

**THE CATASTROPHE OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, IN 1837
INCLUDING A FULL VIEW OF THE
RECENT THEOLOGICAL
CONTROVERSIES IN NEW ENGLAND**

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The Catastrophe of the Presbyterian Church, in 1837 Including a Full View of the Recent Theological Controversies in New England by Zebulon Crocker

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ZEBULON CROCKER

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BY ZEBULON CROCKER,

DELEGATE FROM THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1837.

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P R E F A C E.

THE author of this work, on his return from the General Assembly of 1837, proposed to publish in a religious newspaper, a brief history of the Plan of Union, and the causes of its abrogation. He was advised, however, to adopt the pamphlet form, or make use of the pages of some periodical of a more permanent character. On proceeding to investigate the subject with this design, he found it so extensive as not to be easily compressed within the narrow limits commonly assigned to articles in religious magazines; and he finally concluded to give to the public, a small volume, in which the recent controversies in New England, should be fully exhibited. In presenting this part of the subject, two modes occurred, each of which appeared to possess peculiar advantages as well as disadvantages. The one was, to give a concise statement, entirely in his own language, of the positions maintained by different wri-

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ters in the discussion ; the other was, to exhibit more fully, not only the main positions, but the arguments by which they were supported, with copious extracts from the original articles. The latter mode is the one principally pursued in this volume. While this mode is less concise than the other, and often makes it necessary to repeat the statement of the points in debate, it will be found to have an important advantage, in giving the reader an extensive acquaintance with the subject. It has not been thought advisable in all instances to denote by marks of quotation, parts of sentences and expressions, introduced from the different writers. In stating their opinions, free use has been made of their language, without particular marks to denote it.

The author has had no desire to conceal his own views on the controverted topics. Having read with attention the writings on both sides, and having in general, as he thinks, succeeded in understanding them, he has been frank to express what are his own convictions, whenever truth seemed to require him to do it. The difference, however, between the New Haven divines and their opponents, he regards as trivial, compared with the great doctrines of the gospel, all of which they hold in common ; nor does

he see the least cause, on the ground of theological sentiment, for strife or alienation. In expressing his opinion of the measures of the majority of the last General Assembly, and of the opposers of New Haven in Connecticut, and in estimating the arguments of different writers, rank, and age, and influence in the church, and acknowledged worth, have not been prominently before his mind ; but the quality of the measures and arguments themselves. Nor does he feel much concern respecting the manner in which this volume shall be received, by any portion of the public. He is content to know that it contains historical truth, and to believe, that it is important for the future peace and prosperity of the church, that the subjects on which he has written, should be presented in a more condensed form, than they are found in the voluminous documents, which he has been obliged to consult, in preparing this volume for the press.

Middletown, Con., April, 1838.

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