Spirit. I expect to labor among the people of God, and I now see they need food, which in times past I was not prepared to give them. I had indeed a few superficial notions about Christian experience, a little of what they feel I may have felt; but alas! before God visited me in great mercy, my principal source of trouble was a conviction of my almost entire want of the power of vital godliness. The Lord has shown me something of the

hidden life of his people, and I look to him to increase my knowledge of it. I expect trials from the world, Satan, and my own heart, but God will sustain me. Having at length called me to the ministry, he will fit me for the great work. Well may God's people always pray, that he would give them pastors after his own heart.

I shall now more immediately proceed to a detail of the circumstances which have led me to join the True Reformed Dutch Church. I feel the more strongly urged to do this, because I am well convinced that wrong motives and aims will be imputed to me. It is my desire to glorify God and vindicate the honor of his cause, however despised it may be. And here I would say, that I have always been a secret enemy to the Dutch Seceders, and would be such to this day, if the Lord had not made me of a different mind towards them. It has always been my secret conviction, that many of them were God's people; but my heart was not with them. They were to me in some respects a mysterious people, and no wonder, for I now see their life is a hidden one. Feeling as I did, I could not have lived among them. Their pious, experimental discourse would have been torture to me. My carnal mind was enmity against God and them, and it is well that the Lord did not permit me to go among them, when I was not prepared to be of any essential benefit to them. A door of entrance seemed to be opened to me when I was yet minister of the Dutch Church of Marbletown. A committee of two waited on me then, to ascertain the state of my mind on the subject of settling among them. The fact became known to my people, and it spurred them on to efforts for increasing my salary, which was done. The committee having thus rendered me a service highly acceptable to me, I dismissed the thought of listening to any proposals from Hackensack; and visiting New-Jersey a week or two afterwards, I did not even think it worth while to meet with the Consistory, who assembled to hold consultation with me. It is humiliating thus to expose my former state of mind, but believing it will be for the glory of God, I will deny myself and make the exposure.

It was on Tuesday or Wednesday evening, of the week following the Saturday, on which the Lord visited me with his grace, that the True Reformed Dutch Church rose to my view as the field in which I was in future to labor. It was at this time that the Lord very singularly manifested to me his grace, and made me break

out in strains before unknown to me, "I'll praise him for what he has done, I'll praise him, I'll praise him." Then it was that I said in substance, I think verbally, "I will go and seek the people at Hackensack, that despised flock; I will go and prophesy to God's people Israel; I will go and nothing shall prevent me; I will go for them through fire and through flood, if the Lord gives me grace." This language, rest assured, was not studied or premeditated. I was obliged to speak from the overflowings of my heart, I could not keep silence, for the hand of the Lord was upon me. The words "go and prophesy to my people Israel," had never before particularly arrested my attention, although I knew they were the words of Scripture, and I fully believe them to have been impressed on my heart by the Spirit of God. I had not at any time previous to this been exercised on the subject of going to the Secession; it never before had been presented to my mind in a serious manner.

This perhaps will be the proper place to notice what has been commonly reported and by many believed, viz. that I have been persuaded to leave the Dutch Church by the friends who are attached to the body with which I have connected myself. I can call the Searcher of Hearts to witness, that my statement of the manner in which I was first led seriously to think of joining the True Reformed Dutch Church, is according to truth; and if so, how can it be said in truth that I have been influenced by human persuasion? I have already stated that a door of entrance was opened to me when I was yet at Marbletown, at a distance of one hundred miles from the friends to whom Aquackanonk is so contiguous. If the persuasion of friends has prevailed upon me to take my present step, it is indeed a wonder that I was not influenced by it long ago. No parental wishes would ever have induced me to settle among a people towards whom I felt no drawing. But my friends have not attempted to influence me in this matter; and even if they had they would not have succeeded. Whatever may have been their private wishes, they have never urged me, but very wisely committed me to the disposal of an overruling Providence.

But to return to my narrative. The impression which the aforementioned exercise left upon my mind did not make the path of duty clear to me. My mind was exercised upon the subject afterwards, more or less, and as I was walking in the field the next day,

the thought of my yet being useful among the people of God, affected my heart so deeply that my tears flowed abundantly.

It was not long before a secret desire arose in my heart to go to Hackensack and tell my father what the Lord had done for my soul. Circumstances prevented my going immediately, but the longer I waited, the more impatient I was to go; and my desire was at length attended and increased by the impression, that I would there meet with some intimation of the Divine will. The people of God, thought I, are perhaps uniting their prayers touching the very thing which is now transpiring. On Friday morning, succeeding the Tuesday afore-mentioned, I hastened to be on my way; for the Saviour's words to Zaccheus, "make haste," were strongly impressed on my mind, and urged me onward. At Aquackanonk village, I found myself arrested in my course, the bridge being under repair, and impassable; but so strong was my desire to go, that I really believe I should have gone by the way of Belleville, which would have added to my ride the distance of more than a dozen miles; but there being a nearer route by way of the Wesel bridge, I took that, and in due season arrived at Hackensack.

It was impressed on my mind, as I have stated, that I would receive some intimation of the divine will; and I was not mistaken; for after I had related the nature of my exercises, and the object of my visit, my father informed me of the manner in which the Lord had dealt with him on this very subject. When I formerly declined to accept of a call from the church of Hackensack, the minds of many were sadly disappointed. My father's mind labored on the subject, for he knew I might have found a place in the church of God, and he greatly desired it; although he never said anything to me on the subject at that time. Cast down on account of my refusal, as he one day was on his way to New-York, the voice of the Lord came to his soul and said, "I will send him in mine own time." "But Lord," my father answered, "the door is shut." "I open and no man shutteth," was the reply; and never, he testifies, had he such near communion with God, talking with him, as it were, face to face. This disclosure overwhelmed my heart. The world may ridicule the idea of such intercourse with the Lord, but I firmly believe it to be a part of the secret of the Lord, with which some of his people are favored. My purpose was strengthened by this intimation of the divine will, for such I did and do still regard

ii. In addition to this, I find, that prayer has steadily ascended to heaven for that very thing which God has now accomplished. I praise him for having thus directed me, and I am determined, as he shall aid me, not to be "disobedient to the heavenly vision."

As the Lord has increased my light, and given me increasing insight into his word, I have become more fully persuaded that it is my bounden duty to connect myself with the Seceders. I look upon the cause in which they are engaged, in altogether a different light than I ever did before. The special hand of the Lord has brought the true Reformed Dutch Church into existence; and he will, I have no doubt, put the seal of his divine approbation upon it. Dr. Frøeligh, that old and tried servant of the Lord, although loaded with the reproaches of his enemies, has gone to heaven; and my heart is grieved when I think, that I have been among the number of his opponents. My heart has been opposed to him, but the Lord forgive me. Despised as he has been by the multitude, I now revere his memory; and I hope God will give me grace, to aid the cause in which he led, over which his tears have fallen, and for which his fervent prayers have ascended to heaven. "The memory of the just is blessed."

I have been led to view the cause of secession, as that banner which the Lord, according to his promise has been pleased to raise against the enemy that comes in like a flood; and this banner may yet be a rallying point to those friends of truth, whose eyes are yet in a measure blinded to the present state of things, but who will in due season be led to see, that truth in this day can be redeemed only by setting up its standard in formal opposition to error in all its various forms.

Alas! the sun of the Reformation which rose so brightly is fast sinking in the west. In this opinion I am confirmed by the single fact, that the present mode of preaching, which, almost universally prevails, is far from being evangelical. The preaching of the day, viewing it as a whole, is not reformation preaching. A smattering of the Gospel truth may yet be dealt out from many pulpits, but the marrow of the Gospel is dispensed but from few. Compare for instance, one of Ralph Erskine's sermons with the many which we hear and read at the present day, not as it regards their length, but the character of the matter which they contain. The general mode of sermonizing at the present day, bears no resemblance to that which prevailed in former times. We look in vain in most

modern discourses for that exhibition of Gospel fullness, that delineation of Christian graces and exercises, that nice discrimination between true and false experience, that frequent use of Scriptural passages, allusions and examples in the establishment of doctrine, and the confirmation and illustration of Christian experience, for which old fashioned preaching was so happily distinguished; and by which the children of God were fed unto life everlasting. On the contrary, in many instances we behold attempts for the support of favourite theories, not so much by an appeal to the law and testimony, as by a train of abstract speculation, whose design is to bring down the spirituality of true religion to the comprehension of benighted human reason; and this too under the pretence of preaching Christ and him crucified. In other instances, even where truth is theoretically held forth, we may generally look in vain for its faithful application. The doctrines of Scripture may be explained and by conclusive arguments defended, but we are not told how the mind is exercised when their power is felt; and this certainly is a part of Gospel preaching as important as any other. Yea, if this part of the work of a Gospel minister be omitted or slightly done, his work remains undone; he is unfaithful to his trust, and the people of God cannot be truly benefited by his labors.

It may be said, "The taste of the age has changed;" and that is the very reason, why we ought to believe the age corrupt and degenerate. ✕ The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ remains always the same. ✕ The true believer has a taste for the true Gospel. God enables him according to his measure of light, to discern Gospel preaching from all other preaching; and the spiritual taste which God gives him, does not change with a changing age. ✕ He does not run with the multitude either in their evil deeds or their vitiated likes and dislikes: and I may perhaps be thought highly presumptuous when I add, that the fact of the churches being generally so well satisfied with the manner in which the word of God is handled by those who professedly labor in holy things, confirms me in the belief that the Spirit has in a great measure taken his flight from our land.

I am still farther confirmed in my views on this subject from the extent to which impure doctrine is tolerated in the churches. ✕ Reformation principles in their purity and full extent are becoming exceedingly unfashionable. ✕ Who will deny it? We well know it is

said, There is no great departure from the foundation on which the Reformation was built ; there is only a modification of its doctrines. Were this all, I would view it as an evil of incalculable magnitude, and one that would justify me in the step which I have taken. But do we not when we depart from the principles of the Reformation also depart from its foundation ? What had the Reformation for its basis but the doctrines of the word of God as explained and defended by those who enlisted in the cause. The supporters of truth in the best days of the Reformation are to decide as to the foundation upon which, in the name of God, they reared the glorious superstructure ; and it is vain for us to contend, that we are yet upon Reformation ground, when we have forsaken Reformation principles. The doctrines of the word of God are the foundation of the church. " Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," says the apostle,—i. e. the doctrines which they taught. These doctrines, as they were viewed by the Reformers and their immediate successors, are the foundation of the Reformation church, and as we depart from them do we lay a new foundation, and raise a new edifice. Liberty of thought and exposition is contended for. None certainly can object to a free investigation of the sacred volume, provided it be approached with the heartfelt conviction, that it contains an expression of Jehovah's will, which we are to receive as it has proceeded from his mouth, and of which we are to judge not by an appeal to reason, but by a reference to the Scriptures themselves. Our first enquiry is to be, What has Jehovah said ? and this can be known only by an appeal to the sacred text, with a mind enlightened by the Spirit of God, and a heart feeling its dependence upon the sacred influence for guidance into all truth. ✕ If there be in us a true desire to be governed by the word, we will implicitly receive the testimony of Jehovah as contained in the Scriptures ; and when its truths seem above, and even contradictory to the views of reason, the heart will reply, " It must be so, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it." ✕ But when the pride of reason gains the ascendancy, and is permitted to exert its influence, this and the other interpretations of God's word will be objected to, because reason objects ; and the inventive powers of the human mind are put in requisition, for the discovery of a sense, which is thought to be more consistent with reason and common sense. ✕ And as reason when it labors with a subject which is too high for it, is apt to change its views, and re-

nounce one thing for another, so it happens that those who, ignorantly perhaps, make a god of their reason in matters of religion, are ever unstable; "ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." The ascription of powers to the human intellect in matters of religion, which do not belong to it, I conceive to be the great evil of the age. And a destructive evil it is. Hence arises a denial of the eternal generation of the Son, and of the doctrine of imputation. Hence proceed the doctrines of natural ability, and indefinite atonement, with all those new-fangled theories, which the future ecclesiastical historian will record as a foul blot upon the face of this age.

✕ That principle of the open Infidel which leads him to reject the Bible altogether, is essentially the principle that creates the wonderful diversity of doctrinal opinions that exists at the present day. The open Infidel sits in judgment upon the inspiration of the Bible, and the philosophical Christian upon its meaning: both are influenced by essentially the same spirit; and when one contends with the other, it is but the potsherd striving with the potsherd of the earth. Is the Spirit of God the author of confusion? If God's people are led by one spirit, will they not have essentially one experience, walk in one way, and adhere to one truth? ✕

✕ But the present diversity of doctrinal opinions is viewed by the multitude as a matter of no importance. Creeds and confessions, although professedly adhered to, are in reality, trampled under foot, and it is notorious, that preachers have been ordained to churches when they actually took exceptions to doctrines expressly contained in their Confession of Faith. ✕ If this be not a throwing open of the floodgates of error, what is? ✕ This spirit of defection is spreading, and becoming more and more alarming. Error is putting on a bolder front, and where the scene will end the great Head of the Church only knows. ✕ The principles of the Reformation in their purity form the foundation of the apostles and prophets; and while built upon them, the church of God will maintain a stand from which no storm will drive her. But let the church once tolerate or connive at a departure from these pure principles; let her begin to think that she need not be so wonderfully captious on the subject of Christian doctrine, and she is sliding from off the foundation laid in Zion. ✕ The entrance and progress of error are like the breaking of waters through an embankment; the stream increases in violence, until it rages like a desolating

flood, and sweeps all before it. Such a flood is now raging. Its progress cannot be stayed by human arm, and safety consists in flight, not from the cause of God, but the desolations of error.

We may be pointed to the various benevolent enterprises of the day, as affording evidence that the church in general is in a prosperous state. I shall not here enter into a full expression of my views on this subject; but merely remark that I am entirely opposed to the principle on which they are conducted, that of the amalgamation of sects, who differ from each other in their views of doctrine. Such amalgamation must lead to a sacrifice of the truth. ✕ When those who professedly adhere to the truth, strike hands in the cause with those who embrace error, they at once admit, that difference of religious sentiments should not interrupt Christian communion: and how then can they consistently be strenuous in defending their doctrinal peculiarities? How can they earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints? ✕ The spirit of the age tears down the partition fences between truth and error, and would make the whole church a common, where animals of all descriptions may roam and herd together: and all those who venture to express their disapprobation of the measure, are ranked with the unenlightened of former centuries, and branded as the bigoted and narrow-minded. ✕ But they have reason to be well satisfied with the honor that others ignorantly put upon them. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." ✕

Let it once be universally admitted either by profession or practice, that doctrinal peculiarities, such as are usually embraced in our confessions of faith, are of no importance, and the spirit of faithfulness for God's truth will have forsaken the land.

And farther, the principal on which modern religious associations are conducted, admits the world into the councils of the church; graceless men are allowed publicly to advocate what is thought to be the cause of God; and promiscuous multitudes are addressed and appealed to, as though true piety were common property: all which is unlawful, 2 Cor. vi, 14, Psa. l, 16, 17, Isa. iii, 10, 11. I have no doubt that the hand of God is in some way, in all the movements of the present day, be they civil or ecclesiastical. He will bring good out of evil and light out of darkness. I have no objections to the word of God being as widely circulated as possible. God in his own good time will use it for good; but no thanks to the

instrumentality of a blind zeal, when the work is done. I cannot believe, that the spirit which carries on the benevolent operations of the day, is derived from the *gracious and saving* operations of the Holy Spirit upon the soul; and my reason is this, "That which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God," Luke xvi, 15. The open infidel may oppose them; but formal professors, moral and even immoral non-professors, heretical and formal orthodox preachers approve of and advocate them. A few of a different description, may for want of sufficient light and discernment, or through lack of Christian firmness, be borne along with the flood, but when their eyes are opened to the true state of things, they will forsake the heterogeneous mass, and escape for their lives.

I have been led however, to look upon the efforts which the spirit of the age calls into action, as preparing the way for the wonderful development of God's purposes of grace towards the true Israel, the true church. It seems to me that God designs in all these movements the civilizing of the world, which will precede its conversion to the Lord by the regenerating influence of the Spirit. By the circulation of his word, by multiplying its copies, and by other means, he is preparing materials, which in his own good time, he will use for building up the true Zion, and giving his Son "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession."

It may seem strange, but may it not be true, that a misguided, unholy zeal, drives the chariot of modern, benevolent enterprise. May not self-righteousness and spiritual pride form the main-spring that sets the machine in motion? To what principle in our nature, is the appeal made, when the charities of churches and individuals are trumpeted from Dan to Beersheba? What spirit encourages the ostentation and outward display which is so apparent on anniversary occasions? The rivalry among the orators seems to be, who can make the prettiest and most admired speech. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. What spirit is that which in substance avows, that God is dependent in his work upon the charities and efforts of man: that the Millenium will certainly be postponed, unless the churches are more liberal in their contributions? If this be not the rankest self-righteousness, then I see not, how the word of God can be true.

That cause which derives its support from appeals to the corrupt

principles of our nature, cannot be of God, i. e. it cannot be originated, nor carried on, through the saving operations of the Spirit upon the soul. What is, must be. God has purposed it. What is doing at this day, must be done. God has purposed that it shall be done. But his decree does not necessarily imply, that the instrument of its accomplishment is innocent, when he does a deed morally evil; nor that he acts under a gracious influence, when he does an act outwardly good. The principle from which he acts may be essentially corrupt, and thus he may act according to the decree, and in a manner subservient to God's purposes of grace towards the church, and yet work iniquity at the same time. Many will appear at the bar of God with this plea in their mouths, "Have we not in thy name done many wonderful works," to whom it will be said, "I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity."

The ruling spirits of the age, may do that to which they have been appointed, and yet be drowned in perdition when their work is done. They may perform a work which in the end will prove highly advantageous to God's Israel, and yet they may not be of Israel, but be punished for their iniquity in doing that which God purposed and which he overrules for good. Cyrus was a heathen, and we have no evidence that he died a saint; and yet how peculiar the language which Jehovah uses respecting him. The Lord "saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid," Isa. lxiv, 28, and again, "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him;" "For Jacob, my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me, Isa. lxx, 1, 4, 5, The Jews were at this time, captives in Babylon, Cyrus invaded the city, conquered it, and set them free. He was appointed to this work, and therefore he is called the Lord's "shepherd," his "anointed:" but he knew not God. The desire of conquests, ambition, led him to invade Babylon, and thus liberate the Jews, towards whom he might have been led to entertain a good will, in consequence of the blind reverence, which he may have felt for their God, when he came to understand that he had

been prophesied of, as the conqueror of Babylon, and the deliverer of Israel long before he existed.

The religious enterprises of the day, may and will civilize the world, bring the nations from idolatry and lead them outwardly to embrace Christianity. They may be instrumental in producing false conversions, a show of godliness where the saving power is not; but I do not believe, and that on principles derived from God's word, that the spirit which in this age, prevails in the churches, will exert an immediate influence in destroying the strong holds of Satan. On the contrary, I view the "confederacy" of the day as one of those strong holds: and strange as it may seem, this confederacy is providing the means which God will in time use for its destruction. God, I believe, will, when the time for the full accomplishment of his purposes of grace towards his militant church has arrived, raise up a new race of ministers, who will not be manufactured either at Andover, Princeton, or New-Brunswick, unless another spirit rest upon them; he will plentifully endow them with the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit, and like David, they will take Goliath's sword, the word of God, and cut off Goliath's head. Then shall there be a glorious union of brethren in Christ. The churches will be of one heart, one way, one sentiment, one experience. Then will there be the sweet fellowship of heaven upon earth. Then the marvellous doings of our God, and not of Bible, Missionary and Tract Societies, will be spoken of. The day will emerge from a dark night. The light will be so wonderful, and spread with such rapidity, that all will see the goings of God Almighty. Then will the wisdom of the wise be turned into foolishness, and the counsels of the crafty come to nought. The sentence of death will have been put upon human hopes and expectations, usually derived from the visible success of means employed, and then will God make bare his arm, and surprise the world with the conquests of his all-constraining grace.

Such is his mode of procedure with his people individually. When he intends to confer upon them some great favor, he first puts the sentence of death upon all the means leading to it. Witness the case of Abraham, relative to the birth of Isaac. Such is his mode of procedure with the church. How hopeless her prospects when Christ appeared, and how feeble, apparently, the instrumentality which broke down the strong holds of self-righteous formality, Paganism, and Idolatry. How dark the night of Popery when

the taper of Reform was first lighted, and how the goings of our God were seen, when the taper-light became the light of the sun, shedding its rays over the European continent. The dawn of the Millennium will be the opening of a brighter Gospel day than has ever yet blessed the world: and in our opinion, it will emerge from grosser spiritual darkness than has ever yet covered the people. "If the light that is in thee," says the Redeemer, "be darkness, how great is that darkness." The darkness that is to cover the earth, will be extreme, because the multitude will mistake that darkness for the true light. The shades of this awful night, we believe to be now spreading; and should we be asked, "Watchmen, what of the night?" we would reply, "It is almost midnight." We have a day such as owls and bats delight in. The day is night, the light is darkness.

I must believe, that the spirit I am speaking of, has crept to a very great extent into the denomination from which I have conscientiously separated myself. Error is connived at and tolerated. It is indeed an easy matter for the General Synod of the Dutch Church, so called, to record it in their minutes, that they do not countenance any departure from the standards of the church. But professions may be contradicted by practice. And this the General Synod has done. For proof I will appeal to its acts. During its session in June, 1830, at New-Brunswick, in the case of the Missionary Society of the Reformed Dutch Church, by an overwhelming majority, the Rev. John F. Schermerhorn was appointed general agent of the church. This was done, notwithstanding the testimony which was borne against him that he had been heard to say, that he gloried in being thought a Hopkinsian, or words to that effect. It is true indeed, that this charge was brought by an enemy of Mr. Schermerhorn's; but whether by friend or foe, we ask, was the charge denied? Those who were present know, that no attempt was made to deny it, but in an artful manner to explain it away. This is the man whom the General Synod loves to dandle upon the knee, and honor with a salary of thirteen hundred dollars per annum.

And here I must publicly confess, that I acted a shameful part in this transaction. I voted with the majority against the minority. I am ashamed of my vote. I sacrificed the truth; and why? Because the leaven of indifference, as to doctrine, began to operate within me. When I first entered the ministry, I thought I pos-

sessed great zeal for even the minutiae of doctrine, as taught in our standards; that I was opposed to, and would strenuously resist innovation; but alas! I soon found that the spirit of apathy is contagious. Weak nature runs with the multitude. An irresolute spirit will be borne away by the flood. So was mine. I myself have been led to think that the doctrines of natural ability and indefinite atonement, were little aberrations which might easily be overlooked. I now view the matter differently. With respect to the doctrine of natural ability, I contend that there is not a syllable of it in the word of God. It is not countenanced by the standards of the Dutch Church: and notwithstanding all explanations that may be given to it, it is not true. Is man naturally able to love and serve God? How is he then a sinner by *nature*? a child of wrath by *nature*? How then is it true that the *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, that they are foolishness to him? How can the doctrine of natural ability be reconciled with the Scripture phraseology? I have never yet heard of an attempt to prove it from the Bible, which affirms that we will not believe, and cannot believe. The doctrine of natural ability, is a product of human speculation; it is arrived at by a process of metaphysical reasoning; it is a piece of philosophical Christianity; it contradicts the Bible; its root is unbelief; it has been invented to remove stumbling-blocks found in the Bible, out of the way of the impenitent, and by men who must think themselves wiser than the spirit of inspiration; by men who think the doctrine of total inability too discouraging to the sinner, to be held up to view in its length and breadth. It is the fruit of presumption. Those who advocate it, attempt to pour light upon the wisdom that is from above, by that which is earthly; and in reality magnify the wisdom of men above the wisdom of God. Can they be experimentally acquainted with their own sinfulness, entire depravity, and utter helplessness?

* The first lesson which the Spirit of God teaches the elect sinner, is, that he cannot repent, that he cannot believe, that he cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God, except it be given him from on high: That he is entirely depraved, that he is sinful by nature to the same extent, that the lion is bold, and the tiger ferocious by nature. When God shows him his proneness to sin, his consequent spiritual misery, he fain would break his chains, but finds he cannot. And when the Lord brings him from the horrible pit and the miry

clay, he realizes that the work of grace is as far above the reach of nature's efforts, as heaven is above earth.

✕ The general features which may with justice be given to the doctrine of natural ability, are not inapplicable to that of indefinite atonement. It is not taught in the Bible. ✕ Our standards oppose it. We believe that the sacrifice of the Son of God in itself considered is an all-sufficient ransom price; but the Father gave his Son to be the Saviour of the elect; the Son died for them, and for them only. ✕ The ransom price was not paid for those who are lost. No way of salvation was opened for them. The economy of redemption being what it is, the reprobate having not been elected, Christ having not died for them, and the Spirit not being given to apply salvation to them, their salvation is not possible. This we believe. This our standards teach in conformity with the word of God. All departure from this doctrine we view as dangerous, and as arising from the unbelief and blindness of the carnal heart.

✕ That the doctrines of natural ability and indefinite atonement have gained considerable ground in the Dutch Church will be admitted by all who have any acquaintance with that church; and I am not convinced that there are not those in her connection, who deny the doctrine of imputation and the eternal generation of the Son.

Judging from observation, I must believe and do know that the General Synod of the Dutch Church, so called, is divided into three parties. There are those who professedly embrace the Hopkinsian modification of true Calvinism. ✕ These form one party. ✕ There are others, a few who to a certain extent oppose innovations and seem yet attached to the good old doctrine: from what principle I know not; whether from having been reared in the belief of them, or from an experimental acquaintance with their power and excellence, the Searcher of Hearts alone can determine. These form a second party. ✕ There is a third party composed of those, who, although they may profess not to approve of any departure from the form of sound words as drawn in the standards of the church, nevertheless by their conduct prove themselves to be the enemies of purity: for they unite with the first party in putting down the second. ✕ They are in reality opposed to the measures which certain individuals would pursue for the preservation of what is "ready to die," and cordially dislike them, for venturing to raise their opposition against the destructive measures which the spirit of the age, as influencing the great body

of the Dutch Church, would adopt. The second party is fast losing its influence ; and that too, because it ventures to raise a feeble voice of remonstrance against the prevailing measures. I heard it remarked last June, 1830, respecting a certain lay member, whose standing in the Dutch connection has been high, that he possessed not the influence which he once had, that his influence was sinking ; and the occasion which led to the remark, furnished this implied reason, he was opposed to some of the measures which were adopted in the Dutch Church. If there are yet those in the connection which I have forsaken, who are in sincerity and in truth attached to pure doctrine and godly experience, I have no doubt, that the day is coming, when they will be convinced, that all attempts at reforming abuses and purging out corruption from the Dutch Church under its present organization, are perfectly vain.

✕ The experiment has been tried. Dr. Frøeligh many years ago, on the floor of Synod, moved that a convention should be called for the purpose of ascertaining what was and what was not the doctrine of the Dutch Church. ✕ The motion was rejected by an overwhelming majority, and it was viewed with such contempt, that it might not even appear on the minutes of Synod. ✕ At a later period, Rev. Cornelius T. Demarest, in the name and at the request of several ministers and members of the Dutch Church, carried up a memorial signed by them to the General Synod at Albany, charging sundry ministers in the Dutch Church with holding to Hopkinsian errors. ✕ The memorial was indignantly thrown under the table. ✕ A third attempt was made to check the inroads of error in the Synod of June, 1830 ; but the attempt was fruitless. ✕ Thus have the friends of purity been put down, time after time in their laudable efforts to save the church. An evil is abroad, that no human effort can arrest. If the Dutch Church do not awake at once and rise to the help of the Lord, she is ruined. I do not believe that she will thus awake. A leak has sprung in the ship, which, if there be no special divine interference, will sink her. I will take the long boat, and wait to see her go down. The enemy comes in like a flood, and believing this, we cannot fight under his banner, but must revolt to the standard which God has been pleased to raise up against him. The Reformed Dutch Church has been defiled by the unfaithfulness of her sons. Corruption has obtained the ascendancy : and what says Jehovah, "Come out from among

them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you."

✕ I have had opportunity since I have been in the ministry, of hearing sermons from the lips of several ministers in the Dutch connection. But upon recollecting the character of the discourses, I must affirm, that while some of them were pieces of sound exposition, and contained sound doctrine as far as the letter of the word is concerned, yet they were destitute of that "one thing needful" in a Gospel sermon,—experimental religion. ✕ They contained no food for hungry souls. They furnished no evidence by which we may judge whether we have an interest in the promises. They did not separate between the precious and the vile. ✕ There was nothing in them, that would serve to detect the hypocrite, and temporary believer. They did not exhibit the freeness and all-sufficiency of Christ's salvation. In these several respects, the prevailing method of sermonizing in the Dutch Church, as far as my observation extends, lacks exceedingly. And if there are yet children of God in the connection, whence do they derive their spiritual food? How can such defective exhibition of the truth nourish their souls? Alas! they suffer for lack of knowledge. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." ✕

✕ In as far as I have been conversant with the clergy of the Dutch Church, I have not found among them, the things that savor of true piety. Any conversation on the pith and marrow of experimental religion, I have never heard among them. ✕ I have not heard that speech, to which the Apostle exhorts, "always with grace seasoned with salt;" not "that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearer;" but of "foolish talking, and foolish jesting," I have heard enough. All these circumstances convince me, that the Dutch Church, so called, is in a most deplorable condition. ✕ "The mystery of iniquity worketh in her." I have heard things from the lips of one and another of her clergy, which now remind me of the abominations of the Popish priesthood. ✕ The mark of the beast is in her forehead. These are strong assertions; but not stronger than the case calls for. With these things in my eye, and with them impressed upon my heart, is it any wonder, that I have bid my former friends, and brethren, "Farewell?" I find another spirit in the body with which I have connected myself. I find a people who love frequently to speak to one another of the wonders of God's grace. I

find a ministry, whose aim is to preach the doctrines of the cross ; to feed the flock of Christ with the truth as it is in Jesus ; who come not to the people " with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto them the testimony of God ;" who are not ashamed to use the humble language of Christian experience, and who would rather, I believe, edify the poor and despised people of the Lord, than dwell in tents of ease, or sit on thrones of power. I am happy in the society of Christian brethren ; and with my present feelings, thousands of gold and silver would not tempt me to retrace the step I have taken.

While I am exhibiting my reasons, derived from the deplorable state of the Dutch Church, so called, for leaving that church, it will be necessary in order to present my reasons in full, to say a little about what is usually termed, "the hope of the Dutch Church ;" I mean the Theological Seminary at New-Brunswick. The churches are generally informed in the annual report on the state of the institution, that it is in a prosperous state, that it is worthy of the fostering care of the church, that the church cannot be perpetuated unless the institution be supported, &c. &c. But I must be permitted to say, that the character of the institution, while I was at New-Brunswick, has often made me think, then, and afterwards, "Is this institution the hope of the Dutch Church ? Its main stay ? Alas ! alas !" What the character of the institution was at that time, will appear, when I remark, that the character of the students generally was far from being what the nature of their undertaking demanded. The spirit which was manifested, has led me to conclude, that the responsibility of the ministerial trust was not generally felt. The secret things of Christian experience, were not the subjects of Christian conversation among the students. The deportment of the mass of them, was characterized by a frivolousness and lightness, highly unbecoming the gravity of their professed characters. I have been witness to great improprieties in their private intercourse ; and when they went into company, they did not carry a savor of Christ with them. The discourse which they generally helped forward in the social circle, was well suited perhaps to amuse a party of giddy young ladies, but was not befitting the dignity of men, much less the gravity of theological students. Although aiming at the ministry, they did not in their intercourse with the world, recommend Christ either by word or example. I speak now of the mass ; there may have been exceptions, but they

were rare. I might with truth on my side, throw a shade on the above picture, that would render it darker than it already is ; but I forbear. Let me not be viewed as exculpating myself. I have already stated in substance that my theological course, as to any progress I made in experimental knowledge, was not a profitable one. Religion did not flourish in my heart. The world consequently had the ascendancy. For my delinquency I ask forgiveness of the God of grace.

I cannot of course bear any definite testimony respecting the present state of the institution, as far as the character of its students is concerned. But having occasionally visited New-Brunswick, since my entrance into the ministry ; and having become acquainted with some who entered there since my leaving the institution ; I have it in my power to say, that I discovered no evidence, which satisfied me that there was any change for the better ; and in addition to this, I have received information respecting some particulars, which convinces me, that the hope of the Dutch Church, the Theological Seminary, rests on a bank of sand, which the raging flood will sweep away. The Dutch Church, so called, may multiply congregations in her connection, and send her promising young men to her fields of missionary labor ; she may lay before the world a flattering account of her rising glory, of her extension and increase ; but what kind of growth must that be, which is fostered by such a fountain of impure waters ? The fountain is poisoned ; and its streams, instead of nourishing the plants of divine grace, will exert a deadly influence upon them. Impurity will spring up in their course, and the fruitful field under such an instrumentality would be converted into a barren wilderness.

In addition to the above statement, I would remark, that the character of the institution is not faithfully guarded by those, who have the general superintendence of its interests. What course is pursued now in the admission of students, I know not. But it was not customary, when I entered, to make any enquiry, by personal examination into the piety, and the Christian experience of the applicant. All that was required, was a certificate of preparatory literary qualifications, and one of church membership. Would not faithfulness to the cause and church of God demand more ? It is true indeed, that the final examination, before the board of superintendents is concluded by some inquiries respecting experimental religion ; but the examination on this subject, as it respects the

theological class of which I was a member, was so slight and superficial that a man of Christian discernment, would not have had an opportunity of satisfying himself, whether the candidates were experimental Christians or not.

Respecting those who filled the Professoral chair, when I was theological student, I will make but one remark: They failed in urging upon their pupils the necessity of habitually adding Christian experience to doctrine in all their discourses from the pulpit and elsewhere.

Great efforts have been made of late years, to raise a fund which shall yield an annual income adequate to the support of three professors. Strong hopes were entertained, that the object would soon be gained; but an event has transpired, which will strongly operate against the success of the measure, and which convinces me, that Jehovah does not approve of it; and leads me to believe, that he will not allow it to succeed. The General Synod appointed an agent for the collection of the money subscribed, whose conduct in the affair, proves him to have been wholly unworthy of confidence. Had they not grounds for suspicion before they sent him? The work committed to him, appears to have been in the extreme, carelessly and unfaithfully done. Hundreds of dollars were not accounted for, when the General Synod had its session in last June. It is a mark of Jehovah's frown: and I would not be surprised, did I yet live to see the institution go down to rise no more.

There is another circumstance which has operated strongly on my mind, since my change of views; and that is, the suspension of Dr. Frøeligh by the General Synod, convened at Albany, nearly eight years ago. I believe it to have been an act which has kindled the anger of the Lord. They laid their hands upon him, and suspended him from his ministry, when he was worn out in the service of Christ. God gave him many souls as seals to his ministry. Oh! I tremble for the church which I have forsaken. It has touched the Lord's anointed, and harmed his prophets. It has touched the apple of God's eye: and I believe it has a mill-stone about its neck, that will drown it in perdition. Why did the General Synod suspend this aged servant of the Lord? Was it because they were zealous for the honor and glory of the Lord of Hosts? or was it that the honor of the Dutch Church might be vindicated. It appears to me, that if they had been influenced by a desire to glorify God, they would have proceeded more reverently in

a measure so unspeakably important and solemn. But alas! little impression did the solemnity of the measure seem to make upon their minds. I testify what I have seen. I was present on the occasion. They dared to take away the commission which the Lord of Hosts had given him, and chop off his head as a minister of Christ, with about as little ceremony and apparent awe, as would be required in cutting off a dog's neck! If I mistake not, it is a piece of iniquity for which the Lord will visit the church to her latest generation. The curse may be hidden from blinded eyes, but the day of the Lord will make it manifest.

It is not denied, that the doctor was cited more than once to appear before Synod; which he declined doing. This circumstance does not affect the assertion, that the act of deposition was irreverently done. The steam-boat was held waiting for the members of Synod, and the suspension of this old man was the last or among the last of its acts. All was done in a hurry, and of course, irreverently. They did not seem to realize what they were doing. I remember, at a subsequent session of Synod, hearing the man who has been, and is yet, for all I know, a defaulter to General Synod, Rev. S. Van Santvoord, plead very warmly for the suspension of other ministers who had seceded. He was for "nipping the secession in the bud," by laying the hand of deposition upon its supporters. When I look at the character of those men of God, who have raised a banner for the truth, and that of their most violent opposers, I feel at no loss as to the judgment which ought to be passed upon the matter. "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men."

It may be said, "the cause of secession is supported by men, who have not the confidence and respect of society." I am well aware, that they do not fill the high places of the earth; neither do they aspire after them. If the state of society were purer than it is, these men would be more respected and loved. They have, however, the consolation of knowing, that they rank high in the esteem of those, who are "the excellent," Psa. xvi, 3; "the salt of the earth," Matt. v, 13. The honors of the world, they do not covet. "If they yet pleased men they would not be the servants of Christ." Gal. i, 10.

For myself, I must say, I have looked upon them with as much contempt as any one. Nothing appeared more ridiculous to me, than that a company of obscure ministers and laymen, should

arrogate to themselves a light, a spiritual discernment, of which they affirmed, the mass of the community, whether found within the pale of the church by a profession of faith, or not, to be destitute. And yet I believed that many of them were the people of God ; but I thought they were led astray by their teachers. But I thank God, that my views of them, as a body, have changed. When was the church ever known to prosper before the Lord, when she was caressed by the world ? The cross has always been to her, the tree of life. I am confirmed in my views, when I reflect, that the Saviour used the instrumentality of obscure fishermen, to break down and destroy the abominations of the earth. "That God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise ; that he hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty ; that base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen ; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are ; that no flesh should glory in his presence," 1 Cor. i, 27, 28, 29. I am confirmed in my views when I remember the words of the Redeemer, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake," Matt. x, 22. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household ?" Matt. x, 25. "If the world hate you, ye know, that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you," John xv, 18, 19 ; and the words of Paul, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. iii, 12 ; and the words of the prophet, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word ; Your brethren, that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified ; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed," Isa. lxvi, 5. It may be said, "All these passages will not apply at the present day." When this assertion is proved from the word of God, we will believe it, and only then.

There is one man among them, to whose lot it has fallen, to receive an uncommon share of obloquy and reproach ; and that is the Rev. Cornelius T. Demarest, of the King-street Church, New-York. I have formerly united with others in thinking him a censorious, bigoted, narrow-minded man ; but the Lord forgive me, for having done him so great injustice. No wonder, that he feels constrained to use the language of a faithful, but persecuted prophet,

"Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast born me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth," Jer. xv, 10. Were he to keep silence, he would betray the cause of his master. "Cry aloud, and spare not, says Jehovah, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. lviii, 1.

It may be said, "The body with which you have connected yourself is distracted and torn." I know that difficulties have existed, and are not yet entirely removed. But will this prove that the secession is not the cause of God? "None of these things move me." This is not the first time that Satan has appeared among the sons of God, when they came to present themselves before the Lord, Job i, 6. He loves to sow discord in the church of God. Hell rejoices when the people of God fall out by the way. But the Lord will heal her divisions. The True Reformed Dutch Church, as a body collective, is blessed at present with sweet concord, and the tender fellowship of brethren. There may be little differences between individuals in her connection; But the Lord, I trust, will remove even these out of the way. Dark days are permitted to come over the church of God, that her faith may be tried. When God intends a special blessing for his people, he will manifest himself to them, and give them his promise. But then the day of trial is first coming. This is precisely the course which God has pursued with the True Reformed Dutch Church. By manifesting himself to his people, he led them to rear a banner for the truth. He greatly strengthened their faith in the justice and righteousness of the cause which they had espoused. He gave them strong evidence that the cause was his own, and that he himself would consequently perpetuate and defend it. But how has the faith of his people been tried, since the faith of which I am speaking was given? The adversities which this little band has met with, I shall not particularly detail; but they have been many and great. David had promise of the kingdom, but the crown was not put upon his head, before his life frequently appeared to him to be greatly endangered, and he in unbelief was led to fear, that his life would be taken, and that the promise would fail. God however, in the day of his adversity, was pleased for the support of his hopes, now and then to give him a token for good; as for instance, when he had the life of his enemy and persecutor in his power, in the wilderness of Engedi, 1 Sam. chap. 24, and on the hill Hachi-

lab, chap. 26. In like manner has the Lord been pleased to support the hopes of this people, under their trials, by now and then giving them a token for good. "By looking forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice," Sol. Song ii, 9; by bringing, in the work of conversion, from among their most bitter enemies, their warmest friends, and then putting the seal of his approbation upon the cause. Prov. xvi, 7.

The adversities by which this people have been pressed down, have only made them pray the more fervently, for the manifestations of God's grace, and the visible tokens of his good will towards them. Their faith has been tried, but it has not failed. I hear they have been greatly encouraged and rejoiced under the dispensation, which has brought me, unworthy as I am, among them; and I must be free to acknowledge, that the thought of my being an instrument for gladdening the hearts of the Lord's people, whom I formerly made sad, has yielded me a satisfaction, which the applause of a world would be too poor to give. I would rather be instrumental in kindling in the hearts of God's despised people, one pleasurable emotion, than receive the caresses of the proud, or the flatteries of the great.

When the faith of this people has been fully tried, God will bring them forth from the furnace; and the trial of their faith being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, will be found unto praise, and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. i, 7.

If after the clear manifestation of the divine will on this subject, I should for a moment hesitate, because the horizon of the True Reformed Dutch Church is not without a cloud, my conduct might be attributed to carnal consultation of the grossest kind; from which, may the Lord deliver me.

It may be said, There are corruptions in the body with which you are now connected, as well as in that from which you have seceded. I answer, Perfect purity must not be looked for on earth. It does not exist in the hearts of God's people, and it does not exist in God's church; and the remaining imperfections of both are a grief and burden to the saints. But as God gives them grace, they do not tolerate corruption in their own bosoms, and the true church does not tolerate corruption either in doctrine or practice within her's. And believing it to be the desire and aim of the friends of the True Reformed Dutch Church to promote the truth as it is in Jesus,

shall I stand aloof because there are remaining imperfections within her pale ? Borne down as she has been by adverse storms, her faith may for a moment have been shaken, and her hopes been almost prostrate ; but she will arise, gird up her strength anew ; march on to the help of the Lord against the mighty ; and angels, those guardians of the just, those spirits that minister to the heirs of salvation, will bid her, God speed.

I am well aware, that my course has by many been imputed to motives, by which I have not been influenced, and which I utterly disclaim.

In addition to what I have said, or what has been affirmed and believed by the multitude, viz. that I have been influenced by the persuasion of friends, which in the presence of the Searcher of Hearts, I deny, I would remark :

It may be said, " When you removed to New-Jersey, you became surrounded by a seceder atmosphere, and it has infected you." I answer, " I have had very little more intercourse with Seceders, during my residence at Aquackanonk, than I had, when at the North. I have not visited among them, and none of them have ever used any efforts to make me think on the subject of secession as they did. My heart was opposed to them, and I kept aloof from them. And even if they had been the means of influencing me in this matter, with my present feelings, I would regard the influence a very happy one. Would to God, they might yet rightly influence the whole community, and turn the country upside down, for then they would turn the right side up. But no human instrumentality, directly exerted, has had any part in leading my mind to its exercises and decision on the subject of leaving the Dutch Church. They began and were continued in my retirement ; and even after it was known, that my mind was disturbed on the subject, not a word of persuasion was at any time addressed to me ; but I was left to be governed by my own exercises, and to decide for myself.

It may be said, you became involved in difficulty with your former congregation on the subject of infant baptism, and that has led you to take your present course. Why should any difficulty with an individual congregation, lead me to separate myself from a whole denomination ? But let it be understood, that my mind became exercised on the subject of infant baptism, three or four days after the commencement of my troubles on the subject of

secession. I had partially determined to secede from the corrupt Dutch Church, before I was brought to a trial with respect to baptising the infants of non-professors. While on this subject I must take occasion to state, that my conscience never justified me in abandoning the plan of baptism which I pursued while at Marbletown. It was always a great source of trouble to me at Aquackanonk ; but I question whether I ever would have taken a firm stand in this matter, had it not been for that manifestation of divine grace, with which I trust the Lord favored me. But the Lord having done great things for me, I determined, that I would defile my conscience no more, by admitting those to the ordinance, who, I believe, were not entitled to it ; and God gave me strength to act accordingly. On the Sabbath succeeding, I appointed a meeting of the congregation on this subject. To this meeting I addressed a note, before I knew anything of the decision that would be passed upon the subject in question, giving information, that it was my intention to secede from the Dutch Church ; that they might act on the subject of deliberation, from principle, if they chose ; but that they must decide on it, leaving my stay among them out of the question. From this it appears, that the question of infant baptism, and the question of secession, were in my mind wholly disconnected.

It cannot be said, that I have been swayed by the love of filthy lucre, in this matter ; for my present support is not equal to what it was in my former situation. Those who know the temporal conveniences of the charge at Aquackanonk, will admit that the situation in a temporal point of view is an eligible one ; and had I been swayed by the love of ease, or the love of money, I would have remained where I was. And I now praise God, that in the dispensations of his Providence, matters previous to my taking this step, were so arranged, that no false accuser, however barefaced, can charge me with having been influenced by a worldly and selfish policy.

I might have seceded when at the north ; but then it would have been said, His conduct is easily accounted for, he wishes to be near his friends ; and it would have been supposed too, that I obtained a larger support ; which supposition would have been incorrect.

But as there has been no room for objection on this ground, the enemy of truth has filled the country with slanderous reports and evil surmises respecting me, of another nature ; and ministers of

the Gospel have polluted the professed sacredness of ministerial character, by giving currency to what, in the day of judgment, will be seen to have proceeded from the father of lies.

It has been said, that I am influenced by the spirit of delusion, and, if I have been correctly informed, by the spirit of an unholy ambition.

I am willing that my spirit should be tried by the word of God. Let me be weighed in the balance of the sanctuary. I shall not here enter upon any particular defence of my private exercises. The facts which I have stated respecting myself I know to be true : and what I have said respecting the Dutch Church, so called, admits of abundant proof. To the Master whom I profess to serve, I stand or fall. Let him judge between me and my accusers. Let them be assured, that they "speak evil of those things which they know not," Jude 10.

Now if, in opposition to what has been said, viz. that I am influenced by the spirit of delusion, it should really be true, that I am influenced by the Spirit of God, in what light then must the conduct of the false accuser be viewed. And is this supposition necessarily a groundless one? If it should really be correct, are not my opponents fighting against God? Is not the sin of those who call the work of God's Spirit, the work of delusion, something similar in its hues to that of those, who said, "He casteth out devils through the prince of devils," Matt. ix, 34. "He hath a devil, and is mad," John x, 20.

I thank the Lord, that the clamors of the world do not move me ; and if I thought that I was influenced by merely a desire of selfishly vindicating my course of conduct, I think I would view it to be my bounden duty to lay down my pen, and not write another word. But I look upon the vindication of myself as closely connected with the vindication of God's work and cause, and I have attempted the one, that I may do the other.

It has been commonly reported, that I have seen a vision, and by it have been influenced to join the True Reformed Dutch Church. Not for the gratification of those "filthy dreamers," Jude 8, who have circulated the report, and ridicule the idea of "new visions and revelations," but for the consideration of the truly pious, I would say, that I have seen what I denominate "a heavenly vision." It is something wholly of a different character from what my false accusers suppose it to be. The vision which I trust I

have seen, is the vision of "the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Cor. iv, 6. ✕ The revelation of Christ in the soul is a heavenly, a glorious vision. ✕ Any manifestation of the divine grace, or of the divine will, is a heavenly vision. ✕ Do we not read in one of the hymns which are sung in the Dutch Churches of a "heavenly hour," of a "vision, so divine?" Are not all the children of God, favored with this heavenly vision? ✕ And why should it be thought a thing so marvellous, that I should speak of having seen a "heavenly vision?" ✕ This matter before the Classis of Paramus, by which I was suspended from the ministry, was held up to the ridicule of the crowd, who were on that occasion assembled. ✕ The Rev. President, Jefferson Wynkoop said, they knew of no "new visions and revelations;" the same in substance was said by Rev. W. Eltinge; they cannot speak for their brethren; they may for themselves; I believe what they said. Alas! the people must perish; for "where there is no vision, the people perish," Prov. xxix, 18. ✕ This convinces me, that there is such a thing, as a self-made sanctity; the garb of a Pharisee, beneath which lay concealed corruption and death. ✕

✕ Let me not be viewed as attaching any importance to impressions upon the mind, which are not derived from, or connected with those principles of truth, which are established in the word of God. The Spirit teaches by and in accordance with the word. ✕ The impressions which he makes upon the mind accord with the truths of the word, of which he is the author. ✕ And thus the spirit within us, is to be tried by the Spirit speaking in the word. ✕ The Spirit makes saving impressions upon the mind by applying the truth to it, and thus we are sanctified through the truth, John xvii, 17. ✕ But God does not teach by the word, without the Spirit; neither can we savingly understand the word without the Spirit applying the word with power to the heart. ✕ And when the word is thus applied, oh! what a glorious vision do we behold, that is, if the word be applied as the word of grace and of promise; but if it come as a word of condemnation, and such it is, when it comes in the law, that "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," then the vision is dark and terrific. ✕ I make these remarks to anticipate the charge of enthusiasm and fanaticism, which may be, and for all I know, have already been brought against me. ✕ I hope I shall contend to my latest breath, for a strict adherence to the law and the testimony; to the expression of God's will, as recorded in the word. ✕ But will

not the truth when applied, constrain the soul? Does it not captivate the heart? Will it not deliver from consultation with flesh and blood? Will it not destroy formality by the Spirit of Life? Is it not attended by views of the word of God entirely new? Will it not exhibit the spirit of true Christianity as being a different thing from what we ever before supposed it to be? Does it not present that, which is highly esteemed among men, as an abomination in the sight of God? Does it not present to us, the people of God, as a peculiar people, with whom is the "secret of the Lord," and whose "life is hid, with Christ in God"? Are we not convinced, that no effort of reason, no search of the natural understanding, can find out what it contains? Does it not prepare a man to make sacrifices and endure sufferings for Christ's sake? Do we not then find a sweetness in the fellowship of brethren, that brings heaven into the heart? Does it not introduce us into a new world, new company, new fellowship? Yea, will it not make "old things pass away, and all things become new"? Such I have found it, and this is the vision which I have seen.

I shall now proceed to sketch an outline of the proceedings of the Classis of Paramus, convened in extra session at Aquackanonk, on the subject of my leaving their body. A note, dictated by apparently a friendly spirit, was addressed to me by the clerk of Classis, a week previous to its session, inviting me to meet with them, that we might consult together, and mingle our tears and prayers on a subject, closely connected with my temporal, and perhaps eternal happiness. This was the import of the note. I trust I had counted the cost before I came to a determination, and I was not prepared just then to feel the influence of temporal considerations, and as there was a "*perhaps*" in what related to the world to come, it had no weight with me. The writer of the line must determine what the feelings of his heart towards me, really are. I had decided, before I received the above invitation, to meet with the Classis: and if permitted, publicly to state my reasons for the step I had taken. In the course of proceedings, a committee of Classis was appointed to hold consultations with me, on the subject which had called them together; which consultation I declined; and being permitted to assign my reason, I informed them, that the manifestations of the divine will to me on this subject, had been so clear, that any allowed consultation with those who would dissuade me from my purpose, would, in my opinion, amount to holding

carnal consultation. This ground I still maintain. The fact of my declining to hold counsel was recorded in the minutes of Classis, but the reason I assigned was not permitted to appear there.✕

It was afterwards moved, that a consultation should take place between me and the Consistory of the congregation at Aquackanonk, on the subject of the dissolution of the connection which had existed between us ; which consultation I declined, on the ground that I had withdrawn from the congregation ; that nothing could be gained by any consultation ; that I had no private statements to make to the Consistory ; that there was no connection to be dissolved by Classis, in as far as I was concerned, for I had broken it ; and consequently, that I did not wish Classis to separate me from the congregation, for I was separated already, and the Consistory in fact left me before I forsook them ; for in the note which I addressed to them, assembled at the meeting afore-mentioned, I informed them that it was my intention to secede ; not that I had seceded. I at the same time informed them, that I was willing to preach for them on the ensuing Sabbath ; but they took a vote on the subject, and decided that I should not preach. Thus they closed their church doors against me, and renounced me as their minister.✕ The wicked rejoiced, and I did not feel as though I had any cause for sorrow. ✕On the next Sabbath evening, the Lord was pleased to open to me a door of utterance among his own people.✕

It seems strange that the Consistory, having thus forcibly rent the tie, should at the meeting of Classis, manifest such an anxiety to consult with me on the subject of its dissolution by Classis. I could not meet with them ; but stated that I was willing to deliver my call into their hands, when the account standing between us was settled.

I had stated to Classis, that I had withdrawn from their body ; and during the course of proceedings, expressed a willingness to assign my reasons before them. Their wish seemed to be that I should honor them so far, as to ask a dismission of them ; which I, *toto animo*, declined. It was stated, that if I took a dismission, they could give me a fair recommendation as to piety, and ministerial qualifications. I did not ask this at their hands. I would not have thanked them for it ; for I do not view them, as a body, to be competent judges of the matter. I have no evidence that they possess the spirit of discernment. When I was among them, a worldly-minded minister, they could receive me in the arms of

their affection ; but the moment that grace, as I trust operates on my heart, they censure me, and "speak all manner of evil against me, falsely." Our views of things differ so widely, that I cannot receive and commune with them as brethren.

Having stated that I could not ask a dismission, and that I was willing to assign my reasons for withdrawing ; they gave me permission to state why I could not ask a dismission ; but the license was soon withdrawn : for when the reason I was assigning, appeared to be one which did not meet their approbation, I was immediately pronounced out of order and silenced. I came not to their meeting to make any disturbance, and I submitted. Did they suppose, that in assigning my reasons, I would conform myself to their views ? Why at one moment grant me an unconditional liberty, and at the next deprive me of it. I must pronounce it a piece of ecclesiastical caprice and tyranny, which cannot fail of having its proper effect upon all impartial judges.

Having been favored by the Stated Clerk of the Classis of Paramus, with an extract of their proceedings in my case, I quote from it the following lines :

"The question was put to Mr. Paulison, whether, agreeably to the determination which he had expressed, of seceding from the church, he wished to ask a dismission from the Classis, and on that ground, to state reasons for his intention to leave the church.

"He replied in substance, that he had withdrawn, and that he did not recognize the authority of this Classis by asking a dismission ; and if he could not state his reasons without first asking a dismission, he had nothing further to remark on that subject. He then commenced stating his reasons with the permission of Classis why he could not ask a dismission, wherein he was insulting and abusive, and was called to order by the President."

It appears from this extract, that in the opinion of Classis, I was "insulting and abusive ;" but I was not influenced by an abusive spirit. I had permission to assign my reasons for not asking a dismission of Classis. In the reason which I assigned, it was not my wish unnecessarily to wound the feelings of any one member of Classis. Whose reason could I give, in such a case, but my own ?

X I assigned as a reason, what was then, and is still my candid opinion, viz. that the Dutch Church, so called, has forsaken the foundation on which that church was originally built ; and that in going to the "True Reformed Dutch Church," I would in reality

return to the true foundation. This was the substance of my "insulting and abusive" language. A little thing is an insult to pride. ✕

✕ I look upon the denomination with which I have connected myself, as being what its title imports, "The True Reformed Dutch Church." I view it as such in opposition to what I conceive to be the false church. ✕ In that constitution of the Reformed Dutch Church, to which I still adhere, Art. 28, Con. Faith, we find the following words; "We believe, since this holy congregation (i. e. the church,) is an assembly of those who are saved, and that out of it, there is no salvation; that no person of whatsoever state or condition he may be, ought to withdraw himself, to live in a separate state from it; but that all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it, maintaining the unity of the church." The constitution of the Reformed Dutch Church, makes it according to the word of God, the duty of all to connect themselves with the true church; and believing this, why should I ask human permission thus to do? Why should I ask a dismission from what I consider the false church, to connect myself with the true church. And when I assert that the Dutch Church, so called, is the false church, I assert nothing that the word of God and the standards of the church will not justify. ✕ Merely to remark on the tenor of our confession of faith, in the 29th Art. Con. Faith, the marks of the true church, and represented to be, 1. The preaching of the pure doctrine of the Gospel. 2. The pure administration of the Sacraments. 3. The faithful exercise of church discipline. ✕ I contend that in each of these particulars, the church which I have left, is grossly defective. ✕ The word is not purely preached; the old fashioned, the Reformation mode of preaching, is abandoned. In many instances, false doctrine is openly taught; in the great mass there is a secret leaven of Hopkinsianism, which although it be not professed, is apparent to a man of true discernment, in the handling, and especially in the application of the truth discussed. ✕ Many although they profess to hold the true doctrine, seem perfectly ignorant of the manner in which it is to be applied. And no marvel, for how can we apply to others, what has never been applied to ourselves by the Spirit of God. The applications to sermons in the Dutch Church, so called, and elsewhere, seems to me to be just those which the natural heart would suggest, and by which the people of God cannot be benefited. ✕ The ordinances are not administered according to the

word of God, and with some exceptions, the number whose theory on the subject may be correct, have not faithfulness and self-denial to take a step in a way of reform, and without holding carnal consultation, to act for the Lord. I know an individual, who has been waiting twenty years or more, for his congregation to become "ripe" for the change. It appears evident on whose side lies the fault.

I would depart from the object of this pamphlet, did I here enter into a discussion on the subject of infant baptism. But I would merely state, that my sentiment is this; that the parent or parents presenting the child, should previously have made a confession of their faith, similar in its nature and extent to what is required of individuals previous to their admission to the Lord's Supper. If God requires faith, true faith, in the person or persons presenting the infant, in order to its being done acceptably, how can the church demand less than a profession of faith? Only those who are in the covenant of grace, have a right to its blessings and ordinances. They are the property of Abraham and his seed. But "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." How is the church to judge as to who possesses and who does not possess this faith, but by the confession of the mouth? As far as my observation has extended, I do know that the discipline of God's house is in general not faithfully maintained in the church which I have forsaken. I do not say, that the fault lies altogether, or chiefly with the clergy; but with them and the ruling elders conjointly. Formality prevails to a lamentable extent in the Dutch Church; and when formalists, carnal minded men, fill the bench of ruling elders, how can we expect a faithful government of God's house? And when there is "like people, like priest," Hos. iv, 9, carnal policy will prevail. The fear of consequences will gain the ascendancy over a sense of duty. There will be a prevailing backwardness at reporting existing evils. The misconduct of professors will be connived at. The door of admission to church membership will be opened so wide, that the world will bodily enter in. The sacred enclosure will be polluted by the footsteps of the unclean: and in proportion as hypocrites swarm in the church, will her spirituality and beauty depart. Matters will tend from bad to worse. The world will hold the reins of church government, and that government will of course be conducted on worldly principles. Judging from observation, I must believe that the Dutch Church is, to a great extent, in the sad condition which I have here set forth.

When I look at the account which, in the article referred to, is given of the false church, it appears evident to me, where we may find it illustrated. The following is a part of it, "Neither does she administer the sacraments as appointed by Christ in his word, but adds to, and takes from them, as she thinks proper; she relieth more upon men than Christ; and persecutes those, who live holily according to the word of God, and rebuke her for her errors, covetousness and idolatry."

Believing that the Dutch Church, so called, has forsaken the foundation of her fathers, why should I ask her permission to return to that foundation? When I obtained my license, I professed allegiance to the Dutch Church, I do so still. We are to judge of the character of a church, by its doctrine, by its forms, by its constitution; and when a church abandons these, her character is changed.

A church may adopt a certain confession of faith, a certain constitution, and with it adopt a certain name. All that hear of her title, will and ought to judge of her character, by her confession of faith, by her constitution. Let us suppose, that in process of time, this church, as a body, abandons the doctrines and spirit by which she was once characterized, is she then the same church that she was in the days of her purity? She may be such outwardly, but is she such in reality? All will answer, no. She may have the same name, but she is not the same church. If a party in that church, however small it may be, should in consequence of her corruptions, leave her outward communion, but in reality return visibly and openly to her doctrines in their purity, and her constitution, would they not then in reality, form the church as known by its peculiar name when it was first organized? Might they not be viewed as returning to that foundation upon which the church was first established; and as being consequently the true building? Such is the case we are now considering. The Dutch Church, so denominated, is herself but in name. There may yet be in her a scattered remnant that is truly Dutch, but not so "the Ruling Power," we believe it to be sadly corrupted. The Secession Church has been professedly reared on the old foundation. The ruling power aims at the preservation of purity; and the reality that was once clothed in the name of Dutch Church, has for its present garb the title of True Reformed Dutch Church. The pretensions of True Reformed Dutchmen, as supported above, have been much

ridiculed ; but they will bear the test both of reason and Scripture. The church may become so corrupt, that "Lo Ammi," may justly be her title ; and those who separate from her corruptions, and restore the fallen glory, are the church.

But I return to my narrative of the proceedings of Classis. They seemed during the transaction of what has been related, to encourage the hope, that I would yet be permitted to assign my reasons for secession. With this impression I went to my house during the recess of Classis, and with it I returned in the afternoon ; but the consultation of Classis over the dinner-table, seemed to have brought matters to a different result. Judge of my surprise, when I was informed in the afternoon, that I had permission to assign my reasons for asking a dismissal from their reverend body ; and this too, in the face of my previous assertion, that I would not ask a dismissal, but had withdrawn.

Why not inform me at once, that the liberty of self-defence could not be granted me ? or why attempt to pin me down to asking a dismissal ? Had I been weak enough to comply how they would have gloried over my inconsistency, in first acknowledging them a lawful church, and then joining the Secession, which disowned them : but the Lord preserved me from this snare, and I praise him for it. Even if I had consented to assign my reason according to their permission, I am convinced, I would not have spoken five minutes, before I would have been pronounced out of order, and put to silence. I discovered their sly management, and viewed it with perfect abhorrence. I refused to comply with their terms, and having no more business with them, I bid them "farewell." The assembled crowd were favored, as I retired, with an harangue on trying the spirits. The young man was pronounced under the influence of a delusive spirit ; and among other reasons that were given, was this, that he would not take the advice of his elder brethren. I am willing to try the spirits on this point. In Lev. xix, 32. it is said, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God," but this passage must be received in a restricted sense, as will appear from Prov. xvi, 31. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." I could not take the counsel of my elders in the Classis of Paramus, for I believe that if they have ever been in the way of righteousness, they have wandered far from it.

Having bid the Classis farewell, I was of course not present

when they came to a decision respecting me ; neither did I hear the remarks made in the Classis on the subject of that decision ; but I have been informed of their import by those who were present. And among other things, the difficulties and divisions which the secession had made in families and neighborhoods, were dwelt on, and presented as an argument to prove that the cause was unholy. But this very circumstance serves to confirm me in the opinion that it is of God. "Think not," says the Saviour, "that I am come to send peace on earth ; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes, shall be they of his own household." Matt. x, 34, 35, 36.

Their deliberations resulted in my suspension from the ministry, until the next ordinary session of Classis, when the matter will be resumed. What a singular piece of injustice, have they been guilty of, in pronouncing sentence of condemnation upon me, without allowing me a liberty, which is granted to the vilest culprit in the land, even that of showing reason why the sentence of death should not be pronounced upon me. The liberty of self-defence was denied me ; if they can reconcile it with their sense of justice, I envy them not the purity of their consciences. But the commission, which I once received from the corrupt Dutch Church, that church may take back again. When I first entered the ministry, I ran without being sent, I was sent indeed in Providence, but not in grace. The Lord has at length, as I trust, given me my commission, and the Classis of the church of Jesus Christ has followed the leadings of the Lord, by giving its vote in my favor. My commission, I trust, has been sent me from heaven, and acknowledged by the church on earth ; what more can I desire ?

In making these remarks, I trust I am not governed merely by a regard to self ; were not the honor of God, and his cause concerned, I would not make them public. But of what the Lord has done for me, I will speak fearlessly and commit the result to him.

I have been correctly informed, that before Classis closed its session, it was moved by the clerk of Classis, who addressed to me the afore-mentioned friendly note, that the thanks of the Classis, should be rendered to the congregation, or Consistory, for the manly stand, which they had taken against me, in not allowing me to preach, after I had declared my intention of seceding ; and as his reason for the motion, that my object in offering to preach, was to

light the firebrand of discord in the congregation. The motion was strongly opposed by a brother, who has been more in the wars, and consequently is better skilled in tactics, on the ground that I might seize upon the motion, and use it as a dagger to stab them to the heart.

I know not what his fearful forebodings were, but I will just take occasion to state that the "mild and persuasive Field" has grossly misrepresented my conduct in this matter. I had no such intention as he imputed to me. I would have preached, as the Lord enabled me, what I conceived to be the truth; but as to kindling the firebrand of discord, by bringing a portion of the congregation to join the secession, it entered not into my heart. I despaired of accomplishing such an end. God must work before such a thing can be brought about. Most sincerely would I deprecate the day, when that congregation in its present state, should turn seceder. The addition of a few such congregations, with ministers to their liking, would kindle such a flame of discord in the True Reformed Dutch Church, as would inevitably lead to a second secession: and I for one, would be for rearing the standard anew, and commencing again the work of reform. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"

On the evening of the day on which the Classis met, a discourse was delivered by Rev. W. Elting, on trying the spirits, from 1 John iv, 1. From what I can learn, it was throughout a piece of invective, against that cause which is dear to the Saviour, which God has maintained, and by indubitable evidence, proved to be his own. The preacher will give account of that sermon before the Lord. He appears to have "watched for the halting" of the Lord's servants, Jer. xx, 10, to have registered them in the book of his memory with the greatest precision; he appears to have judged their motives; but the day may come, when he will find himself mistaken. "I will harden Pharaoh's heart," says Jehovah, Exod. vii, 3, and where the hardening process must go on, means will not be wanting. The haltings of the Lord's people, the infirmities and adversities of his true church, may prove a stumbling stone, over which the ungodly fall and perish for ever.

From my heart do I pity the preacher. He has of late years pursued a course respecting God's Israel, which presents him to my eye, as chief standard bearer in the ranks of opposition to the church of God.

Wo unto him! for he has gone in the way of Cain, ran greedily

after the error of Balaam, and I fear he will perish in the gainsaying of Core. He seems a cloud without water, carried about of winds; a tree whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; a raging wave of the sea, foaming out his own shame; a wandering star, to whom (except he repent), is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever, Jude 11, 12, 13. I may be termed abusive, but I have quoted the language of the word of God, and believing that I have a case before me to which it applies, why should not the application be made?

I believe he has persecuted righteous Abel, attempted to curse Israel, and like Korah despised the dominion of God's heritage, spoken evil of dignities, Jude 8, and offered incense with unhallowed hands, and like Nabab and Abihu, offered incense with unhallowed fire.

He once seemed friendly to the Lord's people, preached the truth which they love, appeared to bring forth the fruits of a faithful minister of Christ; but alas! he now persecutes the saints, has turned aside to false doctrine, and is a tree, whose fruit seems to have withered; he seems to have imbibed again the spirit, from which he once appeared to be delivered, and thus is he twice dead; like a wandering star he has wandered from his former orbit, he pursues his course through dark space, and I fear hastens on his way to the blackness of darkness. God forbid, that I should utter these things under the influence of a vindictive spirit. Did he cease from his unholy strife, and show himself a true friend of God's despised people, I would rejoice.

I have said, that I pity the preacher, because I believe him to be woefully blind and deluded: he takes the lead in opposing God's Israel; and I feel constrained to pity him the more, when I look upon the character of those who copy his example and follow in his train. Who are they? I speak not of individuals, but of the body collective, when I say, that it is composed of a motley group, consisting of formal professors, tiplers, profane swearers, Sabbath-breakers, &c. The most awful imprecations have been heard to fall from the lips of the ungodly, against the secession and its adherents. Such men feel encouraged and highly gratified, by the discourse of the preacher. It has fed their malice, strengthened their enmity, and fostered that spirit of perdition by which they seem to be influenced.

It requires but little discernment to discover, that the spirit which may lead a man to assail the cause of God from the pulpit, and

that which leads another openly to curse it, are one and the same. Have the wicked ever been heard to heap their imprecations on the cause which the preacher attempted to support that evening? Could he be brought to discover what evil passions he gratified and fed, what joy he caused among the adversaries of the Lord, both in hell and upon earth, he would, if he were not past feeling, experience a thrill of horror, that would cause "his bones to shake." "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies; they strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of Hosts concerning the prophets, Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth unto all the land. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord," Jer. xxiii, 14, 15, 16. Among this motley group, there may be here and there one and another who have been brought to "see men as trees walking;" but they retain their present company through ignorance. The little gold of grace is mixed with much alloy; it is buried under a heap of rubbish; their situation is altogether unfavorable to the growth of piety; they "perish for lack of knowledge," and may the Lord in much mercy teach them a new lesson in the school of Christ, remove the rubbish, purge away the alloy, break their chains, separate them from the unclean, and bring them to a true union of heart and hand with his own people.

And now, in conclusion, I must say, that in penning these lines I have done what I have been urged to, by a sense of duty to God and his cause. What are to be the consequences of the development I have here made, the great Head of the Church only knows; and to him I commit what I have done. It is a consolation to me to reflect, that I have received more than one token of divine guidance in this matter. My feeble spirit has sometimes shrunk from making the above disclosures, but I have been urged on by a sense of duty; and the Lord, I trust, has supported me, enabled me to overlook all consequences, and commit the whole to his hands, that he may dispose of it, as seemeth good in his sight.

The great Head of the Church knows, that I have not been influenced by any malicious feeling towards the Dutch Church, in

giving this pamphlet to the world. The Dutch Church has never done me any personal injury; and although it may have been said, that I have been influenced by an unholy ambition, in taking the step I have, yet, let the reader be assured, that all the honor I ever sought in my former connection, I attained to: honor was not the object of my pursuit. A friendly feeling was always, as far as I could discover, manifested towards me by my former brethren. "The world will love its own." But having been brought to a discovery of evils to which before I was blind, or whose weight I did not feel; having found the true Zion, and having experienced something of the joy which is felt by those who "return and come to Zion;" it is my desire that others may see and feel with me. I can say in the language of Moses to Hobab, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: Come with us, and we will do you good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

I have attempted to tear away the veil from the Dutch Church, because I view it to be in its present state, a "throne of iniquity," that ought to be demolished. Did I believe that God viewed it with complacency, and had mercy in store for it, I would shrink from the undertaking as being unhallowed: but I view the matter differently.

No thought appears to me more awful than that of directly stabbing the cause of God. God forbid, that I should ever be guilty of an act like this. But when the community are blind to an evil which involves the dearest interests of the never-dying soul; what true friend of man will not think that it ought to be exposed? Can it be exposed too soon? Certain individuals, like the craftsmen of Diana, may fear for their gains, when any efforts are made to bring the goddess into disrepute: but when their wealth derived from this quarter may fail, they have the privilege of turning to better employments.

I believe that God will make of one heart, the scattered remnant whom the prophets have caused to err, Jer. xxiii, 13, and if this development of facts should be instrumental of giving light to any who are in darkness, the glory will be ascribed to him that "worketh all in all."