

was not adhered to yet no injustice was done to Dr. Pryor.

Does Crowell condemn Mr. Armstrong? If so Mr. Armstrong is condemned from his own lips—for he endorses Crowell on this subject.

1st.—At the Central Association the question of a Council for Granville Street Church and Dr. Pryor was discussed. Mr. Armstrong was present and knew that Dr. Pryor had been deposed by the Church from the Ministry. What was his unquestioned duty? When the subject of having a Council was considered, by what means does he now seek to justify himself in not rising up before his brethren and telling them, that the Church had already done all that it is the duty of a Council to do? Now the doctrine is so important that he goes to a neighbouring Province and spreads it out in the press. How did he keep silent at the Association? Why not show then, that there was nothing for a Council to do? Why not rebuke the Church through our delegates who were also present, for departing from Baptist polity? He might have thought it possible that there were brethren present who were not informed on this doctrine. Why did not Mr. A. enlighten them? Having let this opportunity pass, could Mr. A. ever consistently urge this rule upon our Church? But the Association closed and our delegates came away unrebuked, and the Association was left unstructured.

2nd.—It turned out that Mr. Armstrong was invited to be a member of the Council. How could he accept such invitation? He knew what the Church had done. And what had been done, according to the doctrine of Crowell which he has embraced, should have been left for a council to do. Why did he not reply to the church, that there was nothing for a council to do? One opportunity for reproving the Church had passed, another came and went and no rebuke!

3rd.—Mr. Armstrong accepts the invitation. The Council comes together. Some of his brethren on this council held the belief, that Councils should only advise and never decree; and consequently that a church must bear the larger part of the responsibility of deposing a Pastor; and yet there is no intimation that they were instructed by their brother Councillor. Was it not Mr. Armstrong's bounden duty to have pointed out to his brother Councillors the gross violation of Baptist polity by the Church in deposing Dr. Pryor from the pulpit? There is no intimation that it was done. Had he undertaken it, and failed to bring the other members of the council to adopt his views, holding them as strongly as he does, would it not have been his duty to have withdrawn from that body at once? Is it possible that Mr. A. still concealed his opinion?

4th.—But in the written directions, given to the Council for its guidance, the Church had laid it down as a duty of the Council to examine and give their opinion upon the previous action of the Church. It was asked whether the course that had been taken was such as should have been taken, and if not, the reason was sought, and the course that should have been followed the Council was requested to point out.

Could Mr. Armstrong pass this point and not express his views? What! did he allow the Church to remain in ignorance of a violation of a principle in Baptist polity, after that church had asked him as a member of that Council to point out to them wherein they had gone astray, and to inform them what course they should have taken? And this opportunity passed and no rebuke.

5th.—But still more surprising is Mr. Armstrong's reply as a member of the Council, to a charge that had been brought against the Church. The charge was that "The Church was regarded as blamable for not calling a council at an earlier period." With Crowell's doctrine in his mind and in his heart, what opinion should Mr. A. have reported on this point? The Church had neglected to call a council and had done a Council's work, as Mr. A. supported by Crowell maintains. Let us hear the reply of Mr. A. as a member of that body. "The Council is not able to decide upon this particular question," but "we are of opinion that *** an advisory Council will generally be found desirable"! What! holding the opinion that a Council should invariably be called in such cases, and to it should be committed entirely the duty of dealing with the pastor in his ministerial relations, and at the same time reply that there is an inability to decide upon this particular question; and more astonishing still, to say that an advisory council was desirable! An advisory Council—and that only desirable! All this is consistent with opinions held by other members of that Council, but what terms shall we use to express our astonish-

ment at the contradictions and inconsistencies of Mr. Armstrong?

When on the Council, as one of its members, Mr. Armstrong was asked if the Church was blamable for not calling a Council at an earlier period in the history of the whole case. As a member of that body, he gave us his opinion. Now, unsolicited, he gives us another opinion. Let us place side by side Mr. A.'s opinion in Sept. 1867 and his opinion in April, 1868.

"The Council (Mr. A. a member) are not able to decide upon this particular question. But in relation to the whole subject of calling a Council in critical cases of a difficult nature between pastor and people, we are of opinion that for the interests of all parties concerned,—an advisory Council will generally be found desirable, and that such a procedure is in harmony with the practice of the Churches in these Provinces."

A minister so charged has a right to be tried by his peers. That the proper tribunal to try such a minister is a presbytery or Council, composed of the pastors and elders of other churches. That such a Council should ALWAYS be first called. That it is unwarrantable haste for any Church to expel a minister from membership before the judgment of such a council has been obtained.

How stands the case now? Who is condemned and who acquitted by the doctrine of Crowell so heartily endorsed by Mr. Armstrong? A few more words will put this point at rest forever.

The Church quoted Crowell to justify action taken after the Council had reported to the Church their opinion. If truth ever helped truth and if fact ever sustained fact, the quotation from Crowell harmonizes with the action of the Church.

The Church proceeded to an original investigation, as it was not satisfied with that of the Council. "If the offence is such (says Crowell) as to require his exclusion from church fellowship, they can now proceed without embarrassment in the same way as with any other member." This says Mr. Armstrong "instead of countenancing condemns the Church." How does it condemn the Church when dealing with Dr. Pryor as a member,—the special duty which Crowell says a Church is bound to perform? So perfectly does the quotation, not only in its sense but also in its phraseology, apply to the case in hand, that its very letter can be used to fairly set forth what the Church did. What a spectacle does Mr. A. exhibit? Silent at the Association when he ought to have made his doctrine known: invited to be a Councillor and accepted the invitation when he should have refused if as he believed the legitimate work for such a body had been done; sat on the Council and nothing to say about his new doctrine; asked by the church what course should be pursued in such cases, and was not able to decide on their particular case then, but condemns it now in the public press; recommended an "advisory Council" and now calls such a body "a farce;" and after all this, Mr. A. struggling in the meshes of the net of his contradictory and unheard of course seeks to accuse the Church. Surely, surely some strange blindness must have fallen upon him, else he never would have made this flagrant committal of himself, from which there is no deliverance except by confession and retraction.

In reply to Dr. Crawley we stated and we take this occasion to state again, that we are in sympathy with Baptist usage of calling councils. And it might have been better for us to have called a council at first. But we say most emphatically that, except in some cases not touching the vital principles of Church Government, Councils should always be advisory. They must be so to be in harmony with our principles. Upon this point Crowell in theory is in harmony with Baptist polity, but in following his theory to its practical issue, he falls into an error by a fancied analogy where the real analogy would show a different result.

Crowell's directions for the discipline of a Minister—a hybrid Church polity.—Crowell's theory is, that as a council participates in setting a man apart to the ministerial office, so a council should share in expelling a man from that position. And he is very explicit on the point. He says, "As the agency of the presbytery was called to invest him with the ministerial office, it is equally necessary in order to divest him of it." "One Church may not undo, that which probably required the consent and agencies of many Churches to do; and if a presbytery or council, composed of the pastors and elders of other churches, is in any sense necessary to ordain a man to the ministerial office, it is necessary in the same sense, and to the same extent, in order to depose him from it." (C. C. M. page 250).

This is clearly and fairly put. There can be no reasonable objection to this analogical doctrine. It is laid down that the two agents—the church and the council—unite

in elevating a man to the ministerial office, each exercising its own measure of authority and bearing its respective amount of responsibility. On the other hand, in case a minister is to be disciplined, it must be by the same agents, each exercising the same amount of authority in the latter case as in the former, and each taking a part in the discipline corresponding to the part taken in the ordination. Crowell says, "If a presbytery or council is in any sense necessary to ordain a man *** it is necessary in the same sense and to the same extent in order to depose him."

Now in order to the fair settlement of this question, the first thing to ascertain is, the respective authority and responsibility of these two agents in ordaining a minister. Let Crowell himself settle this question. "In so far," says this author, "as ministers do any thing to introduce a man into the ministry, they ordain him; in so far as the people (the church) do it, they ordain him. So far as the proper use of the word is concerned it may be applied with equal correctness to the acts of the people, or of the ministry or of both united." (Page 107). But the same author is still more definite. "Ordination then," he says, "consists in two things; First the election by the church of one to be their pastor, or to perform some ministerial service in their behalf, either to them or as an evangelist to the destitute. Second his solemn induction or inauguration, in which the ministry publicly recognize him as one of their number, welcome him to their brotherhood."

Crowell fully and clearly recognizes the independence and authority of the Church and the subordination of a Council in elevating a man to the ministry. "The first (the election by the church) (he says) is the essential act, without it no one could properly be invested with the office and functions of a Christian Minister." "While it is plain therefore that ordination services are no more essential to the validity of the Minister's office than inauguration services are to that of the President of the United States, yet it is appropriate and desirable as a public acknowledgment and testimonial that he is worthy of that office and a solemn benediction on his induction into it."

Let all be granted that these extracts claim. He is elected by the Church. This is the "essential act." He is set apart by the Council. This has no more to do with the validity of his office than the inauguration of a President has to do with the validity of his office to which he had been elected by the people.

It only now remains to make the application of Crowell's theory, in the case of calling a delinquent pastor to an account.

The Church by vote elected him—"the essential act"—consequently the Church must depose him by vote—the corresponding "essential act." This is unquestionably a fair application of the theory, from which there is no escape. What then is the corresponding part for the Council to take? In the ordination they gave advice. In discipline let them do the same. In ordination they publicly performed some services of inauguration, thus endorsing what the Church had done. In discipline let the Council in a public way perform some appropriate services of expulsion, thus endorsing the decision of the Church.

This is a rigid application of Crowell's analogy. And while there can be no special objection urged against it, the better way would be to have a Council called in the beginning of any trying discipline; and to have it understood, on the one hand, that the Church is and must be independent, and on the other hand that the advice of a Council should be respected. In making the application of the analogy, Crowell fell into the mistake that it is a Council which puts a man into the ministry, and so inferred that a Council should put a man out of the same office; whereas he had already said that the Church performed the "essential act." And the part taken by the Council was not essential to the validity of the office.

1. We challenge the admirers of this view of Crowell's to produce an instance where this doctrine of his, founded as it is on a false inference was ever carried out in practice among the Baptists.

2. Every unprejudiced mind must see that Crowell fails to apprehend the true analogy of the case.

3. It is equally evident that Crowell's inference is antagonistic to Baptist polity. It is neither congregational nor presbyterian polity. The minister's case is divided. His ministerial character is to be tried by a presbyterian government; and his character as a Christian man is committed to the jurisdiction of the Church. This implies the existence of two distinct and

independent ecclesiastical tribunals within the limits of one Church polity—a monstrosity unheard of in any body hailing to be the Church of Christ. It is an attempt to unite incongruous principles in the same Church polity, but they will not unite. Their antagonism is as natural and unyielding as that of oil and water.

We have never heard of this being practiced among Baptists. No work on Baptist polity to which we have access lends any countenance to such a mode of procedure. All agree that Councils should be advisory.

By order of the Church,
B. H. EATON,
Clerk.

We are aware that the letter dated April 8th from the Rev. Mr. Davis—one of the late Council—has a very important bearing upon this subject, which has caused us so much trouble. The Editor of the Messenger stated, "that the exclusion of Dr. Pryor from the church was fully anticipated by several members of the Council, and in harmony with their recommendation. We have it under their own hands;" and that "although the Council was unanimous in the wording of their decision, yet the members did not all understand it alike."

We were astounded at Judge Johnston's remarks upon these statements. (See his Letter page 29.) He almost charged Mr. Selden with having perpetrated a falsehood. Upon Mr. Selden's bare statement the subject has rested up to the present time. The letter of Rev. Mr. Davis confirms what Mr. S. said, and delivers him from Judge Johnston's charge. But whilst the publication of Mr. Davis's Letter, does this, it will be seen that it draws down the whole weight of Judge Johnston's charge upon the Councillors who have expressed a similar view of the case.

It is passing strange, that a christian man of Judge Johnston's years and experience, would allow himself to utter such language, even hypothetically, when it ought to have been evident to his own mind, that the hypothesis was a real fact. These brethren now stand charged by Judge Johnston with, "a miserable want of common sense or common principle," and as having "befooled and be-knaved themselves." And Mr. Armstrong, following in the wake of Judge Johnston, imitates him in his fierce denunciation. He, too, on the same hypothesis, brands these councillors with being "sunk into the depths of dishonor, unfaithfulness and dishonesty, and as having disregarded the claims of righteousness, truth and love."

Surely this is a sad spectacle, and one before which the Church and the world will stand aghast—an aged Judge and a Minister of the gospel joined together in aspersing representative men of our denomination, both ministers and laymen, with language such as is scarcely ever heard from rabid politicians when in the most deadly antagonism!

While we are convinced that these brethren are able to defend themselves, yet we feel it is our duty to fearlessly express our opinion in the matter.

The finding of the Council, as well as all the principles and considerations involved in the calling of that body, the investigations of the subjects submitted, and the reporting of the decision to the churches are entirely and flatly opposed to the supposition that the Council was to be the final judge; but while, as we have pointed out, the decision of this body is defective as to the advice that was sought, yet it is largely in harmony with the idea that the Council was an advisory body; and if so, the subsequent action of the Church was in harmony with the decision and may have been anticipated by the Councillors.

As an advisory body we have volunteered our apology for the defectiveness of the advice which was given. (Reply page 31.)

1. The Rev. Mr. Davis and the other Councillors, who intended to leave the church free to exercise discipline, guided by their advice, subsequent to the time of their decision, respected the independence of the churches so much prized by Baptists.

2. Their course is in harmony with the writers upon Baptist Church polity whose works we have consulted.

The opposite, maintained by Mr. Armstrong, Judge Johnston and Dr. Crawley, is in no way harmonious with our principles nor with the facts connected with the case in hand. But although these brethren have entangled themselves in contradictions and absurdities till we see no way for them to escape, yet we must think and speak of them charitably. How it is that they, far more exposed to censure than Rev. Mr. Davis and those Councillors who take a similar view of the case, can use such epithets as they have, ordinary minds cannot understand.

B. H. E.