

In making your statement you say that you deem it essential to a proper understanding of the subject, to recur to the early history of your separate organization. Hence you advert to the proceedings of the General Conference of your Church at Buffalo in May 1860, and to an obnoxious addition which that Body made to the Discipline of the Church as the cause of your separate organization in 1862. You refer also to the proceedings of the lay members of the Church, repudiating the new Article of Discipline, the one in Baltimore in Dec. 1860 and the other at Staunton in May 1861, and you quote the action of the Baltimore Conference of Ministers at the last mentioned date, as declaring that the action of the General Conference referred to "has sundered the Ecclesiastical relation which has hitherto bound us together as one Church" - "Whilst these proceedings may no doubt be a matter of interest in your Church history, neither they, nor the action of the highly respectable Gentlemen whose names you quote in connection therewith, have, as it appears to me, any material bearing upon the subject of your Complaint.

I cannot however forbear saying that I think it is greatly to be regretted, that continuing as you seem to have done in an unaltered membership of the Church, and in fellowship with the Baltimore Conference for nearly two years after the adoption of the Buffalo Chapter, and fully one year after the proceedings of the two Conventions to which you refer, and of the Conference of 1861, you should in March 1862 for the first time have practically sundered your Church connection, and abandoned the time honored edifices and associations where you had previously worshipped. I say that I can not but regret such a proceeding at such a time. We were then in the midst of a raging Conflict of Arms, brought upon us confessedly by this doctrine of the right of Secession. It was a time for far more engrossing thoughts and important action, than any connected with the stale proceedings of past Conferences or Conventions, and called for at least the temporary suspension of all religious disputes. The question of Ecclesiastical discipline in 1860 had been absorbed by that of National existence in 1862. It was no longer a contest over the Church Government of one denomination of Christians, but a Contest to determine whether our Country itself possessed a Government that deserved the name, or was to quietly acquiesce in its own dismemberment, and see State after State despoil it of its property and defy its authority, at the bidding and for the benefit of aspiring traitors who desired to govern them. Hundreds therefore who in the earlier stages of your Church difficulties might have cordially co-operated with you in protesting against the Buffalo platform, now that the whole aspect of public affairs had assumed so threatening a character, were necessarily prompted by every patriotic inducement to discountenance all secessionary displays in the face of the calamities, which political doctrines, apparently at least of a kindred kind, had already brought upon the Nation.

With this passing remark upon the proceedings to which you refer as preliminary to the secession of your Congregation, I proceed to the facts connected with the order of Genl. Schenck, which you say has "set at nought the dearest and most sacred right that any man can enjoy - that of 'Worshipping God.'" This is, I agree with you,