

JOURNAL
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
EIGHTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH
IN THE DIOCESE OF GEORGIA.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED

A SERMON,

Preached at the opening of the same, in St. Paul's
Church, Augusta, on Sunday Morning,
April 18th 1830.

BY THE REV. EDWARD NEUFVILLE,
RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, SAVANNAH

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SAVANNAH

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JOURNAL, &C.

Augusta, Geo.

Monday, April 19, 1830.

This being the day appointed for holding the Eighth Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church for the Diocese of Georgia, and this city being the appointed place of meeting, several of the Clergy and several Lay Delegates, attended at St. Paul's Church, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

Divine service was conducted by the Rev. T. S. W. Mott, of Christ Church, St. Simon's Island, the convention sermon having been preached yesterday by the Rev. Edward Neufville, of Savannah. The Rev. Hugh Smith, as President of the last convention, took the Chair, *pro tem.* and Edward F. Campbell, Esq. acted as Secretary *pro tem.*

On motion, the Rev. T. S. W. Mott and Richard Tubman, Esq were appointed a Committee to examine the certificates of Lay-Delegation, who reported that, Dr. J. B. Read, from Christ Church, Savannah, and Rich. Tubman, Esq. E. F. Campbell, Esq. and Mr. Gerard M'Laughlin, from St. Paul's Church, Augusta, were duly appointed delegates to the present convention.

On motion, a ballot for President and Secretary took place, when the Rev. T. S. W. Mott, was elected President, and Edward F. Campbell, Esq. Secretary.

On motion, resolved, That the same rules of order heretofore adopted at previous conventions in this Diocese, shall be observed as the rules of order on the present occasion.

A motion was then made, seconded and passed, that the Rev. B. C. Cutler, of Massachusetts, and the Hon. Judge Buel, of Troy, N.Y. now in this city, be invited to attend the meetings of this convention.

On motion, resolved, That the Rev. E. Neufville and Mr. G. M'Laughlin, be appointed a Committee to apprise these gentlemen of their invitation to seats at this convention.

The following Parochial Reports were then presented, read and ordered on file, viz:

FROM CHRIST CHURCH, SAVANNAH,
REV. E. NEUFVILLE, RECTOR.

Baptisms, 23; Funerals, 16; Marriages, 8; Communicants added, 5; removed, 5; died, 2; withdrawn, 3; suspended, 1—Present number 107.

Sunday School.—5 male and 7 female Teachers; 69 male and 70 female Scholars on the roll. The Sunday School Library has increased 95 volumes, and now contains 232 volumes.

A Sunday School for coloured children has been organized, (in which the system of instruction pursued in Infant Schools, has been adopted,) and contains 50 scholars.

At a fair for Missionary purposes, held in December last, the sum of \$634.88 was realized. Upon the whole, the Rector has cause to be thankful for the continued flourishing condition of this church, and to rejoice in its prosperity.

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**FROM ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, AUGUSTA,
REV. HUGH SMITH, RECTOR.**

Marriages, 5; Baptisms (adult) 2, infants, 6—8; Funerals, 9; Communicants added, 9; died, 4; removed, 2—Present number 75.

The Rector of this Parish is happy to have it in his power to give an encouraging statement of its condition. Its financial concerns have been relieved from embarrassment; the number of pew-holders and of attendants has considerably increased; there has been some increase of seriousness and of attention to religious concerns. The Sunday School continues about in its usual state—its library has been increased during the past year. The Female Missionary Association of this Parish, by a spirited effort, realized the sum of twelve hundred dollars for Missionary purposes. Encouraged by the thought that his “labour has not been wholly in vain in the Lord,” the Rector trusts that the prospect before him will animate him to new exertions and would pray for the blessing of Him who alone can bring them to good effect.

**CHRIST CHURCH, ST. SIMON'S ISLAND,
REV. T. S. W. MOTT, RECTOR.**

The return of our annual convention brings round the close, or nearly the close, of another year of my residence on St. Simon's Island; and it again becomes necessary to lay before you a report of my proceedings, and the state of the church. Since my last communication of this kind, little of interest or importance has occurred. Our congregation was then almost as large as the population would admit, embracing with a very few exceptions, the whole number of inhabitants. Its numbers have not since that time diminish-

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ed; on the contrary, I am happy to say the attendance has not only been quite as general, but there has been manifest among us, an increasing interest in the services of the church, and a more serious attention to the word of God.

With the continuance of some pecuniary aid from the Society for the general advancement of Christianity in Georgia, this church may now be considered on a permanent footing. In June last, our Vestry ordered a new survey of the lands granted some time since by the State Legislature, which proved to be more extensive and valuable than had been supposed, and have since been leased for a period of ten years, at the rate of two hundred and fifty dollars per annum.

During the last year there have been ten baptisms, one funeral, and five have been added to the communion. Tho's B. King, Esq, with his usual liberality, has presented the Parish with a very valuable Bible and Prayer Book, for the reading desk.

Since my residence on this island, I have occasionally visited the adjacent counties of Wayne and Glynn, for the purpose of preaching, baptizing, visiting the sickm &c. as my services were required; but never excepting on one occasion, permitting such excursions to interfere with my duties at home. Though to most, the services were entirely new, I have usually found them on such occasions well attended, and well received. Could a suitable person be found, one, who with the character of an able clergyman, could unite the office of an instructor of youth, I have no doubt a very respectable Parish might soon be established in Waynesville, Wayne County, where I preached last year to a very attentive and numerous congregation. On a visit of this kind to Glynn County, last autumn, I baptized six children.

It was then on motion, *Resolved*, That the thanks of this convention be presented to the Rev. E. Neufville, for his chaste and appropriate sermon delivered on this occasion, and that a copy of it be solicited for publication. The Rev. Hugh Smith and Mr. G. M'Laughlin, were appointed a committee to wait on the Rev. Mr. Neufville for this purpose.

The following report from the Standing Committee was then received and on motion accepted.

The Standing Committee of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Georgia, present the following report to the Convention: That Mr. Theodore Beekman Bartow, a candidate for Holy Orders in this Diocese, having presented to them the required certificate of piety and good conduct, from the Rector, Wardens and Vestry of Christ Church, Savannah, they have signed the testimonials required by the Canons, recommending him for Deacon's Orders to the Rt. Rev. Bishop Bowen, of South Carolina, exercising Episcopal functions in this State, according to the provisions of the 20th Canon. No other candidates for orders have been received since the last report of this body.

[Signed]

HUGH SMITH,
President of the Standing Committee.

E. F. Campbell, *Sec'ry.*

The clerical members of the last Convention then reported, that, although they had failed to redeem their pledge, then given, to provide two Missionaries for the destitute parts of this Diocese, prior to the present time, they have nevertheless used their best endeavors for this purpose and were not without the hope of speedy success.

The report of the Treasurer of the Convention was then read, by which it appeared that there remains in the Treasury the sum of twenty-one dollars.

The Treasurer of the Protestant Episcopal Society for the general advancement of Christianity in Georgia, reported, that there is now in the Treasury, one hundred and twenty-five dollars and ninety cents.

On motion, these reports were accepted and ordered on file.

The Convention then proceeded to elect a Standing Committee for the ensuing year, when the Rev. Hugh Smith, Rev. E. Neufville, Rev. T. S. W. Mott, Dr. J. B. Read, Dr. T. I. Wray, and Edward F. Campbell, Esq. were chosen.

The following gentlemen were then elected Delegates to the General Convention:

Rev. Hugh Smith, Rev. Edward Neufville, of the Clergy; Hon. Geo. B. Jones, Dr. J. B. Read, E. F. Campbell, Esq. and G. M'Laughlin, Esq. of the Laity.

It was then moved and *Resolved*, That two hundred copies of the journal of this Convention, together with the Rev. Mr. Neufville's sermon at the opening of the same, be printed: and that the Rev. E. Neufville and Dr. J. B. Read, be and are hereby appointed a committee to superintend the printing.

On motion, Resolved, That the next Annual Convention be held in Christ Church, St. Simon's Island, on the second Monday after Easter Monday, 1831; and that the Rev. Hugh Smith, be and hereby is, appointed to preach the Convention Sermon.

On motion, after prayer by the President, the Convention then adjourned.

[Signed]

T. S. W. MOTT, *Pres't.*

Edward F. Campbell, *Sec'ry.*

A SERMON.

JUDGES.—CHAP. V.

- Verse 15.—For the divisions of Reuben, there were great thoughts of heart.
16.—Why abodest thou among the sheep-folds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.
17.—Gilead abode beyond Jordan; and why did Dan remain in ships?—Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches.
23.—Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

These words are taken from the triumphal song of Deborah and Barak. "The design of this beautiful hymn, which breathes the characteristic softness and luxuriance of female composition, together with the elevation and grandeur of prophetic inspiration,

seems to be twofold, religious and political; first, to thank God for the recent victory and deliverance of Israel from Canaanitish bondage and oppression; and next, to celebrate the zeal and alacrity with which some of the tribes volunteered their services against the common enemy, and to censure the lukewarmness and apathy of others, who staid at home, and thus betrayed the public cause.”* It is to these that reference is

* Dr. Hales.

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made in our text. Reuben, Dan and Asher, were the only tribes (excepting Simeon and Judah, who were too remote from the scene of action) that did not declare themselves on the Lord’s side, and unite against the confederate kings who had for a long succession of years mightily oppressed his people, and aimed at cutting them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel might be no more in remembrance. Allusion is made to the causes of their absence: Reuben had long before been deprived of the privileges of his birth-right, because of the instability of his character; and still his dying father’s doom adheres to him—“thou shalt not excel.” Two things prevented the men of this tribe from engaging—their divisions and their business in the world. Twice does the prophetess strike upon the jarring chord of their internal commotions, to their shame; the unhappy contests which prevented them from uniting together and with their brethren for the common good, at a period when their friendship and assistance were most needed; particularly as they afforded ground for suspicion, that their feelings were estranged from those to whom they were bound by the strongest ties. But this was not all. Their business in the world had its influence also, in keeping them back from the contest. They abode among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks. To them the pursuit of individual advantage was dearer than that of the public good. The flame of patriotism, by which they were sometimes animated, was extinguished on this occasion, by the fear of trouble and the love of ease. They felt no disposition to sacrifice their own interests at the shrine of their country’s cause, which was, emphatically, the cause of heaven; or to mingle with the embattled hosts of Israel in the contest for all that is

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highest and dear. The laurels of victory were faded, in their view, by the beams of that sun of prosperity which was shining upon them, and offered no inducement to strive for their attainment; and there was more of melody to their ears in the bleatings of the flocks, than in “the sound of a trumpet, or the alarm of war;” more of security to their persons in the recesses of the sheepfolds, than “in the high places” of the tented field. They saw that rest was good, and their contracted, selfish spirits cared not what became of others, so they could “have all and abound;” even though besought “by a generous recollection of their common ancestors, by their own blood and by the common faith, to extend to their brethren, at least some token of compassionate regard.”

Dan and Asher did the same. The one excused himself on the score of his maritime interests, which might be exposed; the other on the score of injury already received, which required immediate attention. And yet Zebulun also was a haven for

ships, a seafaring tribe, but nevertheless was forward and active in this expedition. The truth is, Dan and Asher were indisposed to the service; they calculated the probably loss which might accrue to them during their absence, or the ruin which might ensue in case of defeat, and therefore, preferred standing on neutral ground, so as that none of their hope of gains in commercial enterprize might be lost. They deserved, therefore, the indelible marks of disgrace which were put upon them by the prophetess, whose song of victory would be channted through all posterities, and teach them to value the glory of God, more than the gain of money, and the cause of national pride and honor, more than the wages of unrighteousness.

But more than all is Meroz condemned, and a fear-

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ful denunciation uttered against the inhabitants thereof, because of their indifference and inaction; because they came not to the help of the Lord—to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Not that he needed their aid, for he could accomplish his purposes without them; but they were near the scene of action and had a favorable opportunity afforded them of showing their obedience to God, and their concern for Israel, and of doing good service to the common cause; while, at the same time, for aught they knew, the victory might have been lost without their instrumentality. Since so much seems to have been expected from Meroz, it must have been a place of no inconsiderable importance, but subsequently dwindled away, until finally its very name is blotted out, and not a vestige of it remains upon the face of the earth. At the rebuking of the Lord its glory departed; and “by the blast of the breath of his nostrils, it was consumed.” “So shall all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might, shining more and more unto the perfect day.”

I trust that it will not require much exercise of imagination to gather improvement from the text; for these things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. There is a cause between God and the mighty, in which we are required to engage, and which will not admit of neutrality. His people, as many as are called by his name and profess his service, are even now summoned to a conflict, not with flesh and blood, but with the principalities and powers of the kingdom of darkness. He has commanded them as he did the tribes of Reuben and Dad, saying: “The Lord hath given you rest and hath given you this land, even a goodly her-

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itage; but ye shall pass before your brethren and help them, until the Lord hath given your brethren rest, as he hath given you, and they also have possessed the land which the Lord your God giveth them.” He has committed the interests and advancement of his church and spiritual kingdom, to their instrumentality and care, and bidden them to extend its limits, until the heathen are given unto his son for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; with firm assurances that he will be with them always, to give efficiency and success to their labors, even unto the end of the world. He looks upon those as against him that are not with him, and as he has promised richly to reward those who fight manfully under his banner, so he will certainly and severely punish all

cowards and deserters. It is our interest, and our duty therefore, brethren, to consider, in order that we may avoid them, those obstacles which prevent men from coming to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty. For as yet we see not all things put under him; on the contrary, very much land remaining to be possessed: the spiritual Israel but a little flock; the church afflicted, persecuted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, surrounded by dangers which threaten its subversion; multitudes still sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, perishing for lack of knowledge, anxiously awaiting their deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Why is it that so little has been done? why drag the wheels of the gospel chariot so heavily along? why so few, so hardly contested, the trophies it has won? Its adversaries are the chief, its enemies do prosper; it has not free course, it runs not, neither is it glorified. What are the causes of this? I.—The

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first and most prominent is the want of united energy and concentrated effort. For the divisions which distract the Christian church, there are great thoughts of heart among those who are inquiring after the way of peace. They see its members instead of “all speaking the same thing, being of one accord, perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,” engaged in “contentions and strivings about the law, doting about questions to no profit,” with all the bitterness of sectarian jealousy and prejudice, each seeking to gain the post of honor, “having a doctrine, having a revelation, having an interpretation,” and denouncing others as false apostles, claiming for themselves alone the prerogative of truth. Now when the gospel “trumpet” is made to “give such an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” Who will not rather pause, procrastinate, delay, or perhaps even be agitated with strong temptations to doubt, whether it be possible to attain the object of his search, amid the varied and often contradictory directions and assurances of those who offer to conduct him? Happy if he be not ultimately lost amid the wild, barren, uncultivated sands of skepticism; happy if that very word which was intended to be a savour of life unto life, become not rather a savour of death unto death. He only is safe who believes not every spirit, but tries the spirits whether they are of God; who does not suffer himself to be carried away by every wind of doctrine; or to engage in idle speculations about things of comparative indifference, to which those who disturb the unity of the church always attach so much importance.

Still more injurious to the interests of the church, is the want of harmony among members of the same communion, with respect to the means of accomplishing

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the common end they have in view. A house divided against itself shall not stand; a kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; “where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” Churches and nations have known this by sad experience. That which is or may be powerful in its collective capacity, is weakened by the spirit of faction, and only *wastes* its energies in partial efforts. There must be cordial co-operation, unanimity of sentiment, and fixedness of purpose; a voluntary surrender of

private and personal opinion to the will of the majority, provided it involve, as it hardly can, no point of principle. "Party spirit, my brethren, acts upon human principles; is guided by pride and passion and not by the rules of christianity." It is the offspring of a carnal mind, nourished by a zeal which is not according to knowledge; the sickly scion of a tree whose fruit withereth and is never brought to perfection; whose end is to be burned.

II.—Another cause of the tardy advancement of the gospel church, is the love of ease and of temporal advantage. Reuben *abode* among the sheep folds; Dan *remained* in ships, and Asher *continued* on the sea shore. They may have wished well to the cause of Israel, but there was none found willing to sacrifice his private interest in its behalf. The kingdom of heaven suffers loss, my brethren, from the almost universal prevalence of a similar disposition. Among the multitudes who are girding on the harness for an active employment of the talents and ability which God has given them, but few are found willing to consecrate their service to his work; to undertake the arduous but honorable department of ambassadors for Christ; to go forth in his name, bearing good tidings and publishing peace to a ruined world. The road

to worldly distinction has, for the generality of them, far greater attractions; presenting in perspective, rewards more rich, more speedily attained and more congenial to their feelings; taught as they are from earliest childhood, and that oft times by parents professing godliness, to aim at the attainment of the fading honors of a fading life. The ease of a soul which has much goods and is not constrained, through want, to withhold itself from any joy; the rest of one who is laden with honors, such as earth bestows; the desire of having their names recorded on the page of history, with those whose fame has rung and echoed from generation to generation: these things offer greater inducements to the youthful aspirant to usefulness, than the self-denying labors of the herald of the cross, whose path through life is one of poverty and reproach; in which he is required to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; to disengage himself as much as possible from the affairs of this life, in order that he may please Him under whose banner he is enlisted; to fight and struggle and contend with the embattled hosts of darkness, not for a season only, but even unto death; whose earthly loss is cast in journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils by the heathen, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings, in fastings, in cold and nakedness. But then, my brethren, to compensate for all this, there is the reward; distant indeed to the eye of sense, but not less glorious to the eye of faith; sure as the truth of a promise-keeping God, and lasting as the eternity in which he dwells.

Oh! for a voice whose accents laden with the history of Zion's desolations, might reach and penetrate the hearts of some who would come forward in this the hour of need and show themselves strong in her

behalf. Oh! for language of persuasion, which would thrill through the ranks of those who are at ease in their possessions, and arouse their sympathies in her distress. Oh! for

a spirit of devotedness, like that which once animated the bosoms of Apostles, and led them forth, forsaking all they had, to fight the battles of the Lord, jeoparding their lives unto the death.* Oh! for an answer to the oft and long reiterated cry, “Come over to our help.” My heart trembles for the ark of God; I see its safety and its glory sacrificed to the love of ease; I see the world leagued with the powers of hell to accomplish its destruction; I see all Israel scattered upon the mountains as sheep which have no shepherd. I see confusion, ruin and defeat impending, while those, who ought to be engaged, are afar off, abiding in the sheepfolds to hear the bleatings of the flocks—I see “all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s”

III.—Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? is there nothing to be charged to the account of *indifference* in this matter? is there no participation in the guilt of Meroz? Would to God, my brethren, we could have passed over this, without well grounded suspicion that this has done more to retard the progress of the gospel, than either of the causes already

* The misapprehensions which prevail respecting the unhealthiness of the Southern States, have probably deterred many of our brethren of the clergy from settling among us. But men of business have not been influenced, by any such consideration, to abandon the gains of commercial enterprize. And why should the herald of the cross forego a prospect of usefulness, because of apprehensions which, to say the least, are far from being well founded? for we deny that our climate is so fatal, as it is generally represented to be; or that there is as great a degree of mortality, in proportion to our numbers, as there is in sections of country which have the reputation of being far more salubrious. There is moreover, much wisdom in the saying: “The path of duty is the path of safety.”

named. We have touched a chord which vibrates to the disgraceful apathy of those, who are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph, and care for none of those things which concern the immortal destinies of their brethren that are in the world; who stand idly looking on at the mighty conflict, unconcerned as to the issue, uninterested spectators of that which involves in its consequences the glory of God, and the dearest interests of man; who have no desire to impart the riches of the gospel; no holy breathings after a conformity to the example of Him who came from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost; no concern for his glory that he should be exalted in the earth, and his saving health made known among all nations. Alas! what multitudes of such are to be found in the number of those who claim to be “of Israel”; who profess to rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and yet cannot so “look back to the rock from whence they were hewn,” as to remember for good and show kindness unto them that are in bonds! It is a reproach to the christian name, that so little of the spirit of Christ is discernible where *most* it should prevail. It is a libel upon the christian character, to say, that it comports at all with a neglect of the second great commandment of the law. If any man say “I love God, and hateth” or neglects to advance the happiness of “his brother, he is a liar.” And “if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ,” love not his cause, his institutions, his people; *his* doom is written, by the hand of inspiration over against that of Meroz: “let him be Anathema Maran-atha.” He “shall not be able to stand in the

judgment,” but “be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”

The limits of our time forbid a further enumeration

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of the causes which operate to retard the progress of the church. In the inconsistency of conduct, sometimes discernible among its members; in their mis-improvement of the distinguished privileges with which it invests them; in the coldness of their devotion, the irregularity of their attendance on ordinances and means of grace, and the lukewarmness of their zeal; we discover the want of that deep rooted attachment, which fails not of producing “great searchings of heart,” in reference to the reality of the discoveries and triumphs of faith: and when once the idea of insincerity is entertained, it will cast a stone of stumbling, yea, rear an insurmountable barrier, in the way of those who might else have believed to the saving of the soul. But we forbear enlarging upon these points: enough has been said to reprove us all for not having done, or done but imperfectly, our part towards the advancement of the gospel kingdom, and to excite us to greater diligence in future. We have discovered the evil; let us apply the remedy. In union of effort, in a spirit of sacrifice, in a holy anxiety, in the still more than all powerful preaching of a good example, let us arise and go forth, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, till Zion is established and made a praise in the earth; till the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

My brethren of the convention, we are assembled, once more, to mourn over the desolations of Zion and to concert plans for her enlargement. Thanks be to God, we still maintain our ground; and as yet, though few in number, have lost nothing in the contest. Our hands have been strengthened by our brethren, and their hearts are with us in our deliberations. But still we rejoice with trembling: we can boast no new

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victories, the earnest of our future exultation; no new monuments of the power and grace of Christ. The wilderness is solitary and cheerless yet; the claims of multitudes on the liberality of their more highly favored brethren are still unsatisfied; they look to us for support; they need our efforts in their behalf: and if it be beyond our ability now to send them spiritual guides; if we cannot find those who are willing to go up to their relief; be ours at least the satisfaction of having done what we could; the determination to persevere in exertion, to strive together in prayer to the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his vineyard. He is faithful who has promised, “thy work shall be rewarded; thine expectation shall not be cut off; whatsoever ye shall ask, believing, ye shall receive.”

FINIS.