

**THE BROOKLYN COUNCIL OF 1874:  
LETTER-MISSIVE, STATEMENT AND  
DOCUMENTS, TOGETHER  
WITH AN OFFICIAL PHONOGRAPHIC  
REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND THE  
RESULT OF THE COUNCIL**

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The Brooklyn Council of 1874: letter-missive, statement and documents, together with an official phonographic report of the proceedings, and the result of the Council by John C. Barnes & Flamen B. Candler

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**JOHN C. BARNES & FLAMEN B. CANDLER**

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THE  
BROOKLYN COUNCIL

OF 1874.

*LETTER-MISSIVE, STATEMENT,  
AND DOCUMENTS,*

TOGETHER WITH

AN OFFICIAL PHONOGRAPHIC REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS,  
AND THE RESULT OF COUNCIL.

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## PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

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THE Advisory Council convened in Brooklyn, March 24th, 1874, was so large in numbers, it included so many distinguished men, and was called to consider questions of such substantial and enduring importance to the fraternity of Congregational churches, that, beyond almost any similar body heretofore convened, it attracted public attention; and the more or less full accounts of its proceedings which have been already published have been widely read. In view, however, of the prominence and importance of the Council, a general desire has been expressed to have a more complete report of its discussions than has thus far appeared, presented in a volume for permanent preservation.

Anticipating the probability of this, the committees of the churches calling the Council had made arrangements beforehand for a complete stenographic report of all its public discussions and proceedings, by Mr. Frederick J. Warburton; and that report has been placed at the disposal of the present publishers, and is contained in this volume.

Arrangements had also been made for a similar report of the private deliberations of the Council, if it should seem desirable to the body itself to have such a record made of them. But as the Council preferred, no doubt wisely, to preserve the entirely confidential character of the informal and interlocutory discussions of its private sessions, no report of them exists. The "Result," which was reached by means of them, is their only authentic record and fruit.

That Result is contained in the present volume; as is also the

correspondence between the churches, which preceded the calling of the Council, and the final report of the committees to the churches that invited it.

The publishers have spared no pains to make the volume accurate and satisfactory, in its exhibition of all the public words and doings of the Council. They believe that the importance of the subjects discussed will give it a permanent as well as an immediate interest and value,—not only to the Congregational churches of the country, but to the members of other Christian communions, who may wish to know what Congregationalism is, and what power it has to conserve the purity and the faith of the churches.

One of the publishers, having been a member of one of the committees of the inviting churches, desires to add here his testimony to the entire harmony which marked the proceedings of those committees, in regard to the weighty matters entrusted to them, from the time when the first resolutions were passed appointing them to their office, till the time when their final report was made to the churches which had appointed them, and when they were discharged from further service.

He has never seen a company of Christian men more desirous to do fully and faithfully, but to do nothing beyond, what the churches intended; or more certainly actuated by the spirit of love to the cause and kingdom of the Divine Master. He cannot but believe that such deliberations and action as those of the churches and their committees, and of the Council in which these resulted, will be followed by the blessing of Him who is the Head of the kingdom, and will be found to have been to His honor and praise!

NEW YORK, June, 1874.



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## LETTER-MISSIVE.

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BROOKLYN, N.Y., March 9, 1874.

*The Church of the Pilgrims, and the Clinton Avenue  
Congregational Church, SEND GREETING :*

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST :

Since November last we have been in correspondence, through our pastors and special committees, with the Plymouth Church in this city, on certain questions of church-discipline, and of the proper fellowship of Congregational churches.

The occasion of this correspondence, with our letters, and the letters and resolutions of the Plymouth Church in reply, will be found fully spread forth in the documents accompanying this Letter-Missive, and in the explanatory statement prepared, at our request, by our committees.

We have now reached a point where we feel ourselves to need, and at liberty to seek, the aid of the wisdom of other churches ; that we may know how far what we have done is approved by them, and what course we should properly follow in the future.

We have desired, and, as our letters will show, have earnestly sought, that all the questions at issue between us, on the one hand, and the Plymouth Church on the other, should be submitted by that church, as by us, to a Council chosen in common.

We have not been able to obtain from that church a decisive answer, either in the affirmative or in the negative, to this request ; and the further protracting of our correspondence appears to us inexpedient, in view of the delays connected with it, of its comparative fruitlessness hitherto, and of the mutually suspicious and hostile feeling which it has shown itself liable to excite.

We therefore wholly lay aside any effort to secure a Coun-