

Mr. Leach is
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5th of December,
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way of palliating the violation of his oath that bound him to his country's service, should say that he had never been able to give any time to the consideration of the matters involved in his oath? Would he not be justly considered as thereby affording manifest evidence of his inconsiderateness and irreverence in taking the oath, as well as insincerity of purpose at the time of taking it?

Both gentlemen are charged with levity, in regard to the obligation of their vows and engagements, as well as rashness and inconsiderateness in casting off the same;—and both of these charges rest on nearly the same kind of evidence, namely, that they had taken neither sufficient time nor pains to inform their minds before coming to such an important decision.

With regard to the first,—the obligation of the solemn vows and engagements they had made was certainly most weighty,—and it was to be expected that if they had felt the weight of that obligation pressing very heavily upon them, they would not have been in such a hurry to cast it off after they began to entertain doubts. The time occupied in coming to a conclusion, in the case of both, was, according to their own showing, exceedingly short;—in the case of Mr. Leach, not more than a few weeks at the most,—and in the case of Mr. Ritchie, not longer than two days, for he acknowledged to the Committee of the Presbytery that two days before he gave in his letter of resignation he considered himself a regularly ordained Minister of Christ. This fact shows most conclusively that the obligation was but slightly and feebly felt. The disclaimers which have been put in with regard to levity may pass for what they are worth; but the facts of the case speak a language not to be misunderstood or gainsayed. The men who could administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on Sabbath, in apparently good faith, as Ministers of the Presbyterian Church, and on the Tuesday following could cast all their vows and engagements to the winds, most assuredly did not feel their obligation very strongly or heavily. Such conduct was not treating their solemn vows and engagements with even common decency.

The rashness and inconsiderateness with which they cast off their vows and engagements is made so plain by the narration of facts in the second part of the libels, that it is scarcely possible for words to make it plainer. It is proved, in the case of both, by an induction of particulars, that during the last three or four months preceding their offering their resignations, they displayed no kind of hesitancy or doubt as to their powers to perform any ministerial act whatever, and that they exercised all the functions of the ministry, without exception, up to the second day previously to their writing their letters of resignation, when they were both employed in administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper