

THE
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I.

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

THERE are some special reasons which urge this subject upon our attention.

First. There is an attempt in some directions to lower the choice of the Ministry to the same level with that of any other profession or avocation in life. It is claimed that men are called to the Ministry in the same way in which they are called to be Farmers, Merchants, Lawyers, or Physicians. The question would then be one simply of expediency and aptitude. The conditions of the choice would be the tastes and preferences of each individual, together with his talents and qualifications and such outward indications of Providence as seemed more favorable to the Ministry than to any other occupation.

This theory overlooks the *Divine character* of the Ministerial office. The Minister is no longer a *Mediatorial gift* to the Church.

It ignores also the immediate Headship of Jesus Christ over his Church. He no longer can say to Ministers, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

It sets aside also the *Divine Call* of the Spirit. It is no longer "the Holy Ghost who" makes them overseers of the flock.

A *second* reason which urges this subject upon our attention is the fact that while some go to the extreme which I have just mentioned and deny the necessity of the Spirit's call, there are others who fly to the opposite extreme, and so emphasize the internal call of the Spirit as to render appointment to office or ordination or any authentication by the Church entirely unnecessary. Upon this theory any man who can persuade himself that he is called by the

Such an institution should be carefully guarded and used only for the purposes indicated. No encouragement should be given to any one to shorten his course of study in college. It is designed for those only who have excellent reasons why they cannot go to college and undertake the full college course. No student should be admitted to this preparatory school under twenty-one years of age, and who cannot satisfy the faculty as to his ability and piety. It should be made clear that such a preparatory school is no rival of the college, and that it aims to do a work that the colleges cannot or will not do.

The course of study ought to be so severe that it would stay the progress of those who lack the proper qualifications. Such an institution is designed for the rapid progress of able and eager men, and no dull and lazy students should be tolerated within its walls. Such students should be so aided that they may give their entire time to the work, because they have a large amount of work to accomplish in a short time. Such a preparatory school might be so hedged in that all evils might be warded off, and a new source of supply opened up for the Christian ministry that would yield us a class of men that are greatly needed, especially for the hard missionary work of the Church.

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THE NEW CREED OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THERE are few, probably, who doubt that it is beyond human powers to frame a creed as extended as the Westminster Confession of Faith, which can be adopted in all its propositions as the personal belief of each of a large body of ministers. Wherever, therefore, the formula of subscription is such as really or apparently asserts the adoption of every proposition of the Confession as the personal faith of the subscriber, consciences are wounded and a real necessity exists for relief. The most natural, and, as it seems to us, altogether the best way of seeking this relief is so to modify the formula of subscription as to allow all the liberty that is consistent with the Church's witness to the truth. This is the way that has been adopted by the American Presbyterians, who require candidates for ordination "sincerely to receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this Church as containing *the system of doctrine* taught in the Holy Scriptures," or, as the original Synod expressed it in 1729, to "declare their agreement in, and approbation of, the Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, as being *in all the essential and necessary articles*, good forms of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine." The framing of a "Declaratory Statement," setting forth the sense in which the Church understands her standards—as has been done, for example, by the United Presbyterians of Scotland—seems to us a much more clumsy device. Its effect is simply to amend the Confession by indirection in certain specified points (and if amendment is to be made, why not do

it directly?), while leaving the liberty of the subscriber just as much in bondage to the (now altered) Confession as before; it, therefore, does not in any way supersede the necessity for a freer formula of subscription. Unless the Church no longer adheres to the system of doctrine taught in the Confession, the formulation of a wholly new creed, to be substituted for it, labors under still more serious disadvantages. Nor can the new creed, any more than the old, be received in its *ipsissima verba* by the whole body of adherents. Only if it is confined within such narrow limits, and is expressed in such vague terms, as to lose all distinctive character, can the necessity of the less strict subscription to even it be avoided: and in this case it fails to serve the purposes for which a creed exists.

It is not strange that the Presbyterian Church of England has felt, in common with her sister churches, the need of relief from a strict subscription to the Confession. The peculiarity of her case is the comprehensiveness of the relief which she has sought. Other churches have been satisfied with a revised formula of subscription, or a declaratory statement, or a new creed. The Presbyterian Church of England has set vigorously to work and provided herself with all three. And now, after five years of hard labor, she finds herself facing her embarrassing wealth of expedients with her mind apparently not yet clearly made up what to do with any of them.

The movement which has resulted in the preparation of the new "Articles of the Faith," now before the Presbyteries of that Church for consideration, was fairly inaugurated at the London meeting of the Synod in 1883. Overtures in almost identical terms had come up from the Presbyteries of Birmingham and London, reciting that "the Westminster Confession of Faith, while held in high and deserved honor in this Church, as setting forth that system of doctrine which this Church with unabated firmness teaches and maintains, is found to be no longer so well suited in form and expression as it was in former times to the actual condition and wants of the Church;" and praying the Synod "to take the relation of the Church to this subordinate standard into careful consideration, with a view to such prudent and timely action as to its wisdom may seem meet." A more explicit overture also came up from the Presbytery of Liverpool, which, on the ground that the Westminster Confession "fails in the opinion of many to answer so fully as formerly" the function of setting forth the sense in which the Church understands the teaching of Holy Scripture, and of forming a basis for church-membership, prays the Synod "to take these premises into consideration, and appoint a committee with instructions to enter into communication with the other Presbyterian churches in this matter, in the hope that in concert with them a shorter and fuller statement of Biblical teaching on those doctrines that are held to be of chief importance and find universal acceptance in Presbyterian churches, may be drawn up on the main lines of the Westminster Confession, more suited to the wants of the Church of our time." In response to these overtures the Synod by a large majority adopted a paper which began by expressing its sense of the gravity of the situation, and affirming "its unabated adherence to the doctrine contained in the Westminster

Confession," and then appointed a committee, which it instructed : " 1. To consider whether any, and if so what, changes may with advantage be made in the existing formulas, by which office-bearers affirm their adherence to the Confession of Faith. 2. To consider whether it is desirable that any explanatory declaration be adopted by the Church, with a view to make it more clear in what sense the Church understands her subordinate standard or any portions thereof. 3. To consider whether, with a view to secure some briefer and more available compendium of fundamental doctrine, this Church ought not to approach the General Council of the Presbyterian Alliance, to meet at Belfast next year, by memorial or otherwise, on the subject of such a digest of doctrine designed to embody that ' Consensus of the Reformed Confessions ' on which the said Alliance is based."

The comprehensiveness of these instructions seems to have proved embarrassing to the committee, and to have caused it to take an uncertain, not to say a vacillating, course. It was apparently the intention of the Synod to remit to the committee the whole subject of the relation of the Church to the Confession, in the expectation that it would report an explicit answer to the questions : 1. Whether the Church needed relief in the matter of her subscription to her subordinate standards, and 2. Whether, if needed, this relief should be sought in a change in the formulas of subscription, or by means of a declaratory statement conditioning the subscription, or by the substitution of " some briefer and more available compendium " for the document subscribed. It is probably important, however, to remember that the overtures on which the action was based recited dissatisfaction not so much with the relation of the Church to the Confession as with the Confession itself, and one of them proposed action looking openly toward the drawing up of a shorter and more acceptable creed. The committee may have felt, therefore, from the first that the ultimate design of its appointment was the preparation of this " briefer and more available compendium of fundamental doctrine "—although its actual instructions in this matter only empowered it to consider whether the Presbyterian Alliance ought not to be memorialized on the subject of the preparation of its proposed " Consensus of Reformed Confessions."

It appears, at all events, to have acted on this theory ; and so to have framed its work as to lead the Synod on to this issue. As the result of its first year's deliberations it recommended to the Synod of 1884 a revised formula of subscription which required the adoption of "*the system of doctrine*" contained in the Westminster Confession, instead of "*the doctrine*," as heretofore. But it also reported that it had already determined the scope and general contents which a declaratory statement should take, if such a document should be prepared, and recommended that it should be instructed to prepare such a paper ; and further, that while it was not needful to memorialize the Council of the Presbyterian Alliance regarding the preparation of a " Consensus of the Reformed Confessions," " it was unanimously agreed " " that ' a briefer and more available compendium of fundamental doctrine ' would not only be of great value in itself, but would probably aid the Church in solving the difficulties

which led" to the appointment of the committee, and it therefore asked to be instructed to consider in what way such a compendium "may be best prepared and the uses which it might serve." The committee having been instructed according to its requests, it is not surprising that it was forced to report next year (1885) that the majority of the Presbyteries thought that the question of altering the formulas of subscription should be postponed until the whole of the proposals of the committee were before the Church. It was able at this meeting, however, to lay a draught of a "Declaratory Statement" before the Synod, the adoption of which it recommended; and to report that it was prepared to proceed to frame a "Compendium of Fundamental Doctrine" if the Synod so ordered. This order being given, the Synod declined meanwhile to adopt the "Declaratory Statement," but sent it down with a "general approval" to the Presbyteries for amendment. It came back to the Synod of 1886 with a single unimportant amendment, and on the recommendation of the committee, the Synod placed on record "its entire and cordial approval" of its terms "as expressing the sense in which this Church understands and accepts the Westminster Confession of Faith," and sent it down to the Presbyteries and Sessions for "their opinion whether or not it ought to be adopted by the Church;" meanwhile instructing the committee to readapt the formulas of subscription to the changed conditions, to take legal advice as to the bearing of the proposed adoption of the "Declaratory Statement" on trusts, etc., and to proceed with the "Compendium of Fundamental Doctrine." The Sessions took this opportunity freely to amend the "Declaratory Statement," and the legal advice was adverse to its adoption, so that the committee could only report progress next year (1887), and ask to be continued. Accordingly in 1888 it was able to lay the completed "Compendium of Fundamental Doctrine," under the new title of "Articles of the Faith," before the Synod; and in view of this fact to report that it thought it not "necessary to ask for a re-approval of the Declaratory Statement," the imposing of which, moreover, as a term of office was thought by its counsel to involve legal risks to the Church's tenure of certain of its property. Thus as the new formulas of subscription prepared in 1884 went down before the nascent "Declaratory Statement," so it, in turn, goes down before the completed "Articles of the Faith." Even these, however, the fruit of that bud and flower, are not proposed for hurried adoption; they are simply before the Church, the Synod asking only for careful examination of them by the Presbyteries, with a view to the suggestion of amendments and to advice as to the uses to which they may be profitably put. Meanwhile the committee is engaged in preparing an appendix designed to deal with questions of Church polity, worship, and the like.

At the outset of their labors the committee stated very clearly what they proposed to themselves in the new "Articles"—viz., "(1) That the Compendium of Doctrine should embrace only matters which enter into the substance of the Faith, reserving for an appendix details connected with Church polity, worship, and the like, if the Church should desire to deal with such questions. (2) That the Compendium should consist of a series of brief articles; that it

should be affirmative, not polemical or argumentative ; and that it should be so expressed as to declare the truth affirmed to be the actual belief of the Church." The completed document accordingly consists of a brief compendium of fundamental doctrine drawn up in twenty-three Articles bearing the following titles : I. Of God ; II. Of the Trinity ; III. Of Creation ; IV. Of Providence ; V. Of the Fall ; VI. Of Saving Grace ; VII. Of the Lord Jesus Christ ; VIII. Of the Work of Christ ; IX. Of the Exaltation of Christ ; X. Of the Gospel ; XI. Of the Holy Spirit ; XII. Of Election and Regeneration ; XIII. Of Repentance and Faith ; XIV. Of Christian Obedience ; XV. Of Union to Christ ; XVI. Of the Church ; XVII. Of Church Order and Fellowship ; XVIII. Of Holy Scripture ; XIX. Of the Sacraments ; XX. Of the Second Advent ; XXI. Of the Resurrection ; XXII. Of the Last Judgment ; XXIII. Of the Life Everlasting. We observe at once the truly Calvinistic and truly evangelical character of this scheme ; the circle of essential doctrine is fairly covered, and the stress is happily laid upon the goodness and mercy of God. Its most positive quality is doubtless the prominence which is accorded to the universality of the provision for and offer of salvation. The most serious omissions are probably the lack of all formal treatment of the decrees of God, the covenants, the original state of man, free will and its powers, and inability. Most of these topics are, indeed, incidentally and briefly touched upon. We read in Article IV. of God's "disposing and governing all events for His own high design ;" in Article V. of "Adam, the representative head as well as common ancestor of mankind," and of man's "original state of innocence and communion with God," as well as of his proneness to evil, "out of which condition we acknowledge that no man is able by any means to deliver himself ;" while the necessity of the Spirit's "gracious influence" for salvation is asserted in Article XI., and the sovereignty of election in Article XII. The objection which we should now press is, therefore, not that these doctrines are not implied and some of them even incidentally stated ; but rather that they are not adequately stated, or that the proportion of the faith is not preserved in the statement. These doctrines are too important, not to say fundamental, to be left to chance and sometimes vague hints, which may or may not attract the attention of the reader ; and they ought not to be lost sight of or even obscured in the laudable desire to lay the chief stress on the provisions of God's mercy.

The language of the Articles is studiously simple and untechnical. It is, perhaps, prevailingly vague, and sometimes even clumsy. Nevertheless, many of the phrases and some whole Articles are very happily couched. We may instance the opening of Article VI., which could scarcely be improved : "We believe and proclaim that God, *who is rich in mercy as well as of perfect justice*, was moved by His great love to man," etc. The opening words of Article V., part of which has already been quoted, are equally just, though hardly so beautiful. The whole of Articles IX., X., and XI. are admirable. We give Article X. as an example : "We hold fast and proclaim that God, who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, has, by

His Son our Saviour, given commission to the Church to preach the Gospel of His grace unto all nations, freely offering to all men forgiveness and eternal life, and calling on them to turn from sin to God, and to receive and rest by faith upon the Lord Jesus Christ." This beautiful statement is open only to the criticism that the use it makes of the words of 1 Tim. ii. 4 (and that in the form given in the Revised Version) may be misunderstood as placing ecclesiastical sanction on an erroneous exegesis of that passage. Along with the Articles already named may be ranked Article XIII., and especially the exquisite Article XXI. On the other hand, we are obliged to confess that we find Article XIV. intolerably clumsy in both form and phraseology, and that nearly the same might be justly charged against Articles IV., VIII., XVI. We fear that the Creed, as a whole, gravitates toward this latter element.

In the way of criticism of details, however, we shall confine ourselves for the present to the following remarks: 1. The order in which Articles XIV. and XV., treating respectively of Christian Obedience and Union to Christ, stand, produces a very startling effect in the way of apparently underestimating the divine side of sanctification; and this is insufficiently guarded against by the assertion in the last clause of Article XIV. that our obedience is "the fruit of union to Christ and the evidence of a living faith." The prime truth here is, of course, that we are kept by the power of God unto salvation, perseverance bearing a relation to God's sanctifying grace similar to the relation of conversion to regeneration. Not only is this obscured in the order of the Articles, however, but also in the somewhat strained phraseology of the central clause of Article XV., which sadly needs amendment. The witness of the Christian soul in the whole matter, as well as of the word of God, flows freely into such a form of speech as that supplied by the first question of the Heidelberg Catechism, on which these two Articles could be profitably remodelled. 2. It is with excellent effect that election and regeneration are brought together in Article XII.; and that not only because election may be properly treated (as Witsius; for example, treats it) as the first of the benefits secured by the covenant of grace, but also because it is, after all, not the element of time in it, but that of sovereignty, which is objected to; and this it shares with the doctrine of regeneration. But when Articles VIII. and XII. are read together, the relation of election to the gift of Christ appears to be very vaguely, not to say ambiguously, expressed. Article XII. seems capable of being so read as to leave the question open whether Christ undertook his work with a special view to those whom the Father gave him, and to assert only that the Holy Spirit's work of applying redemption was directed specially to them. Similarly the phrase "His people" is so placed in Article VIII. as possibly to raise in some minds the question whether Christ satisfied divine justice specially for them. 3. The avoidance of the covenant mode of statement produces a very odd result in Article VI., which is made so promissory in form as to raise doubt as to whether it contemplates the actual salvation of any of those who lived before Christ. We are only told that God "was moved by His great love to man to hold forth from the first a promise of redemption, which from age to age He

confirmed and unfolded ;” and that “ in the fulness of the time, He accomplished it by sending His Son to be the Saviour of the world.” What, then, became of those who died before this accomplishment ? If only to match the more excellent statement of the fall in Article V., we should have here a corresponding hint of the covenant, say in some such words as : God “ was moved by His great love to man freely to offer unto sinners life and salvation through a redemption to be wrought in due time by the second Adam, the which promise He,” etc. 4. In a creed of this sort, there can be no valid objection to postponing the statement of faith in the Scriptures to a later point than is usual in Reformed symbols. But the Article that is devoted to this subject cannot be considered adequate to present needs. The necessity of a revelation, the inspiration of the whole of Scripture, and the supreme authority of the whole as a rule of faith and practice, are alike left without clear assertion. Instead of asserting a revelation to be “ most necessary,” the first clause is so worded as to leave the impression that it was only by the superfluous grace of God that a revelation was given : “ We believe that it has pleased God, in addition to the manifestation of His glory in creation and providence, and especially in the spirit of man, to reveal His mind and will to man at successive periods and in various ways.” If this is all that the committee could find it in its heart to say, we ought not to conceal from ourselves that it marks a radical departure from Reformed doctrine. If it is only by inadvertence that the necessity of Revelation is not more sharply intimated, the needs of our times surely call for an amendment of the language such as will bring it to more clear expression. Instead of asserting the inspiration of the whole body of the canonical Scriptures, thus constituted the Word of God, the second clause of the Article is so worded as to assert only that somewhere within the limits of these canonical Scriptures may be found (by devout search, may we say ?) that portion of God’s Revelation which has been committed to writing by inspired men : “ and that this Revelation has been, so far as needful, committed to writing by men inspired by the Holy Spirit, and is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are therefore to be devoutly studied by all.” Here again there is either departure from Reformed doctrine or else an imperative demand for less ambiguous statement. Instead of asserting, again, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, being the Word of God, constitute the only infallible and altogether sufficient rule of faith and obedience, the last clause is so worded that it may be held to declare only that, so far as and in those places where the Holy Ghost can be discovered to be speaking through the Scriptures, are they to be used as a judge of faith and duty : “ and we reverently acknowledge the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures as the Supreme Judge in questions of faith and duty.” We make no assertions, of course, as to the intention of this Article, but it is within the truth to say that it is capable of an interpretation which would make it express probably the lowest view of the nature, use, and value of the Scriptures that has ever received confessional statement. 5. It is perhaps not hypercritical to see indications in the appropriate Articles of a certain “ chary walking,” in the fear of the preva-

lent scientific view of the world. In Article III., for example, there seems to be a distinction intended between the primal "*creation* of the heavens and the earth," the subsequent "*fashioning and ordering*" of the world, "through progressive stages," and the final "*making*" of man. We certainly cannot object to the phrase "through progressive stages" in itself—it asserts a Biblical fact; but it is questionable whether that Biblical fact alone is enough to justify for it a place in so brief a creed. We may ask, further, whether the phrase "giving life to every creature" in this same connection is intended as a careful definition of the whole share God had in the matter, to the exclusion of "being, shape, form, and several offices"? In Article IV., again, it seems to be an unnecessary nicety to encumber so short and general a creed statement with the careful guarding of God's providence, by expressly declaring that it acts only "according to the laws of His creatures' being." Is the statement in Article V. of man's original state as one "of innocence" (rather than of a positive righteousness and true holiness) a further concession to science? And is not the word "inherit" of the same section too modal to choose for the expression of how man becomes partaker in Adam's sin? 6. There are a considerable number of small peculiarities and infelicitous locutions which, did occasion serve, might be pointed out. An example or two must suffice. The principle on which the attributes are arranged in Article I. is not obvious, and the Article opens with a harsh (perhaps pedantic) phrase: "We believe in and adore one living and true God, who is spirit." Why not say concretely and directly: "*the* one living and true God, who is *a* spirit"? It is not obvious, again, why the sense of historicity and sodality should seek expression for itself only in the Articles on the trinity and the person of Christ, the one of which is acknowledged "with the ancient Church" (as if the modern Church no longer held to it), and the other is confessed "with the whole Church." As these articles are no more ancient and catholic than many others, perhaps the singling of them out in this manner is undesirable. Neither is it obvious in what the assertion that God executed His work of creation "for His own holy and loving ends" has the advantage of the Scriptural expression "for His own glory." Either of the illustrative phrases quoted from the older creeds would be better. In view of certain rather prevalent tendencies of the day, it would be well to use in Article XXII. a confessedly unambiguous word like "everlasting," when speaking of future punishment.

We have confined ourselves meanwhile to such detailed criticisms as the foregoing, because any thorough and satisfactory estimate of the value of the new Articles is rendered impossible for the present by the doubt that hovers over the purpose which they are meant to subserve. It is obvious that we might ascribe very different degrees of success to them according as we looked at them as simply a spontaneous expression of belief on the principle of "I believed, therefore have I spoken;" or as a substitute for the Confession of Faith as a standard of ministerial soundness; or as a basis for church-membership. It is quite conceivable that the paper which we might consider laudable from the first of these points of view, might deserve to be pronounced wholly

insufficient from the second, and oppressively overwrought from the third. In their report offered in 1885, the committee suggest two uses to which the (at that time) contemplated Compendium might well be put. It might supply, they say, both a testimony of the Church's faith to those beyond her communion, and a summary of doctrine to guide her in the instruction of her children. On the same occasion it informed the Synod that a proposition made in the committee "to recommend that the Compendium (when prepared) should be the subordinate standard of the Church instead of the Westminster Confession of Faith," was voted down and the question left open. And open it is declared to remain until the present hour. All this is very puzzling. What has this labor of years been expended upon? The whole drift of the proceedings from the overtures of the Presbyteries in 1883 down to the end, points to action relative to the Confession of Faith. The committee which has framed these Articles was appointed in response to overtures seeking relief from the stringency of the Church's relation to the Confession. Its very title is the "Committee on the Church's relation to the Westminster Confession." All its work, whether with reference to the formulæ of subscription, or to the Declaratory Statement, or (shall we not also say?) to the Compendium of Doctrine, has been undertaken and carried through on the theory that it was making provision for the relief sought. Moreover, the uses suggested by the committee for the Articles trench on the functions of the subordinate standard. If these Articles are to stand as the exhibition of the faith of the Church to those without, and as the standard of instruction to those within, there will soon be left no use for the Confession to serve. Is it to be merely a disciplinary formula? Are the ministers of the Presbyterian Church of England to sign the Confession as a condition of service, but to announce to the world that their faith is enshrined in the "Articles," and to teach only them to their people?

We are nevertheless bound to accept the assurance that the uses to which the new Creed is to be put are not yet determined. And that being true, it is impossible to arrive, at present, at a satisfactory estimate of its value. We cannot, indeed, avoid comparing it with the Westminster Confession, even apart from all question of future use. It is not a document emanating from an isolated communion, which is bringing its faith to expression in independence of the historical progress of doctrine and wholly unaffected by three centuries of Protestant efforts to formulate the truth. Its specific meaning as an expression of faith is in any case determinable only when we remember that it is framed by a Church trained under the Westminster standards, and still expressing "unabated adherence to the doctrine contained" in them. The very essence of a judgment upon it is dependent upon whether we find it a ladder with its foot set on the old Confession and leading men one stage higher, or a ladder with its top resting upon it and leading men downward. And we ought not to hesitate to say that we can scarcely conceive of any one turning from one to the other without the experience that it is in the Confession that he finds the strong meat of the Gospel for both the mind and the heart. Nor ought we to

hesitate to say briefly, in closing, that the new Articles do not appear to us to be a satisfactory document for any of the purposes which occur to us as possibly embraced in the hopes of the committee. It is too long to serve (like the Apostles' Creed, for instance) as a Creed for constant repetition by the people in divine worship. It is too short to serve (like the Confession of Faith, for instance) as a testimony of the truth to those without. It is too indefinite to serve (like the Shorter Catechism, for instance) as an instrument for the instruction of the young. It is too vague to serve (like the Confession of Faith, for instance) as an instrument of discipline and a standard of ministerial soundness. For every possible function which a creed should serve, we fall back upon the Westminster standards with the hearty conviction that the old is better. From our point of view, therefore, the English Presbyterian Church would do wisely if, satisfied with having brought their living faith to expression, and deeply grateful at finding itself still "unabatedly adhering to the doctrine contained in the Westminster Confession," it should now lay its new "Articles" safely away, and lay the Declaratory Statement it has framed for itself away with them, and give itself the freedom it desires by adopting the revised formula of subscription which it was so nearly adopting four years ago. The true relief for a church that finds itself too strictly bound to a creed, to the doctrine contained in which it "unabatedly adheres," is not to frame a different creed (to the doctrine contained in which it can scarcely do more than "unabatedly adhere"), nor to frame a "Declaratory Statement" (which can only indirectly alter the doctrine to which it "unabatedly adheres"), but simply to emend the strictness of the formula of subscription that binds it to its already approved Creed.

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