

accordance with the scriptures and her subordinate standards, the Church maintains as truth or condemns as error in the matters of doctrine referred to; the minor proposition charges the individual against whom the Libel is brought with the denial of the truth, or the maintenance of the errors, referred to—the different particulars being stated separately in what are called Counts; and the conclusion calls for the infliction of censure corresponding with the matters that may be proved. The regular course of proceeding is for the court before whom the libel is prosecuted, to consider first of all what is called the relevancy of the Libel, that is, to determine whether the points referred to in the major proposition are matters on which the Church maintains the views that are therein stated; and, still farther, whether the particulars brought out in the minor proposition have a proper relation to what is set forth in the major proposition, so that, if the matters charged were proved, it would involve a departure from the doctrine of the Church, and would infer the censure called for. In considering the relevancy, therefore, the Church herself is, as it were, upon her trial; for, in finding the relevancy of the major proposition, she commits herself to certain doctrinal statements, even although on proceeding to consider the minor proposition she might find cause to reject it, either altogether or in some of its counts, as not being relevant, or not having any bearing upon the principles announced in the major proposition. Where there is no judgment upon the relevancy, a verdict, whether of acquitted or of condemnation, can carry no moral weight with it; because it remains still to be ascertained what are the principles of the men who have pronounced the judgment.

Now, although the brethren of the Presbyterian Synod choose to say, "the assertion that the Synod pronounced the charge groundless without ever coming to a finding on the relevancy of the libel is simply untrue;" and "give an explicit contradiction to the statement" that justice was not done to the case by the Synod; it is nevertheless true that, from the beginning to the close of the proceedings, that body did not declare the relevancy of a single point, and therefore could not by any possibility do justice to the case. The case, it is to be remembered, involved not simply Dr. Brown's character but the interests of the truth. It would occupy too much space

to quote the deliverances on the five counts of the Libel, that they might be allowed to speak for themselves; but the Presbyterian Synod are invited to produce, *if they can*, that judgment upon the relevancy which they say has been given. It does not meet the case to refer as they do to what they call the Synod's "resolution to consider the relevancy and the probation together." If the Synod ever came to such a resolution, they certainly did not carry it into execution. In point of fact, however, whether it was so intended or not, that motion of Mr. Peddie's which spoke of "the inconveniences which would attend a separate and preliminary discussion on the relevancy apart from the probation," seems to have deceived many members of the Synod into the belief that the relevancy, although not in the usual order of proceeding, would still be discussed. It was a dexterous evasion of that question altogether. Various dissents were entered upon the Synods' adoption of the motion, and some of the reasons in support of the dissents shew clearly the injustice done to the truth, in failing to do full justice to the question of relevancy. Thus, one body of dissentients say, "4. Because amidst other reasons, it was especially needful that in this case there should have been the strictest attention to usual form, in justice to parties at the bar of the house—in justice to the truth as held by this Church, as, in the words of the Rev. Mr. Stark, Forbes, at last meeting, as reported by Messrs. Quigley and Kennedy, in their proceedings of Synod, p. 26. 'The inquiry which would ensue as to the relevancy of the libel, would soon fix what were the doctrines entertained by the Church, and that there might be a final and happy issuing of all doctrinal discussions in this Synod.'" Another body of dissentients say "4. Because in the judgment of the dissentients, the Synod, as the representatives of a Calvinistic Church, should have been prepared to admit the relevancy, or show reasons to the contrary; and such an admission would have done much to satisfy the congregations under the Synod's inspection, as to the Synod's soundness in the faith, whereas, the refusal to consider the relevancy of the libel, and give a distinct deliverance on it, leaves room for suspicion either that there is error among us requiring to be sheltered, or a reluctance to avow unwavering adherence to the truth as hitherto most surely believed among us." The brethren, in their Reply, quote the Synod's decision on the third count in order to show that on