

made by Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, and Assemblies into what is in no sense their business, into the beliefs, the opinions and practices of men for which they are responsible to God alone. They have read garbled reports of hair-splitting discussions, angry debates, and tyrannical decisions by ecclesiastics, and these they take to be the bone and sinew of Presbyterianism.

Then as to worship, as to matters under the head of the *jus liturgicum*, they take us to be a people strongly addicted to Psalm-singing in a way of our own, to the exclusion of nearly all Christian hymns, and these Psalms rendered in rugged and unfinished verse scarcely distinguishable from ill-written prose and set to barbarous music rendered in a most discordant manner ; a people of inexhaustible patience and boundless capacity for listening to long, dull, doctrinal sermons, and withal stubbornly opposed to culture and the fine arts especially in the house of God, and yet not pre-eminently devout inasmuch as we are said to be not a little given to gazing in all directions while the minister is arguing out some theological question in his disorderly extemporaneous prayer. These, and such like items, constitute to their minds Presbyterianism.

Now it would be folly to claim for our Church infallibility on all the points thus caricatured, or to say that we are in no measure responsible for such perverted conceptions, that we have done nothing to give occasion for them, and that those who entertain them are wholly to blame ; it might be unsafe and unjust to assume this position, but it is perfectly safe to say of such persons that they are, from whatever cause, profoundly ignorant of the first principles of our Church and of the spiritual life and activity of our people, and, of course, such ignorance is a formidable hindrance to the spread of Presbyterianism.