

History and Ecclesiastical Relations of the Churches of the Presbyterial Order at Amoy, China eBook

History and Ecclesiastical Relations of the Churches of the Presbyterial Order at Amoy, China

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PREFACE.

To the Ministers, Elders, and Members of the Reformed Dutch Church:

It is proper that I give some reasons for the publication of this paper. The importance of the subject of the ecclesiastical organization of the churches gathered in heathen lands, I conceive to be a sufficient reason. Those who may differ in regard to the views set forth in this paper, will not dispute the importance of the subject. Instead of the questions involved having been settled by any of the Presbyterian Denominations of this country (the Dutch Church included among them), by experiments in India or any other heathen land, very few of the churches gathered from the heathen, by these various Denominations, have yet arrived at a stage of development sufficient for practical application of the experiment. (See foot-note, page 160.) There are, however, a few mission churches, where the subject is now becoming one of vast practical importance. The Church at Amoy stands out prominent among these. With the continuance of the divine blessing there will soon be many such. Hence the importance of the discussion, and its importance *now*.

Many experiments have been made in reference to the best way of conducting the work of missions. The Church has improved by them, and has been compelled to *unlearn* many things. We are continually returning towards the simple plan laid down in God's Word. As the Church by experiment and by discussion has thus been led to retrace some of her steps in the preliminary work of missions, should she not be ready to take advantage of experiment and discussion, in reference to the ecclesiastical organization of the mission churches, and stand ready to retrace some of her steps in this second stage of the work of missions, if need be, in order to conform more fully to the doctrines of our Presbyterian church polity? I would use the phrase *Scriptural church polity*, but I suppose it is the universal belief of our Church, that Presbyterian polity is scriptural. At any rate, it is the duty of the Church to examine the subject carefully. She has nothing to fear from such examination. She should fear to neglect it.

In addition to the importance of the subject in itself considered, I have other reasons for discussing it at the present time. There are mistaken impressions abroad in the Church, concerning the views and course of your missionaries at Amoy, which must be injurious to the cause of missions in our Church. It would seem to be a plain duty to correct these impressions. I will quote an extract from a letter, I recently received, from an honored missionary of a sister Church:



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“I have heard much, and seen some notices in the papers of the battle you fought on the floor of Synod, and would like to hear your side of the subject from your own mouth, as the question has also been a practical one with us. * * * * * We have our own Presbytery, and manage our own business, and insist on not having too much of what they call the new science of Missionary management; a science which, I believe, has been cultivated far too assiduously. It was this, more than anything else, which kept me from going out under the A.B.C.F.M., and to Amoy. * * * * * I hear, however, from some, that what you and the brethren there had formed, was some sort of loose Congregational association. If so, I must judge against you, for I believe in the *jure divino* of Presbytery (or Classis if you choose so to call it), and I think you and they should have been allowed to form a Presbytery there, and manage all your own affairs, and that your Boards at home should be content to consider themselves a committee to raise and send on the funds. But it is hard for the D. D's and big folk at home to come to that. They think they must manage everything, or all will go wrong; while how little it is that they can be brought to know or realize of the real nature of the work abroad; and then it is the old battle of patronage over again. Those who give the money must *govern*, and those who receive it must give up their liberty, and be no longer Christ's freemen.”

This is only a specimen, one of many, of the mistaken impressions abroad in the Church concerning the views and doings of your Missionaries. May we not, *must* we not, correct them? The letter also illustrates the evils resulting from allowing mistaken impressions to remain in the Church uncorrected. There has long been an impression in our Church that the A.B.C.F.M. interfered with the ecclesiastical affairs of our missions. We have been informed that several of our young men, before our Church separated from that Board, were deterred thereby from devoting themselves to the foreign Missionary work. The writer of the above letter, probably having more of the Missionary spirit, was not willing, on that account, to give up the work, but was led to offer himself to the Board of a sister Church. The Mission at Amoy, and our Church, have thus been deprived of the benefit of his labors by means of an erroneous impression. When we learned the fact of such an impression existing in this country, we endeavored to correct it. In our letter of 1856, to General Synod, we called particular attention to the subject. Here is a part of one sentence: “It seems to us a duty, and we take this opportunity to bear testimony, that neither Dr. Anderson, nor the Prudential Committee have ever, in any communication which we have received from them, in any way, either by dictation, or by the expression of opinions, interfered in the least with our ecclesiastical relations.” We failed to get that letter published, and I find the erroneous impression still prevalent, working its mischief in the churches.



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But to return to the subject of the mistaken impressions concerning the views of your Missionaries at Amoy. These impressions would have been partly corrected in the Church, if the report of the proceedings of Synod, in "The Christian Intelligencer," had been more correct on this subject. That paper states, that, on Friday evening, "Rev. Mr. Talmage then took the floor, and addressed the Synod for nearly two hours," but does not give a single word or idea uttered by him. It is careful to report the only *unkind words* against the Missionaries uttered during that whole discussion, which, with this single exception, was conducted in a spirit of the utmost Christian kindness; but does not give a word of the remarks made on the Friday evening previous, on that very subject, in justification of their course.

It seems to be a duty, though painful, to speak particularly on this subject. Look at the following language: "I know that we are told that the *hybrid organization* [i.e. the Classis, a *court of the Church of Christ*, at Amoy] which now exists is every way sufficient and satisfactory; that it is the fruit of Christian love, and that to disturb it would be rending the body of Christ. Here one might ask, how it came to exist at all, seeing that this Synod spoke so plainly, and unambiguously, in 1857; and *I, for one, cordially concur in the remark of the elder, Schieffelin, that the brethren there 'deserve censure.'* We do not censure them, nor do we propose to do so; *but that they deserve it is undeniable.* But the point is, how can our disapproval of *the mongrel Classis* mar the peace of the Amoy brethren?" This language was used by the President of Synod, after asking whether the Synod was ready for the question, "the question being about to be put," when an attempt to answer it seemed altogether out of place. In all the circumstances it seemed almost like the charge of a judge to a jury. I do not say that there is any improper spirit manifested, or opprobrious expressions employed in this language, or that the President did wrong in waiting until the discussion was over before he uttered it, or that the missionaries are not deserving of such severe censure—of all these things let the Church judge—but I do say that the spreading of such language and such charges broadcast, before the Church and before the world, demands that the missionaries be heard in self-defense, or, which is all they ask, that they be allowed to state the facts and views which guided them in their action.

Doubtless it was an oversight that such a one-sided report on this subject appeared in The Christian Intelligencer. At least it was not at all designed that injustice be done to the Missionaries, but, unless they be allowed to speak for themselves, is not injustice done them? It seemed to me that a very mistaken impression concerning the views expressed by me, near the close of the session of Synod, was also conveyed by the Report. This

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I attempted to correct by a note to the editor, but even the right of correcting my own sentiments and language was refused, my note garbled, and, as I thought, my views again misrepresented. More than this, the *implied* charge is published to the world that I am seeking to excite “dissension among the churches,” and “opposition to the constituted authority of Synod.”[1] It would therefore be great dereliction of duty to return to my field of labor, allowing my own views, and the views of my co-laborers, to be thus mistaken in the Church, and such serious charges against our course unanswered. I am not aware that any censorship of the press has been authorized by General Synod. Surely if others are allowed to be heard for us we should be allowed the right to be heard for ourselves. We were unable by writing from Amoy to get our views before the Church. I must, therefore, while in this land, endeavor to make them known.

[Footnote 1: If this language seem too strong or uncalled for, see Appendix B, at the end.]

I have been advised by some to delay the publication of this paper a few months, until we learn the effect of the decision of the last Synod on the Mission at Amoy, and see what course the Church there may feel compelled to adopt. I do not see the force of such advice. Whatever may be the course of the Church there, the intrinsic merits of the question will be unchanged thereby. Besides this, I cannot afford such delay. I have been looking forward to as speedy return as possible to that field of labor. Would it be right to leave the whole subject to the eve of my departure, and thus shut myself off from the possibility of defending or further explaining my views, if such defense or explanation be called for?

I have been asked, Why not bring this subject before the Church through the columns of the *Christian Intelligencer*? This question, after what has been said above, need not now be answered. Doubtless the editor is responsible for what appears in his columns. The only resource left the Mission seems to be the one I have chosen.

I regret the necessity of discussing the subject, since the action of the last Synod, but we could not discuss it previously without running counter to the same advice which would now restrain us. I do not at all suppose, however, that by the course I am taking I shall become guilty of disobedience “to the authority of Synod.” Neither should it be the occasion of creating “dissensions in the churches.” The discussion of any important subject in a proper spirit is neither opposed to the doctrines of the Sacred Scriptures, nor to the doctrines of the Dutch Church, and I am willing to leave it to those who may read the following pages to decide whether there be in them any manifestation of an improper spirit. We, and those who differ from us, are all seeking the same end, *i.e.* the glory of God through the advancement of his cause. All that I ask for myself and co-laborers is an *impartial hearing*.



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Perhaps, in order to guard against any mistaken impression, I ought to add that the relations between the Missionaries and the Board of Foreign Missions of our Church, have always been of the most pleasant character. Whatever have been their differences of opinion on this most important subject, or on any other subject, they have not caused, so far as I am aware, the least interruption of that warm Christian friendship which has always existed, or been the occasion of one unkind utterance in all their mutual correspondence. Why not so? Cannot Christians reason with each other, even on subjects of the highest moment, in such a spirit as not only to avoid animosities, but even to increase personal friendship? If this paper should prove the occasion of discussion in our Church, let me express the hope that such discussion will be carried on in such a spirit.

J.V.N. TALMAGE.

Bound Brook, N.J., October, 1863.

HISTORY

AND

ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS

OF

THE CHURCHES OF THE PRESBYTERIAL ORDER,

AT

AMOY, CHINA.

The first Protestant Missionaries at Amoy arrived there in the year 1842. They were Dr. Abeel of the American Reformed Dutch Church, and Bishop Boone of the American Episcopal Church. After these there arrived Missionaries of the London Missionary Society, of the American Presbyterian Church, of the English Presbyterian Church, and others of the American Reformed Dutch Church.

Bishop Boone soon left Amoy, and no others of his Church have since then been stationed there. The American Presbyterian Mission was removed to other parts of China. At the present time there are three Missions at Amoy, *viz.*: the Missions of the American Reformed Dutch Church, of the London Missionary Society, and of the English Presbyterian Church.



The Missionaries of the London Missionary Society are Independents or Congregationalists, and have organized their churches after the Congregational order. Thus their churches form a distinct Denomination, and nothing further need be said of them in this paper.

The first Missionary of the English Presbyterian Church at Amoy was Dr. Jas. Young. He arrived in May, 1850. At that time there were two Missionaries connected with our (R.D.C.) Mission, viz.: Rev. E. Doty, on the ground, and Rev. J.V.N. Talmage, absent on a visit to the United States. There were then under our care six native church members. Five of them had been baptized by our Missionaries at Amoy. The other had been baptized in Siam, by a Congregationalist or Presbyterian Minister of the A.B.C.F.M.



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Dr. Young, being a physician, and not an ordained Minister, instead of commencing an independent work, inasmuch as our doctrines and order of church government did not essentially differ from those of his own Church, very naturally became more especially associated with us in our work. A school under the care of our Mission, of which Mr. Doty did not feel able to continue the charge, was passed over to his care. He also rendered medical assistance to the Missionaries, and to the Chinese, both in Amoy, and by occasional tours in the country. In his labors he was usually assisted by native Christians under our care.

The first ordained Missionary of the English Presbyterian Church, at Amoy, was Rev. William C. Burns. He joined Dr. Young in July, 1851. While he rendered considerable assistance to the brethren of the London Missionary Society, being ready to preach the gospel at every opportunity, providentially he became especially associated with us, and with the native Christians under our care. A remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God had accompanied the labors of Rev. Mr. Burns, in his native land. So the remarkable outpouring of that same Spirit in Amoy, and vicinity, occurred sometime after his arrival, and much of this good work was manifestly connected with his labors. The permanent work in the country around Amoy commenced through his instrumentality, in connection with native members of the church under our care. We desired him to take the charge of that work, and gather a church at Peh-chui-ia, under the care of the English Presbyterian Church. But, at his urgent request, we took the pastoral oversight of the work in that region, administering the sacraments to the native converts.

Rev. James Johnstone, of the same Mission, arrived in December, 1853. He undertook the care of the church being gathered at Peh-chui-ia, assuming, in behalf of the English Presbyterian Church, all the expenses thereof, we continuing the pastoral oversight until such time as his knowledge of the language should be sufficient to enable him to relieve us.

In consequence of the ill-health of Dr. Young, he and Mr. Burns left Amoy, in August, 1854. Mr. Johnstone, in consequence of ill-health, left in May, 1855, before he was able to relieve us fully from the pastoral care of the church at Peh-chui-ia.

Rev. Carstairs Douglas, of the same Mission, arrived at Amoy in July, 1855, and immediately entered on the work of Mr. Johnstone, we continuing the pastoral oversight of the church at Peh-chui-ia, until his knowledge of the language enabled him to assume it.

Before the brethren of the English Presbyterian Church were able to assume pastoral responsibility, the work spread from Peh-chui-ia to Chioh-be. It was thought best that we take the charge of that station.



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After the departure of Dr. Young, all the Missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church, for several years, were unmarried men. Therefore, they resolved to devote themselves more especially to work in the country, leaving to our especial care the church in the city of Amoy, and the one out-station at Chioh-be. Amoy was still necessarily their place of residence. All their work at Amoy was in connection with the church under our care. In the country we assisted them as we had opportunity, and as occasion demanded. They did the same for us. In fact, we and they have worked together as one Church, and almost as one Mission, with the exception of keeping pecuniary matters distinct.

More recently the English Presbyterian Mission was reinforced by one member with a family, and it seemed a proper time for them to commence more direct work at Amoy. A very populous suburb (E-mng-kang) was selected as a suitable and promising station. They assumed the immediate care, and all the expense of it, employing, as at all the other stations, indiscriminately, members of their own or of our churches as helpers.

We are not afraid that our Church will ever blame us for working thus harmoniously, and unitedly, with our English Presbyterian brethren, and we feel confident that none of her Missionaries would consent to work on any other principles. If there be any who, under similar circumstances, would refuse thus to work, this would be sufficient evidence that they had mistaken their calling. If any blame is to be attached to the course the Missionaries have pursued, it is not that they have worked thus in harmony and unison with the English Presbyterian brethren, but that they have failed to keep the churches under their care ecclesiastically distinct. Some do feel inclined to censure us for this. It must be, however, because of some great misapprehension on their part. The Synod has distinctly uttered a contrary sentiment, *i.e.* that the course of the Missionaries is not censurable. We do not believe that our Church, when she understands the true state of the case, will ever censure us on this account. It would not be according to the spirit of her Master. He prayed that His people might be one, but he never prayed for their separation from each other. When separation is necessary, it is a necessary *evil*. But more of this hereafter. Our Church might well have censured us, if we had adopted lower principles as her representatives in building up the Church of Christ in China.

The first organization of a church at Amoy under our care, by the ordination of a Consistory, took place in 1856. The Missionaries of our Board then on the ground were Doty and Talmage. Mr. Douglas was the only Missionary of the English Presbyterian Church. (Mr. Joralmon, of our Church, arrived between the time of the election and the ordination of office-bearers.) When the time came for the organization of the Church, we felt a solemn responsibility resting on us.



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We supposed it to be our duty to organize the Church in China with reference simply to its own welfare, and efficiency in the work of evangelizing the heathen around. Believing (after due deliberation) that the order of our own Church in America would best secure this end, of course we adopted it. We did not suppose that we were sent out to build up the *American* Dutch Church in China, but a Church after the same order, a purely Chinese Church. How much the growth and efficiency of our Church in this country has been promoted by retaining (rather inserting) the term "*Dutch*" in her name, I will not now attempt to discuss. I suppose the principal argument in favor thereof is found in the fact that our Church, in the first instance, was a colony from Holland. The Church in China is not a colony from Holland, or America. We must not, therefore, entail on her the double evil of both the terms "*American*" and "*Dutch*" or the single evil of either of these terms. Your Missionaries will never consent to be instrumental in causing such an evil.

We had already adopted the order and customs of our Church at home, so far as they could be adopted in an unorganized Church. The English Presbyterian brethren had adopted the same. They found that there were no differences of any importance between us and them; the churches being gathered under our care and under theirs—growing out of each other and being essentially one—neither we nor they could see any sufficient reason for organizing two distinct denominations. Especially had we no reason for such a course, inasmuch as they were willing even to conform to our peculiarities. We most cordially invited Mr. Douglas to unite with us in the organization of the Church, and he as cordially accepted of the invitation.

In reference to this subject Mr. Douglas wrote to their Corresponding Secretary as follows: "I need hardly say that this transaction does not consist in members of one church joining another, nor in two churches uniting, but it is an attempt to build up on the soil of China, with the lively stones prepared by the great Master-builder, an ecclesiastical body holding the grand doctrines enunciated at Westminster and Dort, and the principles of Presbyterian polity embraced at the Reformation by the purest churches on the continent and in Britain; it will also be a beautiful point in the history of this infant Church that the under-builders employed in shaping and arranging the stones, were messengers of two different (though not differing,) churches in the two great nations on either side of the Atlantic."

The course of Mr. Douglas met with the decided approval of their Secretary, and, as he had reason then to believe, and has since fully learned, with the approval of their Church.

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We also sent a communication to our Church, addressing it to General Synod. We directed it to the care of one of our prominent ministers, for a long time Secretary of the Board, with the request that it be laid before the Church, using language as follows: "You will, doubtless, receive this paper some months before the time for the next meeting of that Body [General Synod]. We would suggest therefore, that the paper be published, that the members of the next General Synod may have the matter before them, and be the better prepared to make such disposition of it as the subject may demand. We feel that the subject is one of very grave importance," &c.

Our communication was laid before the Board of Foreign Missions. They designated it a *Memorial*, and decided that they had no right to publish it. Of course we had no means of publishing it ourselves. It was laid before Synod among other papers of the Board. The action of Synod on the subject was as follows (Minutes of Synod, 1857, pp. 225-227):

"Among the papers submitted to the Synod is an elaborate document from the brethren at Amoy, giving the history of their work there, of its gradual progress, of their intimate connection with Missionaries from other bodies, of the formation of the Church now existing there, and expressing their views as to the propriety and feasibility of forming a Classis at that station. In reply to so much of this paper as respects the establishment of individual churches, we must say that while we appreciate the peculiar circumstances of our brethren, and sympathize with their perplexities, yet it has always been considered a matter of course that ministers, receiving their commission through our Church, and sent forth under the auspices of our Board, would, when they formed converts from the heathen into an ecclesiastical body, mould the organization into a form approaching as nearly as possible that of the Reformed Dutch Churches in our own land. Seeing that the converted heathen, when associated together, must have some form of government, and seeing that our form is, in our view, entirely consistent with, if not required by, the Scriptures, we expect it will in all cases be adopted by our Missionaries, subject, of course, to such modifications as the peculiar circumstances may for the time render necessary. The converts at Amoy, as at Arcot and elsewhere, are to be regarded as 'an integral part' of our Church, and as such are entitled to all the rights and privileges which we possess.

"And so in regard to the formation of a Classis. The Church at home will undoubtedly expect the brethren to associate themselves into a regular ecclesiastical organization, just as soon as enough materials are obtained to warrant such measure with the hope that it will be permanent. We do not desire churches to be prematurely formed in order to get materials for a Classis, nor any other exercise of violent haste. But we equally deprecate unnecessary delay, believing

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that a regular organization will be alike useful to our brethren themselves, and to those who, under them, are training for the first office-bearers in the Christian Church on heathen ground. As to the difficulties suggested in the memorial, respecting the different Particular Synods to which the brethren belong, and the delays of carrying out a system of appellate jurisdiction covering America and China, it is enough to say:—(1) That the Presbyterian Church (O.S.) finds no insuperable difficulties in carrying into operation her system which comprehends Presbyteries and Synods in India as well as here; and (2) That whatever hindrances may at any time arise, this body will, in humble reliance upon the divine aid and blessing, undertake to meet and remove them as far as possible. The Church at home assumes the entire responsibility of this matter, and only asks the brethren abroad to carry out the policy, held steadily in view from the first moment when our Missions began.

“The following resolutions are recommended:

“*Resolved*, 1. That the Synod view with great pleasure the formation of churches among the converts from heathenism, organized according to the established usages of our branch of Zion.

“2. That the brethren at Amoy be directed to apply to the Particular Synod of Albany to organize them into a Classis so soon as they shall have formed churches enough to render the permanency of such an organization reasonably certain.”

It should be noticed that, in the foregoing Report, which was adopted by Synod, the most important question—the vital question—of our communication, *i.e.* the *unity* of the churches under the care of the English Presbyterian Missionaries and of us, is entirely ignored; and consequently, without the fact being stated, we were directed to divide those churches, and form a part of them into a distinct Denomination.

If the English Presbyterian Church had disapproved of the course of their Missionaries in uniting with us in organizing the native churches with our peculiarities, we think even that would have been strange. It would have appeared to us as though they were sacrificing some of the essentials of Presbyterianism for the sake of non-essentials, for, in our organization, they found all that they hold essential in doctrine, order, and customs. Suppose the position of the two Missions had been reversed, they had been first on the ground, and when we arrived we found the Church being planted and beginning to grow up after their order. If we had found in the Church thus growing up *all* that we hold essential and important, even though it had some little peculiarities which were theirs and not ours, ought not our Church to have permitted us to work with them, as they have been permitted to work with us? If such be not the true Christian spirit, than we frankly confess that we know not, and despair of ever learning from the Word of God, what the Christian spirit is on such



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a subject. But whether such disapproval on the part of the English Presbyterian Church would have been strange or not, it would not have been so strange as was the decision of our Church, that the churches organized by the English Presbyterian brethren and by us—all one in fact, growing out of each other, and all adopting our order, should not be organically one. Hence, when we learned from our Board the decision of Synod, we felt (correctly or incorrectly) that there must be some misapprehension. Surely our Church cannot have correct views of our position, and our course of proceeding. Hence, we returned answer to the Board as follows:—(Letter dated December 23, 1857.)

After speaking of our hearty approval of the course of our Church in separating from the A.B.C.F.M., though as individuals we took our leave of that Board with feelings of sadness, we remarked:

“It seems proper to us also, on the present occasion, to allude to a subject deeply affecting the interests of the little Church which God has graciously gathered by our instrumentality from among this people. This Church is now small, but we trust that, with a continuance of the Divine blessing, the ‘little one’ will soon ‘become a thousand,’ and the ‘small one a strong nation.’ ‘The Lord will hasten it in his time.’ We love this Church, and cannot but watch over her interests with jealous care. Besides this, the Great Shepherd has made us under-shepherds, and commanded us to watch over the interests of this flock. We gave a brief history of our work, and an account of the present condition and peculiar circumstances of the churches here under our care, and stated at considerable length our views in reference to the future ecclesiastical relations of these churches, in a paper prepared for the information of our Church at home, and addressed to General Synod. The facts thus communicated ought to be known by the Church. It seems to us very unfortunate that that paper was not published according to our suggestion. It stated facts of grave importance. If we could have had a representative in General Synod, the previous publication of our paper might have been unnecessary. But, without such a representative, it was hardly possible that the subject, by a single reading of so long a document, could be brought before the minds of all the members of Synod with sufficient clearness.... Therefore it is not strange that some of the important points in the paper should have been entirely overlooked, and also that certain grave misconceptions should have got abroad in the Church concerning the views expressed by us.

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“So far as we can judge from the report of the proceedings of Synod, as given in *The Christian Intelligencer*, one of the most important considerations—perhaps altogether the most important mentioned—why the Church, gathered by us here, should not be an *integral part* of the Church in America, was entirely overlooked. That consideration relates to the *unity of Christ’s Church*. Our Saviour prays: ‘Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are one.’ ‘That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.’ Will our Church require of us, will she *desire* that those here who are altogether *one*—one in doctrine, one in their views of Church order, and one in mutual love—be violently separated into two Denominations? We cannot believe it. Suppose the case of two Churches originally distinct. By coming into close contact, and becoming better acquainted with each other, they find that they hold to the same doctrinal standards, and they explain them in the same manner; they have the same form of Church government, and their officers are chosen, and set apart in the same way; they have the same order of worship, and of administering the sacraments; all their customs, civil, social, and religious, are precisely alike, and they love each other dearly; should not such churches unite and form but one Denomination? Yet, such a supposition does not, and cannot, even after you allow all the likeness and unity between the two churches it is possible to conceive of, represent the circumstances of the churches gathered by us, and by our Scotch brethren of the English Presbyterian Church. Our [theirs and ours] Churches originally were one, and still are one; and the question is not whether those churches shall be united, but, shall they be separated? Possibly (not probably) the question will be asked, why were these churches allowed originally to become one? We answer, *God made them so*, and that without any plan or forethought on our part, and now we thank him for his blessing that he has made them one, and that he has blessed them because they are one.

“That misconceptions have got abroad in our Church concerning our views, we have abundant evidence from various private letters. They were written with the most kindly feelings towards us, but evidently under the impression that we find difficulty in organizing our churches according to the order of the Dutch Church. We have never found any difficulty of this kind. It is true that when we were called to the solemn duty of *commencing* a church organization in an empire containing one-third of the inhabitants of the globe, we gave the subject of church polity a more careful investigation than we had ever before



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given it. The result of this investigation was a cordial (and, as we think, intelligent) approval of the order and forms of our own Church. We have commenced our organization according to the order of the Dutch Church, and we expect to proceed, as fast as the providence and grace of God lead the way, after the same order; and we use the forms of our own Church. Our Presbyterian brethren unite with us in these things.

“But it is not strange that such misconceptions should be spread in the Church. They are the necessary result of publishing certain remarks made in Synod concerning our paper, without publishing the paper itself.

“In the Report of the Synod, Synod’s Board, Board of Foreign Missions, it is said: ‘It would have been well if the memorial had been placed, in a printed form, in the hands of the ministry. This they [the Missionaries] suggested, but the Board felt it was purely a Synodical matter—that they could not act in the case.’ With all due respect, and with the kindest feelings, we desire to make three remarks on this subject. *First.* We do not understand the principle on which the Board felt called upon to decide whether our letter should be published or not. It was not addressed to the Board, nor sent to the care of the Board. The opinion of members of the Board as *individuals* might have been asked, but we suppose that the Board in their official capacity had nothing to do with the paper. *Secondly.* Inasmuch as the paper emanated from us, if ‘it would have been well’ to have had it published, our suggestion was a sufficient warrant for its publication. The responsibility would have been ours. It had not yet become a Synodical matter. Afterwards it would have been a legitimate question for the Synod to decide whether they would entertain a paper coming before them in such a manner. This question might well have been left to General Synod. *Thirdly.* A short time previous to the writing of that paper, unless our memory is greatly at fault, a communication was received from the Arcot Mission (or Classis of Arcot), addressed to General Synod, which was thus published, according to the request of the Arcot brethren, and without the authority of Synod.

“Our position is a somewhat painful one. We desire to give offense to no one, and we do not wish to appear before the Church as disputants. We have no controversy with any. We have neither the time nor inclination for controversy. We are ‘doing a great work’ and cannot ‘come down.’ Yet, our duty to these Churches here, and to the Church at home, and to our Master, demands of us imperatively, that we state fully and frankly our views. We have the utmost confidence in our Church. We have proved this by endeavoring to get our views fully known. And we feel grateful for the spirit of kindness towards us manifested in the action of Synod, and also in the letters received from fathers and brethren in the ministry, notwithstanding

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their misconception of our views. But, we have also learned, how easily our views may be mistaken. In our paper, addressed to General Synod, when discussing the difficulties in the way of the Synod's jurisdiction over churches so far removed in time, distance, and circumstances, we remarked:—"Will written correspondence supply the place of representation? It would place our Classis under great disadvantages. There must usually be a delay of one or two years on every subject on which there is need of a decision by either Synod. If anything is not understood, or is misunderstood, in our communications, there will be no one to explain for us. Difficulties of this kind, from want of knowledge of the civil and social circumstances of this people may frequently occur. Could we have representatives from among us, they could usually be easily explained; but without this representation, they can only be explained by a long correspondence, which may cause years of delay.' The whole of this misunderstanding, which has arisen out of our first communication, and the length of time and the amount of correspondence which may yet be necessary, before we can see 'eye to eye,' give a striking illustration of the force of these remarks."

So far as the preamble and resolutions of the Synod of 1857 embody the doctrines, and what we supposed to be the policy of our Church, we heartily agreed with them. Of course we were pained to see that they implied, that, in organizing a Church at Amoy, we had not proceeded according to the order of our Church, or had found great difficulty in doing so. This was altogether a mistake, and was already producing evil results. We think there is another mistake in the preamble. It seems small, but because of this fact, and of its plausibility, it has done more, perhaps, than anything else in leading our Church into the false position which she seems now to occupy. Therefore, we should examine it with some care. It is the assumption, as a matter of course, that, "the converts at Amoy" are "an *integral part* of our Church," in this country. What made them so? Is it because they were converted through the instrumentality of the preaching of our Missionaries? This is a new doctrine, that a convert as a matter of course belongs to the Church of the preacher through whose instrumentality he has been led unto Christ. Perhaps it was the doctrine of some of the Corinthians, when they said, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos," &c., but it was not the doctrine of the Apostle who reproved them. Besides this, how shall we know which of them were converted through our instrumentality? The English Presbyterian brethren and ourselves have preached indiscriminately. Is it because they were baptized by our Missionaries? But many of them were baptized by the English Presbyterian brethren. They have baptized in our churches, and we in theirs. If they be an *integral part* of the Dutch Church in America, they are also an integral

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part of the Presbyterian Church in England. We, it is true, baptized a majority, say two-thirds. Are they, then, two-thirds of an integral part in America, and one-third of an integral part in England? No. The whole is a fallacy. Each individual Church there is an integral part of the whole of them. All together, they form an *integer*. They might by the act of our Church, and a *correlative act on their own part*, become an integral part of the Church in America? In a similar way they might become an integral part of the Church in England. They are now an *integer* of themselves. To make one portion of them an integral part of the Church in this country, and another portion an integral part of the Church in England, is to be guilty of causing a *violent rupture*.

We felt that the consequences were so momentous, that, before we should allow ourselves to be instrumental in thus (as we supposed) rending the “Body of Christ” at Amoy, we should make another effort to get the facts before the Church. As yet, we could not, if we would, carry out the resolution of Synod, and organize a Classis in connection with the Particular Synod of Albany, for, it was not till several years after, only very recently, that we had materials “enough to render the permanency of such an organization reasonably certain.” Therefore we wrote, as above, under date of December 23, 1857, and frequently wrote on the subject, as occasion offered.

Although our views were not made public (the Board judging that they had no right, or that it would not be for the good of the Church, and the interests of the Mission, to publish them), still we continued to prosecute our labors, in connection with the English Presbyterian brethren, receiving and giving mutual assistance. We were encouraged thus to continue our work: 1. Because of letters we received from home, some of them written by individuals who were able advocates of the decision of the Synod of 1857. They told us that it could not be otherwise than that a separation must come between us and the brethren of the English Presbyterian Church, but they would not have us inaugurate that separation. 2. (and more important) Because a marvelous blessing from on high was attending our labors. 3. (and most important) Because we knew this harmonious and mutual assistance to be entirely in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel.

In process of time a Church was organized at Chioh-be by the appointment of elders and deacons, then at Peh-chui-ia, then at Mapeng, and then the Church at Amoy was divided into two distinct organizations. Thus we had five organized churches, all of our order—the elders and deacons chosen and set apart according to our Forms, and all our Forms in use so far as there was yet occasion for them. Two of these churches were under the especial care of the English Presbyterians, and pecuniarily the work was sustained by funds collected in England and Scotland. The other three were under our especial care. The pecuniary expenses, beyond what the native churches could themselves raise, were borne by our Church at home.

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One of the essential principles of our Church polity is, that individual Churches are not independent of each other. They are members one of another. They are to be subject to each other. They are individual parts of a whole. Each part should be subject to the whole. Hence the necessity of higher judicatories. Thus we felt that these five churches had a right to an ecclesiastical organization, by which they might enjoy this essential principle of Presbyterianism. [I trust we shall hear no more of the charge that the Missionaries at Amoy are Congregationalists.] But we were afraid to give this organization to the native churches, lest we should give offense at home. We knew that we were misunderstood, and as yet could see no way to make the Church acquainted with our position and our views. If the Master should plainly call us to go forward, of course we must obey, and leave the results with Him.

These churches, having grown out of each other, were essentially one, and were as closely united together as it was possible for them to be, without a formal organization. The first formal meeting of all these churches was held at Chioh-be (a church under *our* care), in 1861. No ecclesiastical power was assumed. The next similar meeting was held in April, 1862, in the churches at Amoy. This was still more formal. It was composed of all the Missionaries of our own and of the English Presbyterian Church, and of one representative Elder from each of the five organized churches. This body may be called an incipient Classis. The only ecclesiastical power exercised, however, was connected with church discipline. Heretofore each individual Church, in connection with the Missionaries, had exercised the power of discipline, even to excommunication. Now certain cases of excommunication were referred by individual Consistories to, and acted on by, this body. Is it necessary to defend such acts? We felt that if each individual church could exercise such power, and the principles of our Presbyterianism be scriptural, then could a body, composed of the representatives of these churches, together with the Missionaries, with safety exercise such power. It was approaching as nearly as possible to the practice of our Church at home. We expected soon to be called to the performance of ecclesiastical acts more momentous. Already had two of the churches chosen two of the native members, who were now engaged in careful study, that in due time they might be set apart to the office of the Ministry of the Word, and ordained pastors of the churches respectively choosing them. But for reasons given above we would not go forward faster than we were plainly led by the hand of Providence. Therefore, while the Missionaries, in presence of this assembly, examined these pastors-elect, in reference to their qualifications for the office of Pastor, the body, as such, took no part in the examination.



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This incipient Classis met next in the autumn of the same year at Peh-chui-ia, a church under the care of the English Presbyterian brethren. At this meeting it became a real Classis, not fully developed as a Classis in a mature Church, but possessing the constituent elements and performing the functions of a Classis. Not only were there cases of discipline to act on, but a distinct application was made by one of the churches, that a pastor be ordained, and placed over them. The body decided, not only that they had the right, but that the plain call of the Great Head of the Church made it their duty to go forward in this matter. Preliminary steps were taken, other meetings of Classis were appointed and held, candidates were examined, calls presented and approved, until early in the present year the First and Second Churches at Amoy had each a native pastor ordained and installed over them. By the authority of this Classis, in the early part of this year, a third church was organized at Amoy according to our order. It is in the suburb called E-mng-kang, and is under the especial care of the English Presbyterian brethren, as mentioned in a previous part of this paper. So now there are six organized churches, all of the same order, and some others almost ready to be organized. If the Missionaries at Amoy have been guilty of any great mistake, it has been in this matter of forming such a Classis, and proceeding to the ordination and installation of native pastors, and the organization of new churches. Therefore, this subject demands a careful examination.

When we commenced the work among the heathen, it was found that the Constitution of our Church had made no provision for such work beyond the simple ordaining of men as Missionaries. We might preach the gospel, but no provision was made for receiving into church fellowship, administering the sacraments, electing and ordaining office-bearers, and all the incipient steps of the organization of the Church from among the heathen. The Constitution was made for the government of a Church already organized and matured, and in America; therefore, it is not strange that such things were not provided for. Our duty seemed very plain. We must fall back on the great principles of church government taught in the Word of God. We believed these principles to be set forth in the Constitution, and other standards of our Church.

When, through the instrumentality of the preached Word, men gave satisfactory evidence that they had experienced "the renewing of the Holy Ghost," without the advice of Consistories, by virtue of our office of Ministers of the Word, we administered to them the sacrament of baptism, thus admitting them into the church. Now the Lord's Supper must be administered to these believers, baptism to their infant children, and to new converts, and the discipline of God's house maintained. By virtue of that same office, and by virtue of the authority given by the Master to his Church, we felt that we had the right, aye, that it was our bounden duty, to perform such acts. We could not yet for a long time set apart a proper Consistory, but we must not therefore be "lords over God's heritage." In receiving new members, and in all acts of discipline, we must advise with the church already gathered.



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The church grew, and in due time a Consistory was called for; must the work stop, because the Constitution had made no provision? No. The little church had the right to choose men, and having chosen suitable men, it was our duty to ordain them. The authority we thus exercised was not usurped, but was implied in the commission we received from our Master through the Church. The same may be said of the authority of the brethren at Amoy, when, in connection with the representative elders of the various churches, they proceeded to the ordination of native pastors, and the organization of new churches. It was not necessary for the performance of every act to get a new commission from the Church. When the Church sent us out, the one commission contained all the authority necessary for the complete organization of the church. It is an absurdity to deny, on *constitutional grounds*, the right of the Missionaries to perform these last acts unless you deny their right to perform all their other acts except the simple preaching of the Gospel. Their acts were all *extra*, not *contra* constitutional. If their authority thus to act be justified in reference to the former acts, and denied in reference to the latter, the justification and denial must be on other grounds than the Constitution of our Church.

Will any one assert that the Classis thus formed at Amoy is not a Classis *de facto*? or that the native pastors ordained and installed by that body are not *scripturally* set apart to their offices, and that its other acts are null and void? If so, then, as yet, there are no organized churches—no Consistories—at Amoy, and there have been no scriptural baptisms, for all ecclesiastical acts performed there, have been performed on the same principles, and by the same authority. No one will have the hardihood to assert such a doctrine. It will be admitted that there is a Classis *de facto* at Amoy. Then it is competent to perform all the functions of a Classis. But it will not be contended that that Classis is a part of the Dutch Church in America. Yet it is essentially like a Classis in America, just so far as the present state of development of the Church at Amoy, and its Chinese character, render likeness possible. It is *Chinese*, not *American*. The organization of such a Church is what we always supposed required of us. We never imagined that we were sent to organize the *American* Dutch Church in China. If your Missionaries are allowed to proceed, and are not required to repel the English Presbyterian brethren from their united labors with us, there will be but one Church at Amoy of the Presbyterian order. With the continued blessing of God on such harmonious labor, it will be *the Church* of that region. It will be dear to both the Presbyterian Church in England, and to our Church in this land, and peculiarly dear to our Church in this country, because of its Dutch characteristics. Your Missionaries



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will still be your agents, responsible to the Church at home, as they have always been. The near relation to the Church in this land, which they have always held, they desire to retain. The late action of Synod contemplates the *formation of two denominations at Amoy of the Presbyterian order, giving our peculiarities to one-half instead of to the whole, thus producing rivalries, injuring the efficiency of the native churches, and making the relation of the Missionaries to the Church at home more distant, thus weakening your hold on them*, and all, as we think, without any remunerating advantages. But before we proceed to the discussion of this subject, a few other preliminaries demand some attention.

The English Presbyterians, as they are accustomed to speak of all the Classes of our Church in America, call this Classis at Amoy “a *Presbytery*.” Hence the question has been put to us with all sincerity and gravity, “Is it a *Classis*, or is it a *Presbytery*?” Some seem to be afraid that the Church we are forming will be half Dutch and half Presbyterian, and that it will soon be swallowed up by the Presbyterians! Are there any ministers, or elders, or intelligent members of the Dutch Church, who have yet to learn that a Classis is a Presbytery, and that the Dutch Church is a Presbyterian Church? Surely not. Why, then, such questions and suggestions? Can they be designed to prejudice the Church at home against the ecclesiastical body which has grown up at Amoy? We will not impute such a motive, and, therefore, I merely say that we are surprised at all such remarks. It is proper for the English Presbyterian brethren to speak of the *Presbytery* at Amoy. They never speak of it as an *English Presbytery*. They do not regard it as a part of the Church in England, but as a purely Chinese Church. They have liberality enough to assist in building up such a Church, even though it has some things peculiar to us, for it has all the essentials of their own order. Will it not seem to them that our Church is deficient in liberality, when they learn the decision of the last Synod?

In connection with this subject, it is proper to speak more particularly of the liberality of the English Presbyterian Church. When it is remembered that that Church is really a branch of the Free Church of Scotland, it will not be supposed that their liberality is the result of indifference to anything which they regard essential or important. Seldom has our world witnessed such sacrifice for the sake of principle as was exhibited by that Church, when she came out from the Establishment. Their liberality is a beautiful illustration of the Christian spirit. The course of their Missionaries at the first organization of a church at Amoy, and the approval thereof, have been already alluded to. In consequence of the recent formation of a Classis, the subject naturally came up again this year. It was laid before their Synod, which met a few weeks previous to ours. In the report of their Foreign Committee, which corresponds to our Board of Foreign Missions, the following language is used in reference to the Church at Amoy:



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“As all the elements of Presbyterian organization thus existed [each church having native elders], a further step was taken last April [1862], when a Presbytery was constituted at Amoy by mutual consent, consisting of all the American brethren and our own, as well as representative elders from the several congregations. Its name is neither the Greek ‘Presbytery’ employed in this country, nor is it the Latin ‘Classis,’ which has long been used in Holland; but it is ‘Tai Tiong-lo-hoey,’ or Great Meeting of Elders, genuine Chinese, and a hopeful earnest of the facility with which our representative and consultative system of polity will find its way among a sensible and self-governing people. Of course it is not intended that this Presbytery should in any way come between the Missionaries themselves and the Committee or Board by which the respective Missions are administered at home; but for the management of local matters, for disposing of questions which may arise in the several congregations, and in regard to which a session may require counsel or control; and for the very important purpose of exemplifying in the most legitimate way ecclesiastical unity, it is essential that Missionaries and native office-bearers should come together in some such capacity. The proceedings are conducted in Chinese, which is the only language understood by all the members of Court, and it is in Chinese that the minutes are kept. Three meetings have already been held. At the last, held in January, important business was transacted affecting the 1st and 2d Congregations of Amoy, both of which are under the immediate superintendence of the American Mission. Each congregation is desirous of the settlement of a stated pastor, and each has agreed to call a minister, the one congregation promising a stipend of \$14 a month, and the other \$13. The calls were sustained, and the Presbytery agreed to meet on February 21st, to proceed with the ‘trials’ of the brethren thus elected. As these proved satisfactory, Sabbath, the 29th of last month, was appointed as the day for their ordination.

“Dr. Peltz, the esteemed Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the R.P.D.C. of N.A., has apprised the Committee, that it is possible that a Presbytery of this composite character may not secure the approval of their Synod. In separating from the A.B.C.F.M., and in setting up a separate and ecclesiastically organized mission, that Synod was anxious to introduce into its different Mission fields a system of Church government which it believed to be scriptural, and adapted to all lands. Consequently, in these Mission fields it sought to form Classes or Presbyteries which should be connected with Provincial and General Synods in the same way as are the Classes on the American continent. And Dr. Peltz is apprehensive lest the General Synod in America should regard as a deviation from this plan the amalgamation in one Presbytery of their own agents with those of another Church.

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“We are hopeful, however, that on further consideration, our brethren in America may allow their Missionaries in China to continue the present arrangement, at least until such time as it is found that actual difficulties arise in the way of carrying it out. ‘Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;’ and there are few brethren towards whom we feel closer affinity than the members of that Church, which was represented of old by Gomarus and Witsius, by Voet and Marck, and Bernard de Moore, and whose Synod of Dort preceded in time, and pioneered in doctrine, our own Westminster Assembly. Like them, we love that Presbyterianism and that Calvinism which we hold in common, and we wish to carry them wherever we go; but we fear that it would not be doing justice to either, and that it might compromise that name which is above every other, if, on the shores of China, we were to unfurl a separate standard. We would, therefore, not only respectfully recommend to the Synod to allow its Missionaries to unite, Presbyterially as well as practically, with the brethren of the R.D.C.; but we would express the earnest hope that the Synod of the sister Church in America may find itself at liberty to extend to its Missionaries a similar freedom.”

These sentiments were *unanimously* adopted by the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church.

It seems perfectly reasonable that two Churches of Christ so nearly alike, in attempting to plant the Church of Christ in the same place in a heathen land, should strive, if possible, to form their converts into one organization. The existence of different Denominations in the same place in any Christian land, at the best, is only a necessary evil. God may bring some good out of this evil, but this is not a sufficient reason why we should create such divisions, for their own sake. Hence, the liberality of the English Presbyterian Church is so manifestly in accordance with the Christian spirit, that it might have attracted no especial notice from us. But the proceedings of our own Synod, by contrast, as it seems to us, have forced it out in bold relief. *They* were willing to support their Missionaries in laboring with ours, and building up a Chinese Church, not differing essentially from theirs, but with some characteristics peculiar to ours. *We*, though the Church thus organized has not only all the essentials but all the peculiarities of our own Church, still refuse such Christian co-operation, preferring to rend asunder the Church already formed, and organize a part of it a distinct Denomination, connected with the Church in America. I cannot yet believe that such is the sentiment of our Church. There must be some great misapprehension. But such is really the decision of the last Synod. Here is the language of the Committee which was adopted by the General Synod:

“Your Committee do not see any propriety in re-enacting the law of 1857 already quoted, because it has never been repealed, and remains therefore in full force and virtue. Nor, if the reasoning in this report be correct, would they have the law repealed, believing as they do, that the maintenance of the principle contained in it is essential to the success of our Missionary operations in foreign parts, and to the wholesome liberality of the Church at home.

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“The Committee are not prepared, however, to recommend that any violent or coercive resolutions should be adopted for the purpose of constraining our brethren in Amoy to a course of procedure which would rudely sever the brotherly ties that unite them with the Missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church. But a Christian discretion will enable them, on the receipt of the decision of the present Synod in this matter, now under consideration, to take such initial steps as are necessary to the speedy formation of a classis. Much must be left to their discretion, prudence, and judgment. But of the wish and expectation of this Synod to have their action conform, as soon as may be, to the resolutions of 1857, your Committee think the brethren at Amoy should be distinctly informed. They therefore offer the following:

“1. *Resolved*, that the General Synod, having adopted and tested its plan of conducting Foreign Missions, can see no reason for abolishing it, but, on the contrary, believe it to be adapted to the promotion of the best interests of the Foreign Missionary Churches, and of the denomination supporting them.

“2. That the Board of Foreign Missions be, and hereby is, instructed to send to our Missionaries a copy or copies of this report, as containing the well-considered deliverance of the Synod respecting their present relations and future duty.

“3. That the Secretary of the Foreign Board be, and hereby is, directed to send to the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, of London, Convener of the Presbyterian Committee, a copy of this Report, with a copy of the action of 1857, and that he inform him by letter of the wishes and expectations of the Synod respecting the ecclesiastical relations which this body desires its churches in Amoy to sustain to it.”

The above is only an extract from the close of the Report of the Committee, and contains the result at which they arrived. In reference to it we would make three remarks. (1). It (Res. 3) seems rather a cavalier answer to the fraternal wish of the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church, as expressed in their action. (2.) The action of Synod is made to rest (Res. 1) on the fact that Synod had “tested” this “plan of conducting Foreign Missions.” If this be so, and the plan had been found by experiment unobjectionable, the argument is not without force. But how and where has this test been applied, and found so satisfactory? Our Church has three Missions among the heathen: one in India, one in China, and one in Japan. Has it been tested in Japan? No. They have not yet a single *native* Church. Has it been tested in China? If so, the Missionaries were not aware of it. The test applied there has been of an opposite character, and has been wonderfully successful. The test has only been applied in India, and has only *begun* to be applied even there. There, as yet, there is but one native pastor. Their Classis is more American than Indian. We must wait until they



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have a native Classis, before the test can be pronounced at all satisfactory. True, that Mission has been very successful since they formed what is called a Classis in connection with the Synod in America. But has it been more successful than the Mission at Amoy? Compare the amount of labor and the money expended on the two Missions, and then look at the results, and thus decide about the tests. It is in no spirit of vainglory that we call for such a comparison. Studiously have we avoided it, and the responsibility must rest on those who compel us to it. (3.) No consideration is had for the feelings, wishes, or opinions of the native Churches. Some consideration is shown for the feelings of the English Presbyterian Missionaries. This is as it ought to be. Yet it is a matter of *comparatively* little importance. *The inalienable rights of the native churches, their relation to each other, their absolute unity—things of the utmost consequence*—are not at all regarded, are entirely ignored!

It would have occupied too much space to have quoted the whole of the Report of the Committee. The preceding part of it occupies nearly six pages of the Minutes of Synod. Yet we may not pass that part over in silence, for, while with much of its contents we have no dispute, it contains some grave mistakes of fact, and, as we think, some very grave errors of doctrine. It grieves me to say thus much, and also to feel compelled to add the following strictures. But, in order to discuss this subject, duty required the careful examination of the whole of the Report, and, finding in it such errors, the clear statement of them. It might be easy, perhaps, to account for the fact, that mistakes, in a report, unprinted, and of such length, should escape the notice of Synod, but an attempt to apologize for that body might give occasion to infer more disrespect than simply to point out the mistakes.

After some introductory remarks, chiefly concerning the difficulty of their task, the Committee “begin with the assertion of principles.” These they make three in number. The sum of the first principle is that *a Church, by divine arrangement, has government*. The essential idea of their second principle, so far as we can understand it, is, that *the Dutch Church has a clearly defined government*. The Missionaries at Amoy, as well as the ministers in this country, admit both these principles fully. But they do not affect the question in dispute. Not so with the third principle of the Committee. Lest I might be supposed to misrepresent, I will quote their own language: “No government can, voluntarily, relinquish its powers, and abnegate its authority without thereby inviting disorder, disquietude, and, in the end, its destruction.” Is this, indeed, as the Committee assert, one of the “admitted principles” of our Church? one of the “convictions in the mind of our Church, hardly separable in idea from its very existence?” one of the “old



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truths maintained through blood and flame?” If the doctrine be true, the Church in Holland had no right to relinquish its authority over the Church in America. If this doctrine be a “principle” of our Church, never, *never* could your Missionaries consent to be instrumental in bringing the Church in China, which now has liberty in Christ Jesus, into such *perpetual* bondage. Once bring the Chinese churches under the authority of the Church in America, and it matters not how great may be their growth, and how many centuries may pass away, the Church in America can never relinquish her authority over them! But this is not an “admitted principle” of our Church. The Dutch Church is *protestant*, not *papal*. Instead of the principle being one of the “*old truths* maintained through blood and flame” by her, it is an *old error of the Papacy*, for rejecting which she poured out her blood so freely, and would do the same to-day. Yet in the Report of the Committee this error of Romanism, guilty of the blood of thousands upon thousands of the saints of the Most High, is made to lie at the basis of the action of the last Synod!

The Committee next proceed to the statement of “certain historic facts.” As with the “admitted principles,” so with the “historic facts.” With some of them we have no dispute. But when they come to describe the present condition and relations of the churches at Amoy, their language, to say the least, is very unfortunate. “These six Churches,” say they, “have grown up together under such an interchange and community of labor on the part of our own Missionaries, and on the part of those belonging to the English Presbyterian Church, that all are said to have a two-fold ecclesiastical relation—one with England—one with America, and still a third, and economical and domestic relation among themselves, which is covered and controlled by what is styled ‘The Great Presbyterial or Classical Council of Amoy.’”

We do not know by whom these native Churches “are said” to have a two-fold or three-fold *ecclesiastical* relation. It is not so said by the Missionaries. They contend that the native churches are neither English, nor American, but *Chinese* churches. They are ecclesiastically related to each other, and ought to remain so. But the effort is now made to sever this ecclesiastical relation to each other, and bring half of them into ecclesiastical relationship with the Church in America, making them the Protestant Reformed Dutch Church of *North America, in China!* At present the native churches have an intimate, but not an *ecclesiastical*, relation to both the Church in England and America.

From the above mistaken statement the Committee have drawn out three “*particulars*” which they seem to think especially worthy of note.

“1st. That while this Chinese Presbyterial or Classical Council is itself an autonomy—having the right to ordain ministers, exercise discipline, and do whatever else a ‘self-regulating Classis’ or Presbytery can or may do, still the whole in England is claimed to be the Presbytery of Amoy, and to this Synod it is reported as the Classis of Amoy.”



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How dreadful! English Presbyterians call the body at Amoy a *Presbytery*, and American Dutchmen call it a *Classis*! If this language is also meant to imply that the *Classis* at Amoy is usurping authority, it is answered in other parts of this paper.

The next “particular” of the Committee is:

“2d. The Missionaries, while they are members of this Grand Presbyterial or Classical Council, exercising full ministerial functions in it, are, at the same time, members either of Classes in America, or of Presbyteries in Great Britain.”

The meaning of this second “particular” is, that the Missionaries have a two-fold ecclesiastical relation. Is there anything contrary to Scripture doctrine, or to Presbyterian principles, or to common sense, that ecclesiastical relations should correspond to fact?—that the Missionaries should have some sort of an ecclesiastical relation, both to the Church at home and to the Church in China? They have a peculiar relationship to both these Churches. Why forget or ignore the fact that they are *Evangelists* and *not Pastors*? Why object to an ecclesiastical relationship exactly corresponding to, and required by, their office and position? The two parts of this relationship do not contradict each other. They are altogether correlative. The Missionaries are still agents of the Church which sent them out. Their ecclesiastical relation to it should be direct, that they may be controlled by it, independent of any intermediate body. The Church at home cannot afford to cut off her Missionaries from this immediate relationship so long as they remain her agents. This does not conflict with, but requires some sort of a corresponding relationship to the Churches planted and growing up through their instrumentality. Their relationship to those Churches must have reference especially to local matters, for the proper organization, and control, and development of the native churches, not at all to be controlled by them. When they cease to be agents of the Church at home, and become the proper *pastors* of the native churches, then will be the proper time to put themselves under the control of the native churches, instead of the Church at home. We must not confound *evangelization* with *colonization*. Does any one imagine that Paul and Barnabas, and Timothy and Titus, or any of them (for they were not all apostles), had connection with the Church which sent them out, *only* through the churches and ecclesiastical bodies organized by them? or that they were in any sense under the control of those bodies?

The next and last “particular” of the Committee is “3d. That while the Churches, three at least, are organized under and according to the Constitution of our Church, it is, nevertheless, claimed that the members of said Churches are not more members of the Reformed Dutch Church here, than they are members of the Presbyterian Church of England.”



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The words of this third “particular” are almost (not quite) accurate. Yet they appear to us like special pleading. They would have been strictly correct if they had run as follows: “These Churches are *all* (why say, ‘*three at least*’?) organized according to (not ‘*under*’—see pages 28-30) the Constitution of our Church. Therefore it is claimed that they form a Church of our order in China, but that the members thereof are neither members of the Reformed Dutch Church here, nor members of the Presbyterian Church in England.” Such are the facts. It would have been better if the Committee had so stated them. The effort is now made to divide these churches, and make three of them a part of the Dutch Church in America.

There is one more paragraph in the report of the Committee which demands notice. It is:

“Your Committee can easily understand how reluctantly our Missionaries may have been, or may still be, to disturb, or alter, or modify the relations of the Churches at Amoy. But they conceive it to be their duty to say that feeling should never be allowed to take the place of conscience, nor to discharge its functions; and so long as our Missionaries claim to be subordinate to the authority of General Synod, they should allow this body to assume the responsibility of its chosen and deliberate policy.”

It seems to us the Committee are not much more fortunate on the subject of casuistry, than on Church “government” and “historic facts.” The Missionaries do “claim to be subordinate to the authority of General Synod,” but they also claim to be subordinate to the *Supreme authority*. Now suppose—we shall not be charged with insubordination for the mere supposition—suppose the Synod, through some misapprehension, should direct us to pursue a course, which, after the most mature reflection, we felt to be injurious to the cause of Christ, and consequently contrary to His will—will the fact of the Synod “assuming the responsibility” clear our skirts? Who is the Lord of conscience? General Synod? It seems to us, while the Committee conceive it to be their duty to deliver to the Missionaries at Amoy a lecture on the importance of giving heed to conscience, in the very same sentence they direct us to hold conscience in abeyance. But where did the Committee learn that their Missionaries were influenced by *feelings* and not by *conscience*, and that too in reference to the laying of the foundation of the Church of Christ in such an empire as that of China; that they felt called upon in this solemn manner to deliver such a lecture? Would such a reflection have been cast on any other body of ministers in our Church? or is it supposed that men who give themselves to the work of preaching the gospel in heathen lands are less under the influence of conscience than those who remain at home? *They conceived it to be their duty!* Was it?



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So much for the Report of the Committee of Synod. The decision of Synod has been given, as stated above. The important question now is, what will be the result of this decision on the Church at Amoy? This question, however, cannot yet be answered with certainty, for we cannot yet even guess what course the Missionaries there, when they learn the decision of Synod, will feel it their duty to pursue. There may be more, but I can now only think of three ways open before them. (1.) *To ask the Board to recall them.* They firmly believe that their course of proceeding, in organizing the Church at Amoy, is not only in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, but also with the principles of our Church. To be the instruments, then, of dividing the Church, which God has gathered by their hands, may be to sin against their consciences. They may therefore ask the Board to appoint other agents to carry out the decision of Synod. This would not be insubordination, but perfect subordination both to the authority of Synod and also to that authority which all Protestant Christians acknowledge to be *supreme*. This, I suppose, would be the most natural course for the brethren to take, except for one consideration; that is, their love for the Churches gathered by them, or under their care, and their responsibility in reference to the spiritual welfare of those disciples of the Lord. It would be the severest trial they have ever been called on to endure to be recalled from their work. Therefore (2.) *They may delay their action*, making one more effort to get their views published, hoping that the Church will yet change her decision, and not require of them to engage in a proceeding which they think will be so injurious to the cause of Christ; but, on the contrary, will approve of the course heretofore adopted by them as altogether scriptural, and the true doctrine of our Church. Or (3.) They may *possibly*, after mature reflection, think the *least evil* will be *to carry out the decision of Synod*, although that decision be altogether contrary to their own judgment. Then they will take three of the six churches, which now are all of our order, and organize these three a separate Denomination and an integral part of the Church in America. This is the course which at home will be generally expected of them.

Now let us suppose that they will adopt this third course, and then let us look calmly at its results—at the supposed or real advantages thereof, and the supposed or real evils thereof.

We first look at the *Advantages*.



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1. The most important is, or is supposed to be, that there will thus be higher courts of jurisdiction to which appeals may be made, and by which orthodoxy and good order may be the better secured to the Church at Amoy. Such advantages, if they can be thus secured, we would by no means underrate. There sometimes are cases of appeal for which we need the highest court practicable—the collective wisdom of the Church so far as it can be obtained; and the preservation of orthodoxy and good order is of the first importance. Now let us see whether the plan proposed will secure these advantages. Let us suppose that one of the brethren feels himself aggrieved by the decision of the Classis of Amoy, and he appeals to the Particular Synod of Albany, and thence to the General Synod. He will not be denied the right to such appeal. But, in order that the appeal may be properly prosecuted and disposed of, the appellant and the representative of Classis should be present in these higher courts. Can this be secured? Is the waste of time, of a year or more, nothing? and where shall the thousands of dollars of necessary expense come from? Now suppose this appellant to be a Chinese brother. He also has rights. But how, on this plan, can he possibly obtain them? Suppose (which of itself is an absurdity) that the money be raised for him, and he is permitted to stand on the floor of Synod. He cannot speak, read, or write a word of English. Not a member of Synod can speak, read, or write a word of his language, except it be the brother prosecuting him. I ask, is it possible for him thus to obtain justice? But, waiving all these disadvantages, the only points on which there is the least probability that an appeal of a Chinese brother would come up before the higher courts, are points on which these higher courts would not be qualified to decide. They would doubtless grow out of the peculiar customs and laws of the Chinese—points on which the Missionary, after he has been on the ground a dozen years, often feels unwilling to decide, and takes the opinion of the native elders in preference to his own. Is it right to impose a yoke like this on that little Church which God is gathering by your instrumentality in that far-off land of China? But it is said, that these cases of appeal (because of impracticability) will very rarely or never happen. Be it so; then this supposed advantage will seldom or never occur, and if it should occur, it would prove a disadvantage. The highest practical court of appeal for the native churches can be secured only on the plan for which the Missionaries contend. Why must we deprive the native Christians of the benefit of the collective wisdom of all the churches of like doctrine and order among them?

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As regards orthodoxy and good order, it is incumbent on the Church at home to use her utmost endeavors to secure these. Doubtless this was the great design of Synod, both in the action of 1857 and in the action of 1863. But will the plan of Synod give us any greater security for these things? How can they be secured? We answer, under God, *only* through your Missionaries. The greater your hold on your Missionaries, the better security for the churches under their care. The plan of Synod would place your Missionaries *ecclesiastically* almost beyond your control. They must be dismissed from the various Classes in this country, and, together with the native churches under their care, form themselves into a Chinese Classis. Either they will have a controlling influence over the native portion of this Classis or they will not. If they have, then your only way to discipline them will be to discipline their Classis. It would be a new doctrine in our Church, to make the Board of Foreign Missions an *ecclesiastical* medium between the Synod and one of its Classes, or to enforce discipline over the ministry by the *money rod*. The Classis, *as such*, must be disciplined by the direct act of Synod. Or, suppose the Missionaries do not have such controlling influence over the native members of Classis, for the native members will outnumber, and, unless the action of Synod (as we greatly fear) seriously retard the work at Amoy, will very soon greatly outnumber the Missionaries. What then? Your Missionaries are under the ecclesiastical control of the native converts. Their doctrines and morals are to be decided on by a court composed mainly of recent converts from heathenism. The only way to bring them before the higher courts in this country, is through this native court, as we have already seen, almost an impossibility. Is it not plain that the Church at home will not thus have a moiety of the control over her Missionaries she now has? Is this the way to keep the Church at Amoy sound and pure? It seems to be supposed by some that the Missionaries desire to be separated from the control of the Church at home. This is altogether a mistake, and another result of withholding their views from the public. They have no such desire. The contrary is altogether the fact. They do not desire to be placed under the control of the native Chinese churches. They did not derive their authority from those churches, they are not sustained by them, and they are in no sense their agents, but they derive their authority through, are sustained by, and are altogether the agents of the Church in this country; therefore the Church at home has and should retain control over them. They are amenable to the Church at home, through their several Classes. These are the only courts qualified to take cognizance of their doctrines and morals. They desire to remain in this relation. We think they have a right to demand this, until such time as they become agents of the Church in China, instead of the Church in America.



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Suppose by some means suspicion should arise at home concerning the orthodoxy or morality of one or more of your Missionaries. On the plan proposed, what can the Church do with them? May the Board of Missions, on mere report or suspicion, recall them without giving them a proper trial? Can the Board try them? No. It is not an ecclesiastical court. Will the Church be satisfied with the decision of a court, a majority of whose members have recently been converted from heathenism through the instrumentality of these very Missionaries? But continue the plan of the Missionaries and all will be simple. If any of the Missionaries give occasion for suspicion, let them be tried by their proper Classes in this country. This is all that the Church at home can do *ecclesiastically* towards keeping the Church pure in China. Whether the proposed *nominal* union be consummated or not, the only hold you will have on the Chinese churches will be through your Missionaries. If they will not receive the instructions, and listen to the advice of your Missionaries and of the Synod through them, you would not expect them to obey the injunctions of Synod. Your only other resort will be to withhold from them help. Can you not do the same now?

But in all this discussion, I fear, we lose sight too much of our dependence on the Head of the Church to keep His Church pure. Sure I am that the Church in China cannot be kept pure by legislation on this, the opposite side of the globe. But we expect Christ to reign over, and the Holy Spirit to be given to the churches, and the proper ecclesiastical bodies formed of them in China as well as in this land. Why not? Such are the promises of God. The way to secure these things is by prayer, and the preaching of the pure gospel, not by legislation. Let the Church be careful in her selection of Missionaries. Send only such as she has confidence in—men of God, sound in the faith, apt to teach—and then trust them, or recall them. Don't attempt to control them contrary to their judgment. Strange if this, which is so much insisted on as the policy of our Church, be right, that she cannot get a single man, of all she sends out to China, to think so. Can it be that the Missionary work is so subversive of right reason, or of correct judgment, or of conscientiousness, that all become perverted by engaging in it?

2. Another supposed advantage is the effect it will have in enlisting the sympathies of the Church in behalf of the Mission at Amoy. It is said, tell the Church that we have a flourishing Classis at Amoy, a part of ourselves, connected with General Synod, just like all the other Classes of our Church, the effect will be wonderful in enlisting sympathy, money, and men in behalf of that Mission; otherwise the opposite evil must be apprehended. If these things be so, they are indeed of grave importance. The Mission in China cannot live without the sympathy of the Church at home. But are these things so?



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It seems to us that the supposition takes for granted that our Church in its Missionary work is influenced by a desire for self-glory, or self-gratification; or, at least, that she is not a Church of liberal views—that she is not at all to be compared, in this respect, with the English Presbyterian Church, or the Free Church of Scotland. Allusion has already been made to the liberality of the English Presbyterian Church. I may now also remark that a large amount of the funds for carrying on the work at Amoy is raised in Scotland from members of the Free Church. They never had any idea that the churches gathered in China were to be a part of their own Church. They do not even ask that they be a part of their sister Church in England. They only ask that they shall be sound in the faith and hold to the essentials of Presbyterianism, even though they have some characteristics peculiar to the Dutch and other Reformed Churches. These Presbyterian brethren in England and Scotland are not only ready to support their own Missionaries in their work of building up the churches under their especial care, but they stand ready to assist the Missionaries of our Church in building up the churches under our especial care. Of their frequent offers to assist us, when they feared we should be in want of funds, our Board can bear testimony. We are not yet willing to believe that our people are a people of narrow views in a matter like this. It is contrary to our history in time past. It is contrary to the facts of the present day. It is contrary to all my observation among our churches. Our people do not first ask whether it be building *ourselves* up, before they sympathize with a benevolent object. We believe the contrary is the exact truth. It requires a liberal policy to call forth liberal views and action. As regards the enlisting of men, look at the facts. Every man who has gone out from among you, to engage in this Missionary work, begs of you not to adopt a narrow policy. So in regard to obtaining of funds. Usually, the men who are most liberal in giving are most liberal in feeling. This must be so in the very nature of things. The way to alienate the sympathies of the Church from the Mission at Amoy is to divide the Church there by a sectarian policy; and the way to enlist her sympathies is to continue the former plan, and let the work go forward with the Divine blessing as in days past. The people will be more encouraged, and praise God more heartily, when you tell them of six organized churches like our own, and many others growing up all around, than they will if you tell them of only three churches, and only a few out-stations, under our care. They will not object to hear that the English Presbyterian brethren are laboring with us, and organizing churches so nearly like our own. However powerful the motive addressed to the desire to build up our own Church, there are motives infinitely more powerful. Such are the motives to be depended on in endeavoring to elevate the standard of liberality among our people.



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Let brethren in the Ministry try the experiment, and tell their people of the wonders of God's grace:—that he has led his servants from our own Church in this land, and from the Presbyterian Church in Great Britain, in their work of evangelizing the heathen, and laying the foundation of the Church of Christ, to lay aside all national animosities, and rise above all denominational prejudices and jealousies—that he has given to the Presbyterian Church in England, and the sister Church in Scotland, a spirit of catholicity and liberality as exhibited in the previous part of this paper—and that, as a consequence, he is causing his Church to grow up in the region of Amoy in beautiful proportions, all the congregations under their care and ours also manifesting the same spirit of catholicity and liberality, submitting to each other according to the Divine command, working together with the utmost harmony, and, as a consequence, with wonderful effectiveness. Can you account for such things except by the energy of the Spirit of God? Surely it is not the spirit of the world, neither is it the spirit of the devil. Try the experiment, then, and see whether the wonders of God's grace will alienate the hearts of his people. Your Missionaries have no doubt—we can hardly understand how any who examine the subject can doubt—we are sure that no one can personally behold the work and yet doubt, that the wonderful blessing of God, which has accompanied the work at Amoy, has been both the cause and the result of this harmonious labor on the part of your Missionaries, and those from the sister Churches in England and Scotland. Therefore, we feel assured that the simple recital of the grace of God thus manifested, must influence the hearts of his people most powerfully, and therefore it is that we beseech the Church not to interfere with, and hinder the work of God. May we not refer, without being charged with disrespect, to the Synod of Jerusalem as a proper example for our General Synod? Peter says, “Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear?” And then the decree, which the Synod sent to the Churches, runs thus: “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these *necessary* things.” The ecclesiastical “power which the Lord hath given” to his Church is “to *edification*, and not to *destruction*.”

If the Missionaries be allowed to proceed in building up a Church, like our own, simply with reference to the evangelization of China, doubtless brethren in the ministry, and other influential men, could take occasion therefrom to prejudice the Churches against our work. They could do this, if they were so disposed, without any such occasion. But will they do it? We cannot believe that they will. They love the cause of Christ too well, and desire to see the world converted to God too ardently, to permit them to throw any obstacles in the way of our



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work, even though that work be not carried forward in the manner which they consider altogether the best. If we are right, these brethren will soon see that we are right, and however powerful the motive to be addressed to the desire of extending our own Church, they will find infinitely more powerful motives to be addressed to a more noble desire of the Christian heart. If our people have not yet learned, they should be taught to engage in the work of evangelizing the world, not for the sake of our Church in America, but for the sake of Christ and His Church, and when the Church thus built up is like our own, they should be fully satisfied. We believe they will be satisfied with this.

3. The only other supposed advantage I can now think of, is the advantage of carrying out the *policy* of our Church. This, in itself considered, might be regarded worthy of but little attention. Cannot—ought not—the Church change her policy if wrong, or if a better can be adopted? Surely her laws are not like those of the Medes and Persians. But the argument has been used with so much earnestness and perseverance, both in the Reports of the Committees and in the discussions in Synod, that it demands some investigation. Instead of the course pursued by the Missionaries being, as it is contended, contrary to, it is the true policy of our Church—the policy in existence long before the decision of 1857. If the course now required of them be the present policy of our Church, it is a *mistaken* policy, contrary to the very genius of our institutions, and ought to be corrected. It is so contrary to our time-honored Constitution that either it or the Constitution must be sacrificed. In order to save the policy it was found necessary during the past year to amend the Constitution by a clause so sweeping, that if the circumstances of a Missionary Classis require it, “*all the ordinary requirements of the Constitution*” may be dispensed with by the General Synod. Can it be that a policy which requires *such constitutional changes* can be the old and proper policy of our Church? But if the policy be continued we are not yet done with changes. The very *name* of our Church must be changed. It now is “The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church *in North America*.” We must expunge the words “*in North America*,” or must add India, China, and Japan, and every other country where the Church may undertake Missionary work. We know it has been said of this policy, “it is our *settled, irreversible* policy.” Is every thing then to be regarded as *unsettled* and *changeable* but this policy of the Church? We answer, No. The Church may change her name, if she please, as she has changed her Constitution. Or she may change her policy. But there are certain fundamental principles of Church government which she may not change. Hence, even yet, the principles for which the Missionaries contend must remain the true policy of our Church, for they lie at the very



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foundation of Presbyterian order. A full discussion of this subject will come up most naturally when we discuss the *evils* of the course now required of us. I will now allude to only one fact. The Board of Foreign Missions was formed on this principle. If the Classes at Arcot and Amoy are to be considered *integral* parts of the Church in this country, related to General Synod like the Classes in this country, then the Missionaries at those stations properly should come under the Board of Domestic Missions. Suppose, according to the new plan, the Missionaries form themselves into the kind of Classis now required of them; what will be the relation of the Classis of Amoy to the Board of Foreign Missions? Is the Classis, in evangelizing the heathen around, to operate through the Board, or the Board through the Classis? The Classis at Amoy decide on a certain course of ecclesiastical procedure, or evangelistic labor, and the Board decides on another course; how is such a matter to be settled? Will it be said, there is no danger of such difficulty? The Classis and Board will both be composed of men with infirmities. Ask the Board whether there have not already been incipient difficulties, in the supposed clashing of the powers of the Board and the powers of the Classis of Arcot. But the Classis of Arcot as yet is little more than an *American Missionary Classis*. What will be the difficulties when it becomes an *Indian Classis*? But we are told, "keep the Mission and Classis distinct." Is the Mission, then, to attend to all the evangelistic work, and the Classis to do nothing? Or are there to be two distinct evangelistic policies carried on at Amoy, the one by the Mission, and the other by the Classis? Or is the Classis first to come over to the Synod, and so get to the Board in order to carry on the work around? Instead of this new plan being the settled policy of our Church, we believe it to be a solecism. When a Church is established among the heathen after our order, then is the true policy of our Church carried out. Let the present relations of the Missionaries to the Board and to their several Classes remain, and there will be no occasion for the clashing of the powers of the Board with those of any ecclesiastical body.

So much for the *advantages*. They are really disadvantages, leading to *serious evils*, which of themselves should be sufficient to deter the Church from inaugurating the policy proposed, or, if it be already inaugurated, to lead her to retrace her steps, and adopt a better and a consistent policy.

Now let us consider the real or supposed *Evils* (in addition to the above) of carrying out the decision of Synod.

1. It will not be for the credit of our Church. She now has a name, with other Churches, for putting forth efforts to evangelize the world. Shall she mar this good name and acquire one for sectarianism, by putting forth efforts to extend *herself*, not her doctrines and order;—they are not sectarian, and her Missionaries esteem them as highly as do their brethren at home—but *herself*, even at the cost of dividing churches which the grace of God has made one?



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The decision of the last Synod may not be the result of sectarianism among the people of our Church. We do not think it is. But it will be difficult to convince our Presbyterian brethren and others, that it is not so. By way of illustration I will suppose a case. A. is engaged in a very excellent work. B. comes to him, and the following dialogue ensues:

B. "Friend A., I am glad to see you engaged in so excellent a work. I also have concluded to engage in it. I should be glad to work with you. You know the proverbs, 'Union is strength,' and 'Two are better than one.'"

A. "Yes, yes, friend B, I know these proverbs and believe them as thoroughly as you do. But I have a few peculiarities about my way of working. They are not many, and they are not essential, but I think they are useful, and wish to work according to them. Therefore, I prefer working alone."

B. "Yes, friend A., we all have our peculiarities, and, if they be not carried too far, they may all be made useful. I have been making inquiries about yours, and I am glad to find they are not nearly so many, or so different from mine, as you seem to suppose, and as I once supposed. The fact is, I rather like some of them, and, though I may not esteem them all so highly as you do, still I am willing to conform to them; for I am fully persuaded that, in work of this kind, two working together can do vastly more than two working separately, and the work will be much better done. Besides this, the social intercourse will be delightful."

A. "I appreciate, friend B., your politeness, and am well aware that all you say about the greater efficiency and excellence of united work, and the delights of social intercourse is perfectly true. But—but—well, I prefer to work alone."

2. It will be destroying a *real* unity for the sake of creating one, which, at the best, can be only *nominal*, and hence will really be a violation of Presbyterian order. It seems strange to us that it should be constantly asserted that we are striving to create a formal union between two bodies which are essentially distinct. There is nothing of the kind. There are six organized churches at Amoy. They are all Dutch (i.e. Reformed), and they are all Presbyterian, for the Dutch Churches are all Presbyterian. But they are Chinese, not American, nor English, nor Scotch. If these churches are not *one*, then it is impossible for two or more individual churches to be one. If schism in a Church be a sin, then the separation of this Church will be a sin, for it will be an actual schism. You can make nothing more nor less of it. If you say that schism is only an evil, then the separation of this Church will, at least, be an evil.



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Perhaps it will be thought that *schism* is too hard a term whereby to designate the separation of the Church at Amoy. Never mind the word, then, but let us look at the facts. The proper Classis of Amoy, composed of all the churches of like order, and of the Missionaries, has proceeded, according to the order of our Church, to ordain and install native pastors, and to perform a few other necessary ecclesiastical acts. These pastors are now called on to separate from, and break up that body, through which they received their office! The opinions and wishes of these native pastors, as well of the native Classis, and the native churches, are all ignored! Are such things right? Are these the doctrines or policy of the Dutch Church? We are told that we need say nothing to the native churches on the subject. Is this right? Is the Dutch Church a hierarchy? Does the General Synod claim authority to order the division in such a manner of a Classis of the Church of Christ without the consent of that Classis? "*What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.*"

In consequence of fallen humanity, there are evils which we call necessary evils. Such is the case of different Denominations of Christians in the same region of territory. They differ in sentiment on important (or supposed to be important) subjects, and because of this difference in sentiment, they can work together in greater harmony, and with greater efficiency, by being formed into distinct organizations. Such, however, is not the case of the six churches at Amoy, and others growing up under their care and the care of your own and the English Presbyterian Missionaries. Even when Churches agree in doctrine and order, it is sometimes better, and sometimes necessary, in consequence of geographical separation or national distinctions, to form distinct organizations. It is better, or necessary, that the Churches in Holland, and America, and South Africa, be ecclesiastically distinct. We do not call this an evil, for all the advantages of ecclesiastical courts and control are better thus secured. But suppose a case. There are, say, thirty Dutch churches in the city of New York. Now, suppose there were no others of the same order throughout this whole land: instead of allowing these churches to remain one organic whole—forming Classes and Synods, as the growth and convenience may allow and direct—it is proposed to take one-half of these churches, form them into a distinct organization, thus depriving them of ecclesiastical relations to the other half, and attach them to an ecclesiastical body in China—a nation of different customs and different language. How should we designate such an act? The first part would be schism, and the last part would be folly. The only difference between such a procedure and that required of us is, that the churches at Amoy have been gathered partly by our instrumentality, and are dependent partly on us for instruction. If our



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Presbyterial order be scriptural, all these churches at Amoy, growing out of each other, are bound to associate together, ecclesiastically. It is their duty to submit to each other. They would also be bound to submit to the Church of the same order in England and America, and every other country throughout the world, if it were possible and convenient. But such relation is not convenient, or possible. Therefore, we must choose that which is possible and most convenient. It is possible, and it is convenient, that they associate together. It is not possible that they all be subject to the Church in England, and, at the same time, to the Church in America. It is not convenient that they all be subject to either of these Churches. We do not think it is convenient that one-half of them be subject to either of these Churches. Besides the sin, or evil, of schism, they never can be properly represented in the higher ecclesiastical bodies of either of these Churches. They never can have an Elder present (I speak now of their connection with the Church in America, for this is the subject before us). They never can have a full representation of ministers. Only very seldom can they have even one minister present. He usually will only be one who is ill, and consequently not a proper representative. The native element, *i.e.*, *the chief element* of the Church can never be represented at all. The representation, at the best, will only be a representation of your Missionaries, not at all of the Chinese Church. Therefore, we assert that such a union would not be *real*, not even *apparent*, only *nominal*. In striving after it, we are pursuing a chimera, destroying a substance for the sake of a shadow.

But it is offered as an objection to our views, that the Presbyterian Church (O.S.) has Presbyteries and Synods in India and China. Yes, they have three Presbyteries and a Synod in India, and have had for twenty years. But even yet there is not so much of a native element in their whole Synod as there is already in the little Church in the region of Amoy. As an ecclesiastical body, it is not *Indian* in its characteristics—it is *American*. So with all their Presbyteries in Siam and China, with the exception, perhaps, of the Presbytery at Ningpo. They are *American* Presbyteries, not native in their character.[2]

[Footnote 2: The following statistics are from the Minutes of General Assembly, 1863.

Synod of Northern India—Was organized in 1841. Is composed of three Presbyteries. Now has 19 ministers (only one of these is a *native pastor*); 9 churches; 246 communicants. (How many of these are natives not reported.)

Presbytery of Canton—Has 4 ministers; no native pastor; 1 church; 12 communicants. (How many of these are natives not reported.) *Presbytery of Ningpo*—Has 8 ministers; no native pastor; 2 churches; 111 native members.



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Presbytery of Siam—Has 6 ministers; no native pastor; 1 church; 8 communicants. (How many of these are native members not reported.)

Presbytery of West Africa—Has 9 ministers; no native pastor; 6 churches; 191 communicants (probably all natives.)

Are these ecclesiastical bodies respectively Indian, Chinese, and African in their character? or are they all *essentially American*? Yet these are the bodies to which the Committee of General Synod of 1857 referred when they said, “As to the difficulties suggested” [by the Missionaries at Amoy] “respecting the delays of carrying out a system of appellate jurisdiction covering America and China, it is enough to say, that the Presbyterian Church (O.S.) finds no insuperable difficulties in carrying into operation her system, which comprehends Presbyteries and Synods in India as well as here.” Why should there be many *insuperable* difficulties so long as these bodies remain *American Missionary bodies*, instead of being *native ecclesiastical bodies*? Practically they do not need representation in the Church at home more than our Missions need representatives in the Board of Missions. In the aggregate of all the above-mentioned ecclesiastical missionary bodies, there is *but one native pastor*, and this, as might be expected, so far as we are aware, furnished the only case in which difficulty has occurred. Doubtless in the instance referred to, the native pastor was in error, and, as he found some *insuperable difficulty* in getting his case before the General Assembly, a similar effort is not likely soon to be made.]

So is the Classis of Arcot appealed to. Such appeals put us in a somewhat painful position. As with the Presbyterian bodies just mentioned, so with the Classis of Arcot. We have no rivalry with the brethren there, and do not wish to say a word that looks like stricture on their policy. We do not utter a word of this kind, except in self-defense. We rejoice in all their successes. But the time will come, if the blessing of God continues to follow their labors, when they will be compelled to adopt our principles. The Missionaries at Arcot are not properly *pastors* of the native churches. They exercise the pastoral office only temporarily, until native pastors are raised up. Their relation to the Synods in this country is not like that of the other Classes of our Church. They never have had and never will have a proper representation in these higher courts. They have never had a native elder present. They never have even a partial representation of ministers, except under the afflictive dispensations of Providence. For several years past they would have been without any representation at all, but for the fact of one of their number being in this country whose ill health forbids his return to that field of labor. It is by being unfitted to be a member of the Classis that he becomes able to be a representative of the Classis in the Synod!



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At the present time, because of the still American character of their body, they may feel no serious inconvenience. If our position had been like theirs, occupying the ground at Amoy alone, possibly we should have done as they have. We should have understood well enough that the connection of the native Church with the Church at home could only be *nominal*. But if our Church desired this, so long as it did not injure the native Church, we probably should have made no objections.

But we are told that it is not desired that this connection with the Church in America should be perpetual. It will last only until the Church at Amoy has sufficient development to stand alone. Then, of course, our Church will consent to the separation. (A very different doctrine, by the way, from the “*assertion*” of the committee of Synod that the Church can not “voluntarily relinquish its powers.”) After that, the churches at Amoy which have been under our care, and those which have been under the care of the English Presbyterians, may again unite in one Denomination, if they see fit. This sounds pretty well. But look at it. First separate the churches long enough to engender rivalries and allow prejudices to grow up, and then attempt to unite them, and what will be the result? Unless they have a more liberal spirit than is usual in the churches in this land, instead of making one denomination out of two, we shall have three. But who shall be the judge when the proper time has arrived to liberate the Church in China, if the opinions of those on the ground, and of the native churches, are all to be ignored?

3. It will injure the efficiency of the Church at Amoy. Besides the objection—which the heathen will thus, as readily as the irreligious in this country, be able to urge against Christianity—furnished by the increase of Denominations, it will deprive the churches of the benefit of the united wisdom and strength of the whole of them for self-cultivation and for Christian enterprise, and will introduce a spirit of jealous rivalry among them. We know it is said that there need be no such result, and that the native churches may remain just as united in spirit after the organization of two Denominations as before. Such a sentiment takes for granted, either that ecclesiastical organization has in fact no efficiency (such is not the doctrine of our Church), or that the Chinese churches have arrived at a far higher state of sanctification than the churches have attained to in this land. Do not different Denominations exhibit jealous rivalry in this land? Why, your Missionaries are already frequently charged with being too liberal towards their English Presbyterian brethren in giving to them members and churches which, it is said, properly belong to us. Is Chinese human nature different from American?



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In consequence of such division, the native Churches will not be so able to support the Gospel among themselves. Look at the condition of our western towns in this respect. Why strive to entail like evils on our Missionary churches? Their strength will be weakened for evangelistic effort. Their Missionary efforts is one of the most striking and praiseworthy characteristics of the Amoy churches. How will they be shorn of their strength by division and necessary rivalry! Besides this, if the connection with the Church at home be anything more than nominal, our churches should, in part at least, work through the Church at home. No? Then why form the connection?

4. Instead of the Dutch Church being *the* Presbyterian Church at Amoy, it will only be a small Church, bearing about the same proportion to the other Christian Churches there, that it does to the other Churches in this land. Why is not the Dutch Church the principal Presbyterian body in this land? Unless we are mistaken in regard to its excellency of order, it has all the adaptedness, and it was here first. Do you wish a similar result in China?

* * * * *

That it may be seen whether the Missionaries of Amoy have asked of our Church to “surrender the Constitution, the policy, the interests of our Church,” “nay, even their own welfare, and that of the Mission they are so tenderly attached to”—whether what they ask for “is flatly in the face of our Constitution and order”—whether the “Synod has no right to form, or to authorize any such self-regulating, ecclesiastical body, or to consent that any Ministers of our Church should hold seats in such a body”—whether, “if we do it, we transcend the most liberal construction which has ever been known to be given to the powers of the General Synod”—whether, by granting the request of the Missionaries, “we violate our own order, our fundamental principles, the polity to which we are bound by our profession, by our subscription, by every tie which can bind religious and honorable, men”—I will append the resolution which was offered by me in the General Synod as a substitute for those offered by the Committee. If it called for declamation like the above, well. These are the words:

Resolved, That the Synod learn, with gratitude to God, of the great progress of the work of the Lord at Amoy, and in the region around, so that already we hear of six organized churches with their Consistories, and others growing up, not yet organized; two native Pastors, who were to have been ordained on the 29th of March last, and the whole under the care of a Classis composed of the Missionaries of our Church and the English Presbyterian Church, and representative Elders of the several churches. It calls for our hearty gratitude to the Great Head of the Church, that the Missionaries of different Churches, and different countries, have been enabled, through Divine grace,



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to work together in such harmony. It is also gratifying to us that these Churches and this Classis have been organized according to the polity of our Church. Inasmuch as the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church has approved of the course of their Missionaries in uniting with ours in the organization of the Church at Amoy, after our order, therefore, this Synod would direct its Board of Foreign Missions to allow their Missionaries to continue their present relations with the Missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church, and the churches under their several care, so long as the present harmony shall continue, and no departure shall be made from the doctrines and essential polity of our Church, or until this Synod shall otherwise direct.

Some, after reading the foregoing discussion, will be ready to say to us: "Your views are in the main correct. It would have been better if Synod had decided otherwise, but the decision has been made, and we must put up with it." We answer, Not so. We must obey Synod, but may not the Church change or improve her decisions? Here is one of the good things we hope to see come out of this mistake of the Church. Jesus rules, and he is ordering all things for the welfare of his Church and the advancement of his cause. Sometimes, the better to accomplish this end, he permits the Church to make mistakes. When we failed in former days to get our views made public, it gave us no anxiety, for we believed the doctrine that Jesus reigns. So we now feel, notwithstanding this mistake. The Master will overrule it for good. We do not certainly know how, but we can imagine one way. By means of this mistake the matter may be brought before our Church, and before other Churches, more clearly than it would otherwise have been for many years to come, and in consequence of this we expect, in due time, that our Church, instead of coming up merely to the standard of liberality for which we have been contending, will rise far above anything we have asked for or even imagined, and other Churches will also raise their standard higher. Hereafter we expect to contend for still higher principles. This is the doctrine: Let all the branches of the great Presbyterian family in the same region in any heathen country, which are sound in the faith, organize themselves, *if convenient*, into one organic whole, allowing liberty to the different parts in things non-essential. Let those who adopt Dutch customs, as at Amoy, continue, if they see fit, their peculiarities, and those who adopt other Presbyterian customs, as at Ningpo and other places, continue their peculiarities, and yet all unite as one Church. This subject does not simply relate to the interests of the Church at Amoy. It relates to the interests of all the Missionary work of all the Churches of the Presbyterian order in all parts of the world. Oh that our Church might take the lead in this catholicity of spirit—instead of falling back in the opposite direction—that no one may take

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her crown! But if she do not, then we trust that some other of the sacramental hosts will take the lead and receive too the honor, for it is for the glory of the great Captain of our salvation, and for the interests of His kingdom. We need the united strength of all these branches of Zion for the great work, which the Master has set before us, in calling on us to evangelize the world. In expecting to obtain this union, will it be said, that we are looking for a chimera? It ought to be so, ought it not? Then it is no chimera. It may take time for the churches to come up to this standard, but within a few years past we have seen tendencies to union among different branches of the Presbyterian family in Australia, in Canada, in our own country, and in England and Scotland. In many places these tendencies are stronger now than they have ever before been since the days of the Reformation. True, human nature is still compassed with infirmities even in the Church of Christ. But the day of the world's regeneration is approaching, and as it approaches nearer to us, doubtless the different branches of the Presbyterian family will approach still nearer to each other. God hasten the time, and keep us also from doing anything to retard, but everything to help it forward, and to his name be the praise forever. Amen.

Appendix A.

Further to illustrate the unity of the Churches under the care of the two Missions, I will transcribe from the *Reports* of the Amoy Mission, for the years 1861 and 1862.

From the Report for 1861. Dated Feb. 24. 1862.

Our work is so interwoven with that of the Missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church, that we cannot give a full report of the state of our Churches and out-stations without including in it a partial report of some of their stations. We have, therefore, thought it best, both on this account, and because the Churches gathered by us and by them are really one, to give statistics of both Missions with brief remarks. These, besides simplifying the matter, will enable the Church at home to become better acquainted with the real progress of the cause of Christ in this region.

Missionaries and Assistant Missionaries of the Reformed Dutch Church at Amoy, at the close of the year 1861. [Here follow their names, and remarks concerning them.]

Missionaries and Assistant Missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church at the close of the year 1861. [Here follow their names, and remarks concerning them.]

Tabular View of the Churches and Mission Stations under the care of the Reformed Dutch Church, and English Presbyterian Church, in Amoy and vicinity.



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 |Native | | |No. of |Rec'd
 Churches and |helpers | | |Church |during
 Mission |sustained | | |Members, |the
 Stations. |by Mission.|Elders.|Deacons.|Jan. 1, 1861.|year.

 First Church at Amoy | 3 | 4 | 4 | 102 | 24
 Second " " | 2 | 4 | 4 | 78 | 13
 Church at Chioh-be | 2 | 4 | 4 | 47 | 5
 " Peh-chui-ia | 3 | 2 | .. | 25 | 3
 " Ma-peng | 2 | 2 | 3 | 33 | 6
 Station at An-hai | 3 | .. | .. | 7 | 23
 " Khang-khau| 1 |The Church members at this Station
 | are reckoned to the Church at Ma-peng.
 " Kang-thau | 1 |The Church members at this Station
 | are reckoned to the First Church at
 | Amoy.
 " E-mng-kang| 1 |The Church members at this Station
 | are reckoned to the First Church at
 | Amoy.
 " Chiang-chiu| 2 |

 | | |No. of | |
 Churches and | | |Church |Under
 Mission | | |Members, |suspension
 Stations. |Dead.|Excommunicated.|Dec. 31, 1861.|Dec., 1861.

 First Church at Amoy | 2 | 2 | 122 | 4
 Second " " | 1 | 1 | 89 | 1
 Church at Chioh-be | 1 | .. | 51 | 3
 " Peh-chui-ia | 1 | .. | 27 | 1
 " Ma-peng | 1 | 1 | 37 | 3
 Station at An-hai | 1 | .. | 29 | ...
 " Khang-khau|The Church members at this Station are reckoned
 |to the Church at Ma-peng.



" Kang-thau |The Church members at this Station are reckoned
|to the First Church at Amoy.

" E-mng-kang|The Church members at this Station are reckoned
|to the First Church at Amoy.

" Chiang-chiu|

|Infants |Colporteurs|
Churches and |baptized |sustained |
Mission |during |by Native |Benevolent
Stations. |the year.|Church. |Contributions

First Church at Amoy | 13 | 1 } |
Second " " | 11 | 1 } | \$471.33
Church at Chioh-be | 5 | 1 | 200.29
" Peh-chui-ia | 3 | ... |



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" Ma-peng | 3 | ... |
 Station at An-hai | 4 | ... |
 " Khang-khau|The Church members at this Station are reckoned
 |to the Church at Ma-peng.
 " Kang-thau |The Church members at this Station are reckoned
 |to the First Church at Amoy.
 " E-mng-kang|The Church members at this Station are reckoned
 |to the First Church at Amoy.
 " Chiang-chiu|

[Then come remarks about *native helpers*, not included in the above; *Schools* sustained by each of the Missions, and by the native Churches; *Theological Class*; Students sustained by each Mission.]

Remarks on the above Tabular View.

The two Churches at Amoy, and the one at Chioh-be are under the care of the Missionaries of the Reformed Dutch Church. * * * * *

The Churches at Peh-chui-ia and Ma-peng, are under the care of the Missionaries of the English Presbyterian Church. * * * * *

The Congregation at An-hai is under the care of the English Presbyterian Missionaries. It has not yet been organized into a Church. It is so far removed from Amoy that it cannot conveniently be placed under the supervision of either of the Consistories. * * * * *
 * *

Khang-khau is a station under the care of the English Presbyterian Mission. * * * * *

Kang-thau is under the care of the Reformed Dutch Mission.

E-mng-kang is a suburb of Amoy. The Congregation worshiping there belongs, mostly, to the First Church at Amoy. The Station is under the care of the English Presbyterian Mission. * * * * *

Chiang-chiu is a large city, some twelve miles or more beyond Chioh-be, and about thirty-five miles from Amoy. In times past, several efforts have been made to establish a Station at Chiang-chiu, but always without success, until during the past year. At the close of the year there had not yet been any baptisms at that Station. Since the



beginning of this year, there have been several. The Church members are reckoned to the Church at Chioh-be, and are under the oversight of the Chioh-be Consistory. Both Missions work as one at Chiang-chiu. Each Mission is to furnish half the expense. To simplify the work, it was thought best that one Mission be responsible for the control of the Station, and direct the work. At present this is the Mission of the Reformed Dutch Church. If the work be prospered, it is proposed to form two Stations, one under the care of each Mission.

[The remaining part of the Report, having no bearing on the subject before us, need not be quoted.]

From the Report for 1862.

[It will be sufficient merely to transcribe the *Tabular View*, and add one or two explanatory remarks.]

Churches and Mission Stations under the care of the Reformed Dutch and English Presbyterian Missions at Amoy, December 31, 1862.



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 | | |No. of |Died |
 | | |Members, |during|Excommunicated
 | | |Dec. 31, |the |during
 |Elders.|Deacons.|1861. |year. |the year.

 First Church at Amoy | 4 | 4 | 122 | 6 | 2
 Second " " | 4 | 4 | 89 | ... | ...
 Church at Chioh-be | 4 | 4 | 51 | 1 | ...
 " " Peh-chui-ia| 2 | 2 | 27 | ... | ...
 " " Ma-peng | 1 | 3 | 37 | 2 | ...
 Station at An-hai | .. | .. | 29 | 2 | ...
 " " Khang-thau|The members at this Station are reckoned to the
 |First Church, Amoy.
 " " Kang-khau |The members at this Station are reckoned to the
 |Church at Ma-peng.
 " " E-mng-kang|The members at this Station are reckoned to the
 |First Church, Amoy.
 " " Chiang-chiu|The members at this Station are reckoned to the
 |Church at Chioh-be.
 " " Go-chhng |
 " " Te-soa |
 " " Khi-be |

 |No. of |Under |Infant |Helpers
 |Members, |suspension |baptisms |supported by
 |Dec. 31, |Dec. 31, |during |Native
 |1862. |1862. |the year. |Church.

 First Church at Amoy | 139 | 4 | 17 | 1
 Second " " | 100 | 3 | 2 | 1
 Church at Chioh-be | 70 | 2 | 9 | 1
 " " Peh-chui-ia| 30 | ... | ... | ...
 " " Ma-peng | 38 | ... | ... | ...
 Station at An-hai | 30 | ... | ... | ...



" " Khang-thau|The members at this Station are reckoned to the
|First Church, Amoy.

" " Kang-khau |The members at this Station are reckoned to the
|Church at Ma-peng.

" " E-mng-kang|The members at this Station are reckoned to the
|First Church, Amoy.

" " Chiang-chiu|The members at this Station are reckoned to the
|Church at Chioh-be.

" " Go-chhng |

" " Te-soa |

" " Khi-be |

[Of the three new Stations, Go-chhng and Te-soa, are under the care of the Reformed Dutch Mission, Khi-be under the care of the English Presbyterian Mission. The other Churches and Stations as in previous Report.]



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The Board of Foreign Missions, being simply the organ of Synod, felt bound in their Report to eliminate, as far as possible, all the Presbyterian elements from the above Reports of the Mission. By so doing, we think that they, *undesignedly* of course, keep our Church in ignorance, not only of the absolute unity of the Churches in the region of Amoy, but also of the real progress of the cause of Christ and of the Church of our order there. Among the members set down to our churches are those who belong to stations under the care of the English Presbyterian Mission, as is shown by the Tabular Views. The Church at home, not aware of this fact, gives to their Mission credit which does not belong to them; and then, when, in the progress of the work, new churches are organized at these stations, and these members are set off to them, because they belong there, the Dutch Mission is charged with deficiency of denominational feeling, in giving to the English Presbyterians that which, "by all rules of Christian courtesy and harmonious Missionary action," belongs to the Dutch Church. Is it well that we should be disputing among ourselves concerning who shall have that credit which all belongs to Christ? I know it has been asked, with disapprobation, by very high authority (not, indeed, by the Board) concerning the unity of the Churches at Amoy—"how it came to exist at all." In answer to such questions, let us consider one case, that of the Station, now Church, at E-mng-kang. It is near enough to the First Church, at Amoy, to be under its supervision. Doubtless, we might have said to our Presbyterian brethren, In gathering a church, we are willing to labor with you in preaching the Gospel, for no one will censure us for that, and we admit that, by all principles of our Church order, it would be altogether proper that the converts gathered in at E-mng-kang should be received and watched over by the First Church, at Amoy; but, by allowing this, there will be danger of unity between the Christians at E-mng-kang and Amoy ("that they all may be one"), which will be a violation of the important and radical distinction existing between them, because "some are supported by our funds, some by the funds of the English Presbyterians;" and then, when it becomes necessary to divide these Churches, for where there is such a radical distinction, "a division will necessarily come at some period, and the longer it is delayed, the more trying and sorrowful it will be," it will be found that the Church at Amoy can never "relinquish its powers and abnegate its authority" over the Church at E-mng-kang—therefore, rather than incur such risks of unity, we had better violate our principles of Church order at the commencement, and not allow the native Elders any responsibility in receiving and watching over the Church members. We might have acted on such principles, but shall we be *censured* for not doing it?

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Let it be distinctly understood, that I do not publish the above Reports with such remarks with any design of throwing blame on the Board of Foreign Missions. The members of it, and the Missionaries, have had no feelings towards each other but such as are altogether pleasant. Perhaps the Board, in view of all the circumstances, has simply performed its duty. I add this Appendix only to illustrate the unity of the churches at Amoy, and show that the Missionaries have acted according to the doctrines of God's Word and the fundamental principles of our Church order.

Appendix B.

In the *Christian Intelligencer* of June 18, 1863, in the Report of the Proceedings of General Synod of Thursday, June 11, the last day of the session, appeared the following paragraphs:

“AMOY MISSION.

“Rev. Dr. Porter arose and said that he was about to utter what to himself was the gladdest and happiest word he had been permitted to speak during the Synodical sessions, delightful as they all had been. He was informed by his beloved brother Talmage, that by permission of Synod, he would like to express briefly his content, in the main, with the action which the Synod had taken respecting the Amoy Mission. It is of the Lord. He has melted all hearts together as one, for his own work and honor. We see eye to eye, and Zion may lift up her voice in thanksgiving.” Rev. J.V.N. Talmage said he wished to express his gratitude to the fathers and brethren for all their kindness to himself and the Missionaries at Amoy. If the Synod has not arrived at the very best decision, he hoped it is the best under the circumstances. He felt no desire to disobey the Synod, nor will the Missionaries at Amoy. If we cannot organize a Classis at once, we will do the best we can. He had been defeated, and he had no qualms of conscience in submitting to the decision that had been reached.”

I was willing to allow the previous, and, as I considered, very partial, report of the proceedings of Synod to pass unnoticed, but felt that I had no right to allow errors, such as are contained in the above two paragraphs, to remain uncorrected. Therefore I addressed to the editor the following note:

“*To the Christian Intelligencer.*

“Mr. Editor:

“In looking over the report of General Synod, as given in the last number of the *Intelligencer*, I find a very grave mistake in reference to the position taken by me near the close of the session. A similar mistake appears in the report made to the *New York Observer*. [3]

[Footnote 3: I addressed to the editors of the *Observer* a card, correcting the mistake which had appeared in their paper, and they published it.]



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“When, in the order of business on Thursday morning, there seemed a suitable opportunity for me to address the Synod, I was sitting near Dr. Porter, and remarked to him that I wished to make such address. He said that he desired to speak first. He arose and addressed the Synod, in substance, as is reported. I was altogether surprised, for I had given him no authority to speak for me; neither had I expressed to him or any other man the sentiments he attributed to me. I felt that his speech was altogether unfortunate, for it seemed almost to demand of me a restatement of my views. But I felt, also, that it would be improper, then, to occupy the time of Synod with any further discussion, and contented myself with merely taking exception to Dr. Porter’s statement, saying that I could not use the language he had just used.” I also stated that although the Synod had not arrived at the best decision, yet *perhaps* it was the best under all the circumstances. As these circumstances seem to be entirely misunderstood by some, I may now explain them. I had remarked in the previous debate, and still firmly believe, that the decision of Synod, if it be fully carried out, would only be disastrous in its results, as far as the churches at Amoy were concerned. But there was another disaster to be apprehended. If the Synod had allowed the work of God to proceed at Amoy, as it had always been carried forward, and with such marvelous blessings from on high, for so many years past, it was feared that some of the members of Synod would use their influence in the Church against that Mission, to such an extent as possibly to cut off the resources of the mission. Such were the circumstances to which I alluded, and I was well understood, at least by some of the members of Synod. It seemed necessary to choose between two evils. My own opinion was, and is, that the Synod had chosen the greater evil, still I was willing to yield ‘the benefit of the doubt,’ and therefore remarked that *perhaps* (I used the word ‘perhaps’) the decision was the best under the circumstances.” I did express for myself, and as I believed, in accordance with the views of the Missionaries at Amoy, that we did not wish, and never had wished to disobey the injunctions of Synod. Besides this, we were under obligations to do what was best for the churches under our care. If we were not allowed to do that which is absolutely best, we should do the best we could.” I also expressed my gratitude that the Synod had manifested so much patience and Christian courtesy towards myself and the Mission, for with one or two exceptions, not an unkind word had been uttered.” The closing sentence of my remarks being somewhat playful, might have been omitted from the report, but if thought worthy of publication, it should have been given correctly. I know that I can give it now with accuracy, almost *verbatim*.



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'I have fought hard, and have been beaten; I could wish I had been able to fight better, but I did my best, and consequently have no qualms of conscience on the subject.' Does that mean that we had no qualms of conscience about 'submitting to the decision that had been reached?' No. It means that I was not responsible for the evils of that decision. "It will, I think, serve the cause of truth, Mr. Editor, if you will be so kind as to publish this card in your next issue. If I was so unfortunate in the use of language as not to express sentiments similar to the above, I desire now to express them." "Allow me also to ask whether you will open the columns of your paper for a full statement of the views of the Amoy Mission on the subject of the ecclesiastical relations of the churches under their care? I find that there is still altogether a mistaken impression among our churches on this subject. Our people who sustain the Mission have a right to know the condition of that Mission. From the report in the last *Intelligencer*, they will get no light on that subject, but will get the impression that some great mistake has been committed by the Missionaries at Amoy. *Allowing* this to be the case, the Missionaries have a right to be heard before the churches. Let the churches understand the matter, and decide concerning the mistake. The Missionaries have been desirous for years to get their views made public, but have not yet succeeded.

"Very truly, yours, &c,
"J.V.N. TALMAGE."
June 19, 1863.

Instead of finding my note inserted in the next number of the *Intelligencer* I found the following:

"REV. MR. TALMAGE'S LETTER.

"We have received from the Rev. J.V.N. Talmage, a communication respecting our report of his remarks at the close of the session of the General Synod, accompanied with a request that he be permitted to appeal through these columns to the Churches in support of his position. The communication is long, and perhaps we can give the substance of it briefly.

"1st. He wishes to correct the statement of Rev. Dr. Porter. And this he shall do in his own words, *viz.*:

"I felt that his speech was altogether unfortunate, for it seemed almost to demand of me the restatement of my views. But I felt, also, that it would be improper then to occupy the time of Synod with any further discussion, and contented myself with merely taking exception to Dr. Porter's statements, saying that I could not use the language he had just used. I also stated that, although the Synod had not arrived at the best decision, yet perhaps it was the best, under all the circumstances.'



“So far Mr. Talmage, in disclaiming agreement with the statement made by Dr. Porter.

“We can, on this point, only express regret that there should have been either seeming or real difference. But as Brother Talmage confesses that our report correctly represents him as having said, that

“Although the Synod had not arrived at the best decision, yet perhaps it was the best, under all the circumstances,’

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“We therefore suppose that the report of verbal differences—if the spirit of the remarks be anything—between him and the gentleman to whom he refers, cannot be accounted as very serious.

“2d. As it respects the opening of these columns to a fresh discussion of the matter relating to the Amoy Churches before Synod, we have simply to say that we dare not give consent, for the following reasons: The Synod is the legislative body for the Church. The documents and statements respecting the Amoy Churches were full and thorough in the information imparted. Four sessions and more of the Synod were occupied with a careful preparatory hearing and final adjudication of the matter, and it is not the duty of the *Christian Intelligencer* to allow itself to be used as the agent of dissension among the Churches, and of opposition to the constituted authority of the Synod.”

Whether my views were *misrepresented*, and whether I was charged with seeking a different object from that for which I had asked—I had not asked that the columns of the paper be opened for a fresh “*discussion* of the matter” which had been “*before Synod*,” but “for a *full statement* of the views of the Amoy Mission,” because of “*mistaken impressions*” in “*our Churches*”—the Church will be able to decide as accurately as myself. But I wish to say this much. Your Missionaries do not consider that by becoming Missionaries they lose their rights as *men*, and *Ministers of the Dutch Church*. They have the right to expect that, when away from home, their reputation will be protected. When mistaken statements concerning their views get abroad in the Church, there should be, and we believe there is, a responsible party whose duty it is to correct such statements. At any rate, a paper which professes to be the organ of the Dutch Church, has no right to refuse to the Missionaries themselves the privilege of correcting mistaken statements of *their own views* and *their own language*, that appear in its columns. The Editor doubtless is responsible for what appears in his paper. He may refuse to publish improper articles, but he may not garble and misrepresent them without incurring reproof. The expense of publishing in pamphlet form corrections of mistakes which appear in the columns of a newspaper, is too heavy a tax to impose on any of the Ministry of the Church, especially on your Missionaries; and, even then, the corrections can be read by only a small portion of those who read the misstatements.