

you to admit, in your letter to Hodges, to be violations of the constitution in order to save it.

The other Presbyterian Assembly at Cincinnati, in 1862, not only endorsed in full your war policy, but also gave utterance to their special "*loathing for some in the loyal States, in Congress and high in civil life, and in the more ordinary walks of business, who never utter a manly thought for the government, but they follow it with two or three smooth apocryphal Southern insurrectionists.*" This same body, in 1863, under the lead of Dr. Barnes, in a paper, characterized, as utterances from that quarter commonly are, by its singularly nebulous verbosity, undertook to settle the construction of the constitution—and that to the contrary of Madison's and Jefferson's theories—and not only enunciated, but formally sent to your Excellency a declaration that must have startled you with its absurdity and suberviency—"That the present administration is the government to which alone, under God, all citizens of this nation owe allegiance."

The Reformed Presbyterian Synod, in 1862, denounced "Congress, the executive and the judiciary, in that for many years they have perverted the constitution to crush the rights of man," and declared that "the compromise with slavery in the constitution is the rock on which we have split." The Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church resolved "that it is the duty of all Christians to support the President." While the American Baptist Missionary Association declared it your duty to put down the *unprovoked* rebellion, as though they were competent to determine the issues involved in all the previous sectional troubles; and resolved that slavery, as the cause and origin of the war, must be exterminated."

The course of Bishop Potter and the Pennsylvania Episcopal Clergy in getting up a solemn semi-official protest against the learned and venerable Bishop Hopkins in form, but evidently designed in fact to serve the purposes of the Republican party in a gubernatorial election; the lending himself, with all the influence of his holy office, as a political emissary to Europe by Bishop McIlvaine and the political deliverance of the Episcopal General Convention, embodying in germ most of the utterances already cited, are facts too well known to you and the public to need more than this general reference.

The Conferences of the Methodist Church, as might naturally be anticipated from the comparative indifference of that body touching the *jure divino* autonomy of the church as a spiritual commonwealth, have transcended all others in the extent and absurdity of their political deliverances. The Erie conference solemnly reviews and approves the enactment by Congress of the excision of slavery from the territories, of the sweeping confiscation acts, &c., as all constitutional and just. The blood-thirsty and blasphemous speeches in the New York conference in 1863, and its political deliverance, commending a vigor-

ous prosecution of the war, vouching for the financial policy of the government, denouncing copperheads, &c. &c., are somewhat notorious. The plous jollification of the general conference at Philadelphia over the capture of Richmond, their resolves in favor of your war policy and emancipation policy are also, doubtless, familiar to you. And the innumerable incidental acts of these religious bodies, the utterances of their pulpits, presses and theological chairs have all been in perfect accord with these official declarations. Thus, for instance, the general assembly at Newark refused to vote a *fast* but a *thanksgiving*, instead, over the slaughter of Spottsylvania and the Wilderness, on the ground, as stated by the mover of the substitute, that a *fast*, indicating reverses and despondency, would injuriously affect Union States funds in Europe, and distress the cabinet at Washington. Church courts made official pilgrimages to "Loyal League rooms," gave assurances of the financial stability of the treasury department; lectured the people for voting against political candidates who had every mental and moral qualification. Pulpits everywhere resounded with discussions of the party issues of the day, with calls for recruits and money to buy substitutes, and with denunciations of all who desired either the war to be conducted according to civilized usage, or negotiations for peace. Theological professors sent forth ponderous articles laden with the absurdest theories of the constitution and of the proper conduct of the war, but filled with the spirit of blood thirst and violence to rouse and enkindle the fierce passions of the people. The religious journals labored to apologize for and defend the outrages of the army that disgraced our name all over the civilized world; reiterated for the masses all the absurd dogmas of the church courts—defended, or refused to protest against even the most inhuman and despotic acts of the government's agents against their own brethren, and imposed upon the confidence of the people in their religious leaders, by collecting from the secular press and circulating the most enormous of all the lies of the telegraph to fire the Northern heart. Ecclesiastical history presents no more striking illustration of how the church, which has the assurance of Christ's presence to teach all wisdom, while acting within her sphere, is punished for transcending her sphere and wickedly perverting Christ's authority and ordinances to secular ends, by being given over to folly and blindness of mind, than is to be found in the amazing absurdities promulgated by church courts, preachers and learned professors in their utterances touching the political and military questions of the day. The political leaders who vainly imagine an endorsement of their theories and measures by these learned politico-evangelical courts and doctors, of especial value, may find to their sorrow that under the great law of Christ's spiritual kingdom ordaining punishment in kind, the political and military wisdom of such men is of all follies the greatest.