

learned, that the Lecture was to be an anti-slavery Lecture; and though Mr. Burns was by no means popular, there was an unusual turn out to hear him. He approached the subject indirectly, by alluding to various kinds of slavery, and dwelt with his utmost severity upon the horrors of West India slavery. He described it just as American Abolitionists describe American slavery, and treated the whole matter in such a manner as to give offence to four-fifths of his audience. He spoke in very contemptuous language of the morality, &c., of the oldest and most favoured Church in the Reformation, and though in general terms, in such a style as to produce the almost universal impression that he was all the time referring, under this covert of generalities and remote cases, to American slavery and the church at Bethany, or to a certain class of its members. We pretend not to give even a synopsis of this Lecture. It was most illjudged and unwarranted under all the circumstances, and the result was that twenty or thirty of the congregation rose, almost simultaneously, and went out—a few of them walking heavily, and making an unusual degree of noise, both with their feet and canes. Before this took place, some noise was made in the back part of the house by scraping the feet on the floor, and there was some hissing, but nothing was said. When those who left went out, Mr. Burns paused, but one of his friends cried out very loudly, "Go on! we will hear you through." This was the only thing said in the house during the Lecture, save by Mr. Burns himself. Soon after this a window on the side of the pulpit, some twenty feet off from the speaker, was pushed up with a stick. It slipped off and fell, breaking two panes of glass. This was supposed, by some, at the time, to be those without, throwing stones, but it was a mistake; nothing of the kind was done during the evening. At this juncture, one of the Professors, of whom two were present, went out to see if there was any probability of further disorder. There had been, also, some loud talking and some shouting out of doors, though not of such a nature as at all to interrupt the speaker. The night was dark, and the Professor saw some two or three persons retreat from the window, but could not identify them. The main body of the students who had withdrawn from the church, he found talking together, some distance in front of the door, and on speaking to them, they assured him of their purpose and desire to preserve and maintain order. There is a small excavation under the end of the church, remote from the pulpit, and some one entered it and struck up against the floor with a stick, so as to be heard by some of the audience in that part of the house. Some one also rapped several times on the windows at that end of the house, with something like a switch, but not hard enough to break the glass or disturb the speaker. The whole disorder consisted in some scraping of feet in the back part of the house, some hissing, a boisterous mode of leaving the house on the part of a few, some loud talking and shouting by a few out of doors, the hoisting of one window with a stick, tapping at another with a switch, and some thumping against the floor from the excavation at the back end of the house. All this was, of course, unwarranted, and justly deserving of the censure and reprobation of the Faculty, which they promptly and most decisively pronounced against it; but no one could be identified as guilty of the offensive conduct described as occurring out of doors, and all, at all acquainted with the discipline of colleges, know how almost impossible it is to discover anything relating to the conduct of a student, when it is known only to themselves.

Unjustifiable and rude as this conduct unquestionably was, it was not such as to interrupt the speaker. He went on to the end of an unusually long harangue, and was listened to patiently by a majority of the Southern students who remained. The meeting was closed with singing and praying, as usual, and in good order, and Mr. Burns and the congregation went quietly and peaceably home. There was no attempt to mob him—there is not the shadow of evidence that such a thing was at all seriously contemplated by any body, and though it is alleged that he was threatened with violence as he proceeded to his lodgings, several gentlemen, who walked along from the church close beside him, testify that there was not a syllable of reproach, insult, or threatening spoken to him. His martyrdom was all in his own imagination. He and his friends went quietly to their lodgings, and there was not the least manifestation of any design to annoy, much less to injure him or them. Mr. Burns did get an anonymous communication, threatening him, if he did not leave, with "consequences which it would be hard to escape and harder to bear," signed "30 students," but there was no name to it, and it was regarded as an irresponsible billet from some one who wished to frighten him. Mr. Burns and his friends did not leave for three or four days, and though their subsequent conduct was very provoking and refractory, there was no violence offered to one of them. On the contrary, they were treated with a great deal of kindness and fraternal confidence by many of their fellow-students of the South.

The next day the students met *en masse*, and passed resolutions commending "freedom of thought, of speech, of the press, and the right of individual interpretation upon all matters pertaining either to religion or politics, at the proper time and place," but condemning the course of Mr. Burns, (a foreigner,) in taking advantage of the sacred desk, and in the capacity of a minister of the gospel, to proclaim sentiments calculated to disturb the peace and quiet of the Institution, "and whilst acknowledging the right of any one to leave a religious assembly, when sentiments are uttered insulting to his feelings, yet heartily condemning all further disapprobation, by some of the students, especially as it was on Sunday evening, and about the house of God; and as mobocracy is, in its very element, inconsistent with liberty and morality:" further they say, "We most heartily condemn all discussions of said question, (slavery,) either for or against, believing that the agitation of said question will prove disadvantageous to the vital interests of Bethany College, and do, therefore, enter our most solemn protest against the delivery of any speech by any student, either from the North or South, upon the question of slavery;" closing with a recommendation to the students to disperse quietly and without any demonstrations of unkind feelings, and to abide faithfully by the spirit of the resolutions thus adopted.

Many of the Northern students, not being satisfied with these resolutions, held special meetings of their own, and dictated to the Faculty the following terms on which they "would remain:"—

That the past be fully rectified; that those who were connected with the mob be arraigned before the Faculty, and publicly reprimanded or expelled from College. "And especially demanding the right to discuss, in public debate or in the pulpit, the merits of American slavery."

While such resolutions as these were being passed, these Northern students (about 20 in number) absented themselves from their classes, and set the authority and laws of the Institution, which they had