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The Virginia ^{Protestant} ~~Reaction~~ Reaction to
the Secession Crisis: October, 1859 to May, 1861

by Leonard Ira Sweet

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INTRODUCTION

If the Virginia denominations could have forecast President Lincoln's request that the Commonwealth supply 2,340 troops to enforce the suppression of her sister southern states, unanimity would have prevailed from 1859 onward, and this paper would be unnecessary except for a single statement: The religious elements in Virginia endorsed secession. Although many of the clergy professed gifts of prophecy, ~~they were~~ ^{was eternal rather than} their ~~vision~~ ^{vision} secular, ~~and~~.

~~They~~ A religious calling meant exemplary stewardship as God's vassal, and as such their interests and concerns transcended political affairs. The men of the cloth kept abreast of current events, but, as God's viceregents, felt a responsibility not to blemish their religious calling in unsanctified, mundane matters. Only when the religious and secular lives of the parishoners became fused did the church take a definite partisan stand, and that in the path taken by the state.¹

The attitude of Virginia to the developing secession crisis ~~was~~ ^{was} reflected in the attitude of ~~the~~ ^{its} religious community. John Brown's raid gave the churches a barometer reading on the rising abolitionist sentiment of the North. The election of Lincoln, a further provocation but no casus belli, convinced many of the clerics that only divine intervention could ~~save~~ ^{save} the Union from imminent wreckage. Finally came Lincoln's call for troops, a call which solidified secession sentiment in both church and state and which placed ~~the~~ ^{the Old Dominion} in a defensive stance -- a position of vast significance as a morale booster and as a religious justification for the war, enabling Virginians to call upon God for aid and assistance without entertaining any doubts about which side He might be on.

The reaction of the Virginia churches to John Brown's raid in October, 1859, can be described as minimal but not meaningless. With the exception of the Presbyterians, the Harper's Ferry incident was reported ^{by the religious preers and leaders} in a straightforward fashion without the polemics that one would expect.² Yet to conclude from this relative silence that the churches were either unaware of the gravity of the national situation or did not care, would be in error. For example, editorials in the Southern Churchman ~~dealing with~~ ^{dealing with} the General Convention of the ^{Protestant} Episcopal Church of the U.S. meeting in Richmond in November, 1859, reveal ~~some~~ ^a concern over the existence of sectional enmity. The foremost achievement of the Convention, in the eyes of the editors, was that the northern delegates saw the happiness and well-treatment of the slaves, while the southern delegates realized that unity and Christian understanding could be mutually achieved by both sections.³

Perhaps the reason for the paucity of contemporary religious comments on the Harper's Ferry insurrection can be seen in the churches' disinclination to view it as an insurrection. In perspective, John Brown's raid most accurately reveals Virginia's deep fears about the possibility of a slave uprising and the state of sectional feelings on the subject. Contrary to some northern assertions, Harper's Ferry was, from a clerical standpoint, not a rebellion by ~~the~~ Negroes within Virginia, but an abolitionist foray from without. Furthermore, the churches maintained that the raid could not be called the "Great Virginia Scare" brought on by the slavery system, as one northern newspaper promulgated, but could only be viewed as an attempt by the ^{and external} fanatical ^{and external} anti-slavery element to overthrow a southern institution. The slaves, for whom the revolt was intended, never responded.⁴

From all angles, the raid was thought to be a pitiful showing by the crackbrained abolitionists.

This interpretation varied little from denomination to denomination. Uniformly, the churches perceived Harper's Ferry as an abolitionist adventure expressing a minority of northern sentiment and censured by the majority of free-state opinion.⁵ On the other hand, however slight the significance the churches placed on the revolt itself, they did observe alarming developments in its aftermath. From the abundant support John Brown received, a heightening of contempt for the North ensued as Virginians listened ~~with astonishment~~ to eminent northerners like Ralph Waldo Emerson saying ~~that~~ ^{that} (John Brown) "would make the gallows glorious like a cross," or Louisa May Alcott calling him "St. John the Just."⁶ From such expressions the ~~Virginia~~ churches concluded that many prominent northerners, many of whom Virginia had hoped would curb fanaticism, ~~sympathized~~ ^{sympathized} with the raiders who attacked Virginia.⁷ Moreover, since the assault proved that for the abolitionists any means justified the end of manumission, the "Christian patriots" in both sections saw they had a common goal: to purge the nation of such schemers.⁸

Notwithstanding the scant church comments on John Brown's raid, the articles that were printed contain generic denunciation of ~~the~~ ^{it}. ~~The~~ The Baptists applauded Buchanan's condemnation of Harper's Ferry.⁹ The Presbyterians, ~~before~~ ^{in time} the most vociferous and aggressive religious element for secession in Virginia, ~~demanded~~ ^{de} demanded the execution of all those who participated in the raid. They cited "murder and treason and insurrection" as the worst crimes possible and God's ~~command~~ ^{Command} for death in such offenses. From the Presbyterian standpoint,

execution would not only serve as retribution but also as prevention. "As the 'irrepressible conflict' in its first overt act has been effectively and righteously crushed, it will be apt to stay crushed while the memory of this tragic affair is retained."¹⁰

Virginia Presbyterians also demanded economic independence from the North after the raid. The Baptists supported the non-intercourse movement ~~not~~ not out of animosity towards the North but from a desire to see the expansion of Virginia industry; the Presbyterians, however, lauded the development of southern industry from the vantage point of sectional security and preparedness.¹¹ If the South were to pursue an independent commercial^{ci} policy, the seepage of southern wealth into northern hands would have to be prevented. ~~Southern~~ Southern industry and manufacturing ~~would be stimulated~~ would be stimulated, and the North's awareness of this new southern strength might alleviate some northern "harassment."¹² But even more important, in the Presbyterian view, the South would be adequately prepared with more money and men, and a more stable economy and commerce than if she continued in the "sin" of industrial reliance on the North.¹³ In case war should erupt between the two sections, the South then would have built up her munitions and would not be caught lacking in the important department of fulfilling war industrial demands. Even at this early date, ~~the Virginia~~ the Virginia Presbyterians^{tended} to identify with the destiny of the entire South ~~14~~

Although the loyalty of the Virginia churches to the Union was not altered by Harper's Ferry, the hardening of hatred for the abolitionists provided a significant step in the direction of divided allegiance.¹⁵ Should the ~~Virginia~~ churches ever be convinced that the mass of northerners agreed with the abolitionists, a ~~crossroads~~ crossroads would

be reached, and a decision of whether to follow the route of junction or disjunction would be necessary.¹⁶ This is exactly what did happen, but only after a chain of events that proved beyond a doubt, to the Virginia religious community, the extensive abolitionist ~~the~~ tenor of the North.¹⁷

After the Brown raid, the Virginia Protestants felt compelled to define more precisely the reasons for their sanctioning of slavery. Among even the anti-slaveryites, the view prevailed that Negroes stemmed from Ham's lineage, an equation affording strong biblical support for the idea of Negroes as inferior creatures suffering from the curse of God.¹⁸ Further, the church could prove that many respected Christian leaders had owned slaves.¹⁹ The churches also pointed to their magnanimity towards the Negroes, citing examples of presbyteries assisting ~~the~~ slaves (mainly in the realm of religious education). It was even asserted that slaves were equal - - in the religious sphere - - for they ^{were} ~~are~~ "heirs with us in the blessed promises."²⁰

The Virginia churches became convinced that the intense fanaticism of the North was based on a perverted theology, that is, the view of slavery as a sin.²¹ The Episcopalians best expressed this conviction when they asked, not that the North approve of slavery, but that it recognize that, biblically, it ^{was} ~~is~~ acceptable and not sinful. Such an acknowledgment might resolve the conflict: if the North could see that slavery was biblically permissible, it would no longer feel compelled to wage a crusade to purge the "sin" from the Union.²²

A resurgence of ideas on how to circumvent a confrontation with the North also characterized the ^{interim} ~~period~~ between the John Brown

raid and the election of 1860. The Baptist ~~_____~~ solution to the conflict contained a denunciation of disunionists as traitors, who were to be opposed by "ballot - and if need be by ball," a call for the North to let the South and its institutions alone, a plea that Virginia stand by the Constitution and the Union, and a general appeal to allow common sense govern both sections.²³ The Presbyterians, soberly opposing disunion on historical grounds (for history taught that disunion could only lead to anarchy or military despotism), favored allowing the masses to articulate their views instead of giving the unscrupulous politicians on either side a monopoly on solutions. Only a settlement worked within the structure of the Union was favored by the Central Presbyterian. "We believe that disunion would be both a wrong and a blunder."²⁴

In addition, during the precession interval the ~~_____~~ ^{states} Protestants undertook an introspective examination of Virginia's position, and consensus settled upon the northern press and its fanaticism as the major contributor to sectional discord. The Baptist ~~_____~~ overview saw trouble stemming from the caldron of "party rancor" and "partisan ambition" in both North and South.²⁵ The Central Presbyterian absolved its denomination from any guilt and devolved the responsibility for the controversy upon those widely publicized northerners who hated everything southern, and on the blind northern press which refused to take the South's secession threats seriously.²⁶ And to make matters worse, the two conservative religious journals in the North, the New York Observer and the Presbyterian, did not denounce the atrocities levied against slaveholders. If the conservative northern serials refused to stand up

for the South's rights, reasoned Virginia Protestants, ~~justified~~ ^{imagine} how the majority of moderates and radicals must think. This mushrooming of abolitionist support in the North, as read by Virginia clerics, made Henry Ward Beecher's abolitionism a harbinger of things to come, "like the pointing of a weather-cock."²⁷

Although the northern press's uncompromising demand for manumission was viewed by the Virginia sects as aggravating sectionalism, misunderstanding, and contributing to the failure of conciliation, the ~~Virginia~~ ^{State} churches still rang the tocsin of moderation. Pleading for patience on the part of the South to allow those remaining conservative northerners to ameliorate the effects of abolitionist hatred and party malevolence, the churches maintained that "our political partyism, view it as we will, does not, in or about it, possess sufficient importance to justify the surrender of any man's evenness of temper to violence, to anger or enmity."²⁸

A final development, in the train of ~~the~~ Harper's Ferry ~~incident~~, ^{a further} was ~~the~~ heightening of anti-abolitionist sentiment in the Virginia Protestant churches.²⁹ St. Paul was employed to prove that abolitionists were apostates. Some might not profess atheism or agnosticism, but Virginia clerics looked on these "fanatics" as certainly anti-evangelical.³⁰ Furthermore, abolitionists were blamed for the state of turmoil in the nation, and their rule in New York was called a "reign of terror."³¹ The "demon of abolitionism" was also said to have infiltrated the Methodist Episcopal Church, which barraged ~~the~~ ^{its} churches in western Virginia with propoganda, exposing "the stench, the suffocation and the death" of slave society.³² The ~~Virginia~~ ^{Old Dominion} religious community's hatred for abolitionists grew increasingly

intense as the election of 1860 drew near.

The Virginia churches approached the election of 1860 solemnly and with a somber sense of responsibility. Concerned about the malaise between the North and South, the churches called for a day of fasting and prayer to invoke God's guidance at this crucial moment. The concept of a sanctified day of soul-searching was not unique, but the immense response it received in the religious community at this time proved the concern of Virginia churchmen over the destiny of the nation.³³

In Lynchburg at the Presbyterian Synod of Virginia in 1860, the West Hanover Presbytery moved that November 1, 1860 be a day of prayer for the country's fermented state.³⁴ Dr. Lewis Dabney, the moderator for the synod and theologian and historian at Union Theological Seminary, commissioned each pastor to preach a sermon on the duty of Christians to be peacemakers. He set the example by preaching on November 1, 1860 a sermon entitled "The Christians's Best Motive for Patriotism," in which he outlined a three-fold program for peace: continual supplication for the country and the repentance of sins, an exemplary Christian ^{an} life in all ^{spheres} ~~spheres~~ of existence, and a moderate and forbearing attitude towards the North.³⁵ Similarly, the Protestant Episcopal Church established election day as a time of humiliation and prayer.³⁶

The election of 1860 witnessed the moderation of the Virginia churches. The Religious Herald, as early as August 23, 1860, urged its readers to vote, advising only that one should vote in good conscience, keeping ⁱⁿ mind that all actions will be accounted for at the Judgment Day.³⁷ ~~Not even~~ Lincoln's ~~victory moved the~~

9

Baptists ~~did not~~ ^{to} step out of their clerical garments ~~and did not~~ ^{or} ~~hesitate~~ to ruffle their composure. In a classic example of unbiased reporting, the Religious Herald's ^{comment} ~~comment~~ on the election read:

Much controversy has been occasioned by the election of Lincoln, especially in South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. In South Carolina, steps have been taken for secession from the union.³⁸

What made this dispassion even more marked was the proposal of secession by Baptist newspapers from other states.³⁹ While the ^{Virginia} Baptists were upset by a purely sectional vote electing Lincoln and saw the eventual dissolution of the Union as probable without divine interference, they did not view ~~the election outcome~~ ^{the election outcome} as enough provocation to justify espousing the break-up of the Union.⁴⁰

Lincoln's ^{triumph} ~~triumph~~ compelled a greater response from the Virginia Presbyterians than the Baptists. A general hardening of position followed the election, ^{"the greatest calamity that ever befall this nation"} with an increase of editorials on secession in the Presbyterian press.⁴¹ ~~the election outcome~~

~~the election outcome~~ The Presbyterians expected the eventual dissolution of the Union, but did not anticipate it. They ~~felt that~~ felt that Republican aggressiveness in promoting abolition would result in war, and the election ~~of Lincoln~~ assured this aggressiveness.⁴²

Dr. Lewis Dabney reported the effects of ^{the Republican victory} ~~the election~~ on his denomination. In a letter to his mother on December 28, 1860, Dabney despondently ^{declared} ~~stated~~: "Christians seem to have lost their senses with excitement, fear, and passion; and everything seems to be hurrying to civil war. Yet moderation was still counseled."⁴³ In a later letter he proffered his conviction that although ~~the election~~ ^{the} election enhanced the nation's troubles for the next four years,

Lincoln was doomed in the 1864 ^{campaign} ~~election~~, provided the nation could stick together that long.⁴⁴

While Presbyterians from other ^{southern} states saw ^{the} ~~election~~ election results as ~~making secession imperative~~ making secession imperative, the Virginia Presbyterians felt that until the Federal government emancipated the slaves or forced Virginia to defend herself, their loyalty to the Constitution would remain unaffected.⁴⁵ In fact, the Presbyterians took the lead within the religious community in advocating a final effort to save the Union. "We think there should first be a convention; not only of the southern states, but of all the states in the union; that one more and final effort may be made to avoid dismemberment."⁴⁶ In essence, the Virginia Presbyterians interpreted Lincoln's ^{victory} ~~election~~ as an ominous warning of worse things to come.⁴⁷

^{It} ~~election~~ was not the last straw. But it was one of the last.

Prior to the election of 1860, the Virginia churches viewed divine intervention as the sure solution to the sectional controversy, for only God's sovereign will kept the country ^{united} ~~united~~ in the first place.⁴⁸

Thus, the importance of prayer for the nation was continually emphasized.⁴⁹ As soon as ^{the Republican triumph} ~~the election~~ was evident, the Virginia churches felt that further ^{supplications} ~~prayer~~ were needed, and the Baptists

^{stampede} led the the ~~people~~ to the closets by requesting another fast and prayer day.⁵⁰ ^{The Episcopalian Bishop William} ~~Meade~~ Meade ran into a dead end, however, when he attempted

to persuade the Virginia governor to appoint a statewide fast ~~day~~ day, so he took the matter into his own jurisdiction and appointed the first Friday in January as a day of fasting and prayer.⁵¹ Presently,

President Buchanan joined the movement, setting aside January 4, 1861 as a day of prayer for the nation's condition.⁵² Essentially, both

North and South believed that the onus for the nation's quandary lay in the sins on both their shoulders. The South had not mitigated the evils inherent in the slavery system, and the entire nation, especially the North, had not appreciated its wealth, liberty and blessings.⁵³

Each individual ~~must~~^{had to} clean his own house before the nation deserved to be saved by God. And the only panacea the church could see for a dirty house was prayer.

With the growing realization that God was not heeding these supplications, as evidenced by the election of Lincoln, the Virginia churches responded by interpreting the impending conflict as a form of divine chastisement and divine will, and by intensifying their prayers for divine intervention. The theory that God employed war as a chastisement and extirpation of sins was universally accepted among Virginia Protestants. And the religious leaders found ample sins in ~~Virginia~~^{the state} and in the South which God could punish.

The South's "lazy dependence on the industry of the North" was a major transgression, and only the furnace of war could weld together the ~~South's~~^{region's} factious jealousies.⁵⁴ Other major sins, as interpreted by the Virginia clerics, included the South's sanctioning of corrupt local, state and federal governments by voting for godless politicians, and the ungratefulness and disloyalty towards

God displayed by Virginians.⁵⁵ Truly, the clerics asserted, ~~Virginia~~^{the Old Dominion} needed chastising, but she should pray that God's love would overlook her sins and He would not use the North to effect His predetermined plan, namely, the purification and sanctification of the South⁵⁶

But even if God's plan did include war for ~~Virginia~~^{the state}, it was because the

Lord chastised those whom he loved best.⁵⁷

Let us remember, no matter how just the cause in which we are now engaged, our past offenses, and our present denial of our entire dependence upon God for all our strength, wisdom and resources, will bring with them the chastising rod of an ever King, but much abused and insulted Saviour.⁵⁸

The second response of the Virginia churches involved a frantic plea to God for direct divine assistance.⁵⁹ If the Union were preserved by man, it was believed that the critical issues would remain unsettled. Only God could change the northern politicians' uncompromising hearts to perceive slavery as lawful, moral and biblical. Furthermore, if disunion occurred, no one could be assured that Virginia would achieve more mutual concord with the other confederate states than with the North.⁶⁰

The Virginia churches' aversion to mixing politics and religion, whether in the pulpit or the press, ~~waned~~^{waned} temporarily after the election of 1860. The Protestant Episcopal Church was primarily involved in palliative efforts between the high and low church factions, and only rarely did political matters erupt in their propaganda vehicle, the Southern Churchman.⁶¹ Immediately following the election of Lincoln, however, the newspaper's coverage of political topics increased greatly. The editor advocated political involvement for the church by its assuming the role of arbiter between the two political powers.⁶² The adventure into the secular world was short-lived, though. On February 15, 1861, the editors guiltily claimed that their previous behavior

was intended only to request wisdom from God, and refused to publish two letters written about the sectional problem on the basis that the serial was sacrosanct to the propogation of the gospel. Even after Lincoln's call for troops and the certainty of war, the Southern Churchman avowed its intention not to speak of political events, and as late as May 3, 1861, the editors dedicated its ministry to lecturing on the evils of war, and alleviating sectional rancor.⁶³

Bishop William Meade supplemented this stand with his affirmation that "any approach to meddling in politics is considered non episcopal," and when he did delve into political matters after the call for volunteers, he did so cautiously, justifying his remarks in that "the cause of religion is so deeply involved."⁶⁴

Likewise, Charles F. E. Minnengerode, pastor at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia, refrained from preaching on politics in the pulpit both during and after the secession crisis.⁶⁵

Illustrating the Baptist leadership in separating religious from secular matters, an editorial ^{in the Religious Herald} entitled "Our Duty in the Present Crisis," pledged that "We shall speak only of the obligations which rest upon all Christian men, no matter to what policy they incline or what party they attach themselves."⁶⁶ Also, the editors congratulated the Baptist clergy for not preaching politics on the national fast day, but ^{for} beseeching God's guidance and providence in the crisis.⁶⁷

After the request for troops, the issues of the Religious Herald ^{were} filled with political matters, but moderation on dabbling into politics was still invoked.⁶⁸ An in-

cident that occurred to Reverend Addison Hall portrays the dislike of political participation. After he returned to his pastorate from the Virginia State ^{Secession} Convention, he was censured for having abandoned his clerical duties to tamper with matters of state.⁶⁹

The election of Lincoln, too, wrought an immense deviation in Presbyterian policy. Previously, the church had stated its intention not to interfere in partisan politics.⁷⁰ But with Lincoln's ^{victory} ~~election~~, it ~~was~~ concluded that since the welfare of both church and state ~~was~~ ^{were} inextricably involved, the church must express its views on the political crisis openly.⁷¹ In fact, so open were the Presbyterians that they proposed a list of wants and grievances.

^{The former included}
~~...that an amended~~ Constitution relieving the South's difficulties, or a "proper guarantee for the future protection of our constitutional claims," which meant the return of fugitive slaves, and the extension of slavery into the territories.⁷²

The ~~list of~~ grievances enumerated the usurpation of rights on the part of the North. Negro^{es} had been given equality and the concomitant ^{northern} legislative program was hostile to the South's interests. The North had favored ^{prohibiting} ~~abolishing~~ slavery in the territories and not admitt^{ing} ~~ing~~ to the Union of slaveholding states. ^{It} ~~They~~ had abolished slavery in the District of Columbia and in southern forts and dockyards directly under Congressional jurisdiction. The northern press had been excessively vituperative in its condemnation of ~~slavery~~ ^{the institution}. The pressure applied by Congress and the press was definitely prodding the South into secession.⁷³ The major bone of contention for the Presbyterians, though, centered in the fugitive slave debate. Northern fugitive-slave laws were designed to steal, not protect, the South's property, the Presbyterians

maintained,⁷⁴ William Brown, writing to Charles Hodge of Princeton Seminary, affirmed Virginia's intention not to accept full payment in money for the fugitive slaves. The South would not be an accomplice to any ^{pretty} disobedience of the Constitution.⁷⁵

On December 20, 1860, a special convention meeting in Charleston, South Carolina voted unanimously to secede from the Union. The reaction in the Virginia religious community was twofold. ^{At} First, ^{it} warned the Federal government not to intervene. ~~in South Carolina's secession.~~ Any measure ~~to~~ to thwart a state from seceding, the Central Presbyterian ~~convention~~ warned, would reverse Virginia's moderate stand on secession.⁷⁶ Dr. Dabney^{also} asserted this in a letter early in 1861 to Moses Drury Hoge, in which he affirmed the right of the President to fortify garrisons, but said:

If any attempt were made to subdue South Carolina herself, without first offering to her such a redress of her federal grievances as would be satisfactory to the moderate, just majority of her southern sisters, I would say 'Hands off, at your peril.'⁷⁷

The second response of the churches to South Carolina's secession ^{combined} ~~involved~~ a greater ^{awareness} ~~consciousness~~ of the widening ^{the secession} chasm between North and South, and a denunciation of ~~South Carolina's~~ ^{ordinance} ~~secession~~.

⁷⁸ The Southern Churchman outlined the economic, political and social rashness of ~~South Carolina's secession~~ ^{the act.} and the Religious Herald, pleading for moderation, construed the secession of South Carolina as creating a suction, drawing in all her sister states into severance from the Union.⁷⁹ The Presbyterian Dabney, however, most caustically condemned South Carolina for her abrasive action:

As for South Carolina, the little impudent vixen has gone beyond all patience. She is as great a pest the abolitionists. And if I could have my way, they might whip her to her heart's content, so

they would only do it by sea, and not pester us.⁸⁰

The Washington Peace Conference convening on February 4, 1861, and a unionist ^{dominated} Virginia Convention, meeting from February 13 to April 17, 1861, were ~~enthusiastic~~ ^{both} enthusiastic, ^{ally} supported ^{by} the ^{state's} ~~Virginia~~ churches.

On a unionist platform, Reverend Addison Hall, a Baptist minister, was elected to the ^{Virginia} State Convention, ~~was~~ the only clerical representative.⁸¹ The Presbyterians, led by Dr. Dabney, saw in ~~the~~ ^{the Washington} meeting ~~a~~ chance to ward off the collision between South Carolina and the Federal government, and to demand southern rights "within the Union."⁸²

The Methodists and Episcopalians, too, looked upon the Washington Conference and the Virginia State Convention as promising a possible peace solution, the ^{Episcopalians} ~~Methodists~~ even going so far as to caution its members back in the January elections not to vote for radicals running for delegate seats.⁸³

As soon as Lincoln called for volunteers, however, ~~this~~ this moderation was nullified. God had removed His sable of peace from Virginia and replaced it with the breastplate of war. The churches not only accepted this breastplate, but wore it.

The Protestant Episcopal Church was placed in a most awkward position, ~~position~~. She was the only major denomination that had not been rent asunder into northern and southern branches by the various splits over the last twenty-five years. Yet she accepted the war as "divine providence." Bishop Meade told how he "clung with tenacity to the hope of preserving the Union to the last moment." In two letters dated January 12 and January 18, 1861, he stated his belief that "self-interest to the men of the world, religion with the pious, and patriotism with the few who know the feeling will save us."⁸⁴

As soon as Lincoln called for troops, however, Bishop Meade approved Virginia's efforts to resist invasion, ^{adding,} "I have slowly and reluctantly come to the conclusion that we must separate." The Union had become hateful and oppressive by its use of force.⁸⁵

The Baptists, led by Reverend Addison Hall, felt ^{that} ~~of~~ Lincoln's call ~~that Virginia~~ forced ^{the state} ~~by Lincoln~~ into a cul-de-sac demanding secession. Since "subjugation is the idea of northern fanaticism," Virginia has only one alternative.⁸⁶ But even though the Baptists supported secession and war, they took a ^{position similar} ~~similar position~~ ^{to} ~~that of~~ the Methodists and called on Christians not to hate the North, but to fight, ^{only} because ^{only} war could ^{restore} ~~bring~~ peace to Virginia.⁸⁷

Among the Presbyterians, Lincoln's proclamation transformed the remaining unionists and pacifists into disunionists and warmongers.⁸⁸

"In one week the whole state has been converted into a camp."⁸⁹

Dr. Dabney, who in January had disavowed any intent of secession, now became "defiant" towards the North. He had supported the Constitutional Union ticket, ^{in 1860,} but now that his honor had been insulted and the relationship with the North had reached the bottom of the well, he vowed to rise with other Virginians to defend the mother state.⁹⁰

This crystallization of clerical support for secession after Lincoln's call for volunteers presented a unique problem to the Virginia churches. Even though war was viewed as a tool for divine chastisement, more earthly justification was needed ~~to~~ ^{for} the churches' stand ^{in a conflict that} ~~in a conflict that~~ could only drench Virginia in showers of blood, not blessings.⁹¹

The Presbyterians ~~specifically~~ ^{platform} adhered to the ~~platform~~ of the Virginia politicians. The compact clause, as expressed in the Virginia

State Constitution, was promulgated as the basis for dissolution.⁹²

Dr. Dabney applied this to Fort Sumter. He maintained that the Federal government's only reason ~~for fortifications~~ ^{for fortifications} ~~in southern states~~ ^a was to protect that state. Since South Carolina seceded, the United States no longer had a right to man the fort.⁹³

The first act of war was committed by the government of Washington against South Carolina, when fortresses intended lawfully, only for her protection, were armed for her subjugation . . . an act of strict self-defense - - the reduction of Fort Sumter.⁹⁴

Herein lay the keystone for the Virginia churches justification for the war. An offensive war was condemned as criminal and evil, but a defensive war, forced upon a people, was "justifiable before God."⁹⁵ Dabney had warned in January ~~1861~~ ¹⁸⁶¹ ~~that Virginia would defend her rights~~ in "A Pacific Appeal to Christians," addressed to the nation's churches and appended with the signatures of many prominent scholars and churchmen. ^{that Virginia would defend her rights} ^{the Old Dominion} Asking that ~~Virginia~~ not "initiate the sin," he submitted, "Is there not still ground to hope that ~~the~~ the southern people would carefully avoid complicating their righteous cause by any undue haste, or by impinging upon existing laws, or even prejudice, more than the absolute necessities of self-defense require."⁹⁶

Not only had the Virginia Protestants not initiated the sin, the clerics advanced, but every effort had been exerted to avoid it. The opposition to secession among Virginia churches did not arise from infidelity to the state, though, but from fidelity to the Scriptures, which taught longsuffering, compromise, patriotism, peace, and a "Christ-like" attitude towards the North.⁹⁷ ^{Virginia's} Yet ~~the~~ forbearance almost buried her. "She bore the olive branch until

it was stricken from her hand with the drawn sword."⁹⁸

About

~~this~~ this interpretation, many pregnant assumptions could be made.

First~~ly~~, Virginia had no other alternative than secession, "having the war forced upon us," and "the guilt [for disunion] lay not at our door."⁹⁹ Hence she took the role of the "murdered mother,"

not only defending her homeland, but defending her time-honored doctrine of state sovereignty.¹⁰⁰ Second~~ly~~, Virginia could feel

secure in the cradle of self-defense, knowing amid~~st~~ the turbulence and killing that she had not been responsible for the war's

onset.¹⁰¹ But perhaps most important, the Virginia churches could be assured that God supported their cause. Since his answer to their

pleas had come in the form of northern aggression, the churchmen enjoyed a sign from God, and were assured that conciliation with the

North was not part of the divine plan for ~~Virginia~~^{the state}. This was a powerful prop~~o~~ganda and morale device, establishing Virginia as the

chosen of God and insuring her of victory over the aggressor.¹⁰²

In summary, the ~~Virginia~~ churches' sectionalism became religious, and ~~their~~^{their} religion sectional.

The Virginia Protestants had witnessed the Federal government's use of coercion to prevent secession. Civil war was imminent.

But in contrast ~~to~~^{to} ~~the~~ secular newspapers, which immediately reveled in odious prop~~o~~ganda, conditioning Virginians in the

kernels of war - - malice, acrimony, and hatred - - the religious serials steered away from political polemics and concentrated on

practical problems.¹⁰³ For example, ~~they complained~~^{they complained} of numerical deficiencies both in the clergy and laity, and of the need for organization in a period of general disorganization. In

addition, the rampant delinquency of parishoners in fulfilling their financial obligations was noted by the religious leaders with fitting exhortations to execute one's Christian duties and pay the tithe.¹⁰⁴ ~~the~~ Colportage efforts in the army were also promoted, the Baptists being the first to start ~~their~~ ^{an} intensified program in early May, 1861.¹⁰⁵

For the Presbyterians, the first Virginia religious group to contemplate secession seriously, apprehensions about the effects of war upon the denomination came early.¹⁰⁶ As far back as May 29, 1860, the Central Presbyterian propounded that political separation from the North should not entail a denominational separation.¹⁰⁷ Re-emphasising this in May, ~~of~~ 1861, the editors contended that governments instituted by man for his good often need revamping whereas the church, established by God, should never divide. "Those whom God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

While the above concerns pervaded many of the documents written after ~~the~~ ^{inevitable} secession became ~~apparent~~, two issues received more attention than all the rest: the want of spirituality precipitated by political conditions and the preoccupation of men's minds with war; the need ^{to} ~~of~~ support ~~for~~ Virginia's position.

In the words of Erasmus, "War does precisely more harm to the morals of men than even to their property and persons," and any analysis of the sources of this period ~~reveals~~ reveals the awareness of Virginia churches of this allegation. The religious leaders continuously exhorted ~~the~~ ^{their} brethren to abstain from the evils of war, and ~~to fight on a high plane of ethics. Only in this way could moral decay~~ ^{to fight on a high plane of ethics. Only in this way could moral decay} ~~and~~ ^{be averted} ~~be averted~~.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, the ~~churches~~ ^{churches warned that} ~~the~~

military or political involvement must not supercede religious commitments.
~~on the ground that the true Christian impulse would result in moral
 decay, presumed to be a condition that for conflict should be employed,
 not based on hatred and ill-will, but on a high plane of ethics.~~

109

The role of the churches in stiffening the backbone of the Confederacy has been aptly discussed by ^{the historian W.} James Silver. But the willingness of the churches, ^{to function as a morale booster,} following Lincoln's request for troops, ~~to function as a morale booster.~~ needs further accent. 110

Quickly undertaking comparative studies, the religious publicists paralleled the sectional hostilities with periods in which persecution was imposed upon God's righteous remnant. 111 Further, the churches immediately consecrated a set time during each Sabbath as a prayer session for the Confederacy and their "struggle for independence." 112 Ineluctably, these entreaties for ~~divine~~ strength in this divine conflict could not help but promote an indomitable conviction that God's sympathies and support lay on the south side of the Mason Dixon Line.

CONCLUSION

The temperament of the Virginia churches in the secession crisis was moderate. Yet, ideologically the ^{religious} ~~Virginia~~ leaders were in harmony with the political philosophy of such radical a state as South Carolina. The Virginia clergy believed in states' rights, the compact theory and the right of secession. The ~~only~~ difference that existed between the churches in Virginia and in the South was in Virginia's maintenance of a high toleration threshold for northern provocation. The question of what caused the Virginia Protestants to employ such moderation while other southern states were seceding is an important one. The fact that the political doctrine of both the Virginia clergy and her southern counterparts was almost identical makes the question even more crucial.

Virginia's ties to the Union were strong, for they were couched in emotion and rooted in tradition. She proudly earned the sobriquet "mother state" by ~~giving~~ giving birth to the Union and ~~supplying~~ supplying its first leaders and political theorists. Hence, it was very unlikely that the mother would abandon her son without great provocation.

Also, the Virginia clergy, while adhering to a political philosophy, kept politics to themselves. Their great commission only allowed them to be sectarian, not secular. With hesitation, therefore, the Virginia churches became involved in the sectional crisis. John Brown's raid did little to disrupt their absorption in religious matters, as they shrugged off the incident as a puny plot promoted by a small band of fanatics. ~~Starting~~ With the election of Lincoln.

however, the total religious orientation of the Virginia churches abated.

The churches' reaction to this foreign political environment was conditioned by their religious framework. Consulting the Scriptures to find a cure for sectional estrangement and hatred, caused in the clergy's view by the perfidious abolitionists, the Virginia churches found that biblically they were enjoined to be slow to anger, full of kindness, and plentiful in mercy. Thus, the ~~Virginia~~ churches' moderation was religiously based on the conviction that God desired them to display temperance, and politically based on the strong links that tradition placed between Virginia and the Union.

Generally, the Virginia ^{Protestants} ~~churches~~ subscribed to the theological school of fe-deism. The view that God worked in history to effect his plan for the nation (later narrowed to the South), however, did not allow for clerical laxity in praying. Consistently, the ~~Virginia~~ churches called for prayer, hoping that the biblical dictates of peace and moderation would prevail in the sectional crisis.

The supplications bore fruit, but not of the type anticipated. Instead of God answering these prayers with the flowers of peace and union, he gave to mother Virginia the thorn of a son's aggression. Abandoning the teachings of his mother for those of the abolitionists, the son rose up to murder the one who had given him birth. No longer was the mother's son prodigal. After Lincoln's call for troops he was unreclaimable. Regretfully, she had no recourse but to defend herself.

In this way, Lincoln's ^{proclamation} ~~request for troops~~ united the Virginia

churches in favor of secession. As interpreted by the ~~Virginia~~
 clergy, ^{this} ~~Lincoln's~~ action ~~had~~ proved that God's sovereign plan
^{the state} for ~~Virginia~~ did not include reconciliation with the North. Casting
 aside former moderation, the Virginia Protestants prepared to obey
 the will of God and defend themselves.

The sublimity of the Virginia churches' persuasion in their
 moral rectitude in espousing secession is revealed by the original
 emblem of Virginia with which she reunited after her secession from
 the Union. A crowned virgin, adorned in an antique jeweled coronet,
 symbolized her retreat into a former, pristine, natural existence.
 Soon her sins would be purged, her chastisement completed, her
 rights vindicated. Her God would find her faultless in this
 worst of all wars, ~~an~~ matricide.

FOOTNOTES

1. W. Harrison Daniel has analyzed the response of the southern churches to the secession movement. As a whole, ~~the churches~~ not until the election of Lincoln did the churches discuss secession seriously, and then they only promulgated arguments already formulated by the politicians and press. See ~~W. H.~~ Daniel, "Southern Protestantism and Secession," 29, No. 3 (May 1967), 408.
The Historian,
2. From October 29, 1859 to December 17, 1859, in continual and lengthy articles, the Central Presbyterian discussed the John Brown incident. On the other hand, the Episcopal Southern Churchman contained no editorial mention of John Brown except on April 20, 1860 and May 10, 1861. The Baptist Religious Herald commented on the incident only in a descriptive fashion until January 5, 1860, ¹³ the first and last editorial criticism of Harper's Ferry. In the Virginia Methodist Episcopal Church, South, there is no mention of the raid either in the minutes of the Virginia Annual Conference, 1859, or in the diary of a leading Virginia Methodist clergyman, Franck Stanley. See Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for the year 1859 (Nashville, Tennessee, 1860). Diary of Franck Stanley, 1859.
3. Southern Churchman, October 14, 21, 28, 1859.
4. Central Presbyterian, October 29, 1859; April 7, 1860; Southern Churchman, April 20, 1860.
5. Central Presbyterian, October 29, 1859, December 3, 17, 24, 1859. Southern Churchman, May 10, 1861; Richmond Enquirer, January 6, 1860. In the December 17 issue of the Central Presbyterian, excerpts were printed from some northern newspapers (Tribune, New York Sun, New York Times, Daily News) to show that most northerners condemned the raid. For evidence of a less moderate Virginia reaction outside the religious community, see Henry T. Shanks, The Secession Movement in Virginia, 1847-1861 (Richmond, Virginia, 1934), 85-88.
6. Clifford Dowdey, The Land They Fought For (New York, 1955), 64.
7. Elon (Dover) Minutes Book, 1857-1884, 40. Compare Central Presbyterian, September 15, 1860 with November 12, 1859.
8. For a typical discussion of this point, see Central Presbyterian, November 12, 1859.
9. Religious Herald, January 5, 1860.
10. Central Presbyterian, March 31, 1860.
11. Religious Herald, January 12, 1860; Central Presbyterian, December 24, 1859.
12. Central Presbyterian, October 27, 1860.

13. Ibid. For a discussion of this after secession was a fact, see Rev. T.V. Moore, "God our Refuge and Strength in This War," a discourse before the congregations of the First and Second Presbyterian Churches, on the day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, appointed by President Davis, Friday, November 15, 1861 (Richmond, Virginia, 1861), 9.
14. Haskell Monroe proposes that beginning in 1861 the Presbyterians began to identify more entirely with her sister states. Haskell Monroe, "Southern Presbyterians and the Secession Crisis," Civil War History, 6, No. 4, 358.
15. So far removed in the Baptist and Presbyterian minds loomed the possibility of secession that task forces were ordered in both bodies to study the ratio of their chaplains in the United States Army and Navy to the other denominations, and to remedy any deficits that might be found. Minutes of the Baptist General Association of Virginia held in the town of Staunton, May, 1860 (Richmond, Virginia, 1860), 24; Minutes of the Synod of Virginia, at their session in Lynchburg, October, 1860, 260.
16. In a revealing letter by Moses Drury Hoge in November of 1859, a complaint is proffered over the lack of fear about disunion. As abolitionist fervor became more representative of the North, talk about disruption of the Union accelerated. The Central Presbyterian too warned that if the abolitionism of the northern press represented the entire North, war was the only recourse. See Peyton Harrison Hoge, Moses Drury Hoge: Life and Letters (Richmond, Virginia, 1899), 138-139; Central Presbyterian, November 17, 24, 1860.
17. On February 23, 1861, William Brown, editor of the Central Presbyterian, wrote that the vast majority of the North could not be abolitionists, for the Union still stood. But the fact that abolitionism ~~gained~~ flourished in the North could not be denied in Brown's eyes. Central Presbyterian, February 23, 1861, March 29, 1861.
ed. George M. Fredrickson (Cambridge, Mass., 1968)
18. Hinton Rowan Helper, Impending Crisis, xxix-xxx.
19. Central Presbyterian, March 17, 1860.
20. Ibid.; Southern Churchman, December 28, 1860.
21. Ibid.
22. Southern Churchman, December 28, 1860.
23. Religious Herald, January 26, 1860. A most humorous solution was suggested by an elderly Virginia Baptist lady. She proposed that sectional strife might be ended by the Baptists sending thousands of tracts to northern ~~post~~ offices where they then would be distributed to those who needed them. The editors sympathized with the end she desired, but not with her means. Religious Herald, August 9, 1860.

24. Central Presbyterian, October 27, 1860.
25. Elon (Dover) Minutes Book, 40.
26. Central Presbyterian, October 27, 1860; November 24, 1860. For evidence of this widespread northern belief in the inanity of southern threats at secession, see the diary of Gideon Welles, a northerner who viewed the South as more united and in favor of secession than ~~his northern friends~~ thought possible. Gideon Welles, Diary (New York, 1911), 10-11.
27. Religious Herald, February 21, 1861; Central Presbyterian, December 1, 8, 1869; March 16, 1861.
28. Southern Churchman, January 25, 1861; Religious Herald, February 25, 1861.
29. Shanks has found two events that managed to intensify Virginia's hatred for abolitionists after John Brown's raid—the debate over a Speaker for the House of Representatives⁽¹⁸⁵⁹⁾ and the intransigence of Iowa and Ohio in refusing to hand over the cohorts of John Brown. Shanks, Secession Movement in Virginia, 90.
30. Religious Herald, May 31, 1860; Southern Churchman, April 20, 1860. For a good example of the acute hatred of abolitionists, and the Virginia churches' view of them as infidels, see Robert L. Dabney, A Defense of Virginia, and through her, of the South, in Recent and Pending Contests Against the Sectional Party, (New York, 1867).
31. Southern Churchman, January 4, 1861; Central Presbyterian, April 7; August 4, 1860.
32. Central Presbyterian, June 2, 1860. C.H. Ambler, "Cleavage Between Eastern and Western Virginia," American Historical Review, XV, 770-774. Only in western Virginia were there churches of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And only in western Virginia was there a desire to abolish slavery and to begin internal improvements. This western Virginia conference voted against changing the Methodist rule on slavery, which stated that there should be no buying or selling of slaves. See Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Buffalo, New York, 1860 (London, 1860), 181.
33. Southern Churchman, January 27, 1860.
34. Synod Minutes of Virginia, October, 1860, 263; Central Presbyterian, October 20, 1860; Lexington Presbytery, meeting at Augusta Church, October 4, 1860, 240.
35. Thomas Cary Johnson, The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney, (Richmond, 1903), 212-213. Dr. Dabney, if we are to believe his biographer, is a prime example of the sublime tragedy. Even though he saw the "imminence of war" (Dabney refused to accept a position at Princeton for this reason), he strove to avert the conflict.

36. Southern Churchman, November 2, 1860.
37. Religious Herald, November 29, 1860. For a discussion of Baptist moderation, see W. Harrison Daniel, "The Southern Baptists in the Confederacy," Civil War History, 6, No. 4, 389. The very fact that the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church did not record any reactions to the election would in itself suggest a temperate response. ~~_____~~
38. Religious Herald, August 23, 1860; November 18, 1860.
39. ~~_____~~ Daniel, "Southern Baptists in Confederacy," 389-390.
40. Elon (Dover) Minutes Book, 50.
41. Central Presbyterian, November 17, 24, 1860. In the December 8, 15, 1860 issues, the editors asserted that Virginia must not be a passive member of the South in their defense of rights. Virginia is obliged to insure her people against aggression.
42. Central Presbyterian, November 24, 1860; March 9, 1861; Robert Lewis Dabney, Defense of Virginia, 353. The fact that the Central Presbyterian spoke for most Virginia Presbyterians is evidenced by the Lexington Presbytery's resolution on November 16, 1860, to circulate the serial by gift subscriptions or any other means possible.
43. Johnson, Dabney, 214; Southern Churchman, January 25, 1860.
44. See Dabney's remarks in a letter to Moses Drury Hoge, January 4, 1861, as cited in Johnson, Dabney, 221.
45. James H. Thornwell, a South Carolina Presbyterian, wrote to Dabney on November 24, 1860 that the election of Lincoln forced him to a secessionist viewpoint. Johnson, Dabney, 224; Robert Lewis Dabney, Defense of Virginia, 353. This loyalty to the Constitution, however, was really loyalty to the Constitution's guarantee to protect Virginia's rights. After the election of Lincoln, there is a subtle shift in Presbyterian thought. Talk about preservation of the Union ~~is~~ changed ~~to~~ talk about the preservation of Virginia's rights within the Union. See Central Presbyterian, December 8, 1860; Johnson, Dabney, 223.
46. Central Presbyterian, November 24, 1860.
47. Central Presbyterian, December 8, 1860.
48. Journal of the 65th Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia held in Christ Church, Charlottesville on May 17-20, 1860, 73; Central Presbyterian, October 13, 1860; Southern Churchman, December 23, 1859; January 27, 1860; Religious Herald, February 28, 1861.
49. Journal of 65th Convention of Protestant Episcopal Church, 73. Southern Churchman December 23, 1859.

- 50. Religious Herald, November 22, 1860.
- 51. In a letter to the Assistant Bishop on December 9, 1860, Bishop Meade discussed the Governor's refusal to appoint a fast day. See John Johns, A Memoir of the Life of the Right Reverend William Meade, D.D. (Baltimore, 1867), 495; Southern Churchman, December 14, 1860.
- 52. Southern Churchman, December 28, 1860; Central Presbyterian, December 22, 1860.
- 53. Southern Churchman, December 28, 1860.
- 54. Moore, "God Our Refuge," 9-11.
- 55. Southern Churchman, November 23, 1860; December 14, 21, 1860; January 18, 1861; Religious Herald, May 23, 1861; Central Presbyterian, December 15, 1860.
- 56. Southern Churchman, December 21, 1860; Moore, "God Our Refuge," 6,8.
- 57. Southern Churchman, November 23, 1860. Religious Herald, May 23, 1861.
- 58. Religious Herald, May 23, 1861.
- 59. Religious Herald, December 6, 1860; February 28, 1861; Southern Churchman, November 23, 1860; December 7,14,21, 1860; January 4, 11, 1861; February 15, 1861; Central Presbyterian, November 17, 1860; December 8, 22, 29, 1860; Bishop William Meade, Sermon Preached by Bishop Meade at the Opening of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Convention of Virginia in the city of Richmond, Virginia, (Richmond, 1861), 19.
- 60. Southern Churchman, January 4, 11, 1861.
- 61. Southern Churchman, July 6, 1860.
- 62. Southern Churchman, December 14, 1860 to February 15, 1861; Southern Churchman, December 28, 1860.
- 63. Southern Churchman, April 19; May 3, 1861.
- 64. Johns, Memoir of Meade, 493; Meade, Sermon, 24.
- 65. Rev. Charles F. E. Minningerode, D.D., Presbyter of the Diocese of Virginia, (New York, 1895), 15. ^{had} Dr. Minningerode ~~was~~ many prominent Confederate leaders as parishoners^{including} Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, Generals Cooper, Ewell, and Longstreet.
- 66. From May 31, 1860 to August 9, 1860, there is utter silence on any political matter in the Religious Herald. ~~Religious Herald~~ ~~December 14, 1860~~ The stand of the Methodist press and churches is uncertain. It is plausible, however, that the Methodists followed the same pattern as the Baptists and Episcopalians. The "Stewards Book of Centenary Church, 1857-1867," ~~was~~

~~is lacking any~~ ^{has no} direct reference to the sectional problem or war. See Floyd S. Bennett, Methodist Church on Shochoe Hill, (Richmond, 1961), 58.

67. Religious Herald, January 10, 1861.
68. Religious Herald, April 25, 1861.
69. T.S. Dunaway, Life and Writings of Reverend Addison Hall, (Philadelphia, 1872), 74.
70. Central Presbyterian, March 3; May 26; June 16, 1860.
71. Central Presbyterian, December 8, 1860, January 5, 1861. Again, there seemed to be a fissure between the denominational newspaper and denominational leaders. Dr. Lewis Dabney counseled Moses Drury Hoge that "we ministers, when acting ministerially, publicly, or any way representatively of such, should seem to have no politics . ." and later "condemned those preachers who turned their sermons into political speeches." See letter to Moses Drury Hoge, January 4, 1861, as cited in Peyton Harrison Hoge, Moses Drury Hoge, 139; Also, Johnson, Dabney, 218.
72. Central Presbyterian, December 8, 1861, January 5, 1861.
73. Central Presbyterian, December 15, 1860.
74. Central Presbyterian, December 15, 22, 1860; January 26, 1861; March 9, 1861.
75. Central Presbyterian, March 9, 1861. In all the correspondences between Charles Hodge of Princeton Seminary and William Brown, editor of the Central Presbyterian, Richmond, Virginia, as published in the Central Presbyterian, January 19, 26; March 2, 9, 16, 1861, the Dred Scott decision is used to fortify the South's position. The North, Brown adamantly held, violated the law, not the South.
76. Central Presbyterian, December 8, 29, 1860.
77. Peyton Harrison Hoge, Moses Drury Hoge, letter dated January 4, 1861, 141. Rev. Hoge bought slaves to set them free, but refused to condemn others who owned slaves. He pushed for ~~the~~ a colonization scheme. For evidence of Dabney's later changing his mind on the right of the Federal government to fortify garrisons, see Central Presbyterian, April 27, 1861, and Johnson, Dabney, 229.
78. Southern Churchman, December 7, 1860; Religious Herald, November 22, 1860; Central Presbyterian, December, 29, 1860.

79. Southern Churchman, December 14, 1860; Religious Herald, November 22, 1860, January 24, 1861.
80. Johnson, Dabney, 215. Also see Dabney's letter to Moses Drury Hoge on January 4, 1861, as printed by Johnson, Dabney, 221. There was another more conciliatory reaction to South Carolina secession within the Presbyterian Church. This element proposed: "nothing will be gained by throwing obstacles in her way - - Nothing will be lost by treating her with kindness." See Central Presbyterian, December 29, 1860.
81. T.S. Dunaway, Addison Hall, 72-74.
82. Central Presbyterian, November 24, 1860; February 16, 1861. Johnson, Dabney, 223.
83. Richmond Christian Advocate, February 14, 1861. Southern Churchman, February 15, 1861 and January 25, 1861. It seems quite incongruous for the churches to pray for divine intervention as the last hope while simultaneously supporting human efforts to ward off the conflict. The answer *lies perhaps* ~~is~~ in that old adage, "God only helps those who help themselves." See Central Presbyterian, December 1, 1860, in which the editors condemn some northern journals for advocating prayer without any specific program.
84. Southern Churchman, April 19, 1861. Meade, Sermon, 26; Philip Slaughter, Memior of the Life of the Right Reverend William Meade, D.D. (Cambridge, 1885), 31; Johns, Memoir, 493.
85. Compare the letter written by Bishop Meade dated January 12, 1861, as cited in Slaughter, Memoir, 31, with the one written on May 8, 1861, as cited in Johns, Memoir, 496 and Meade, Sermon, 26. In contrast to Meade's opinion that Virginia should secede after Lincoln's call for troops, the Southern Churchman reacted quite meekly, as the paper fatally resigned itself to a de facto state. Since Virginia had decided on secession, "Our duty therefore as Christians is to submit to the government over us." See Southern Churhcmán, April 26, 1861. But the fact that Bishop Meade's address to the Convention of the Diocese of Virginia on May 16, 1861, was adopted by the Convention as representative of their feelings seems to suggest that his view exemplified more precisely the tenor of Virginia Episcopal opinion than the Southern Churchman in this matter. But both were in accordance in one respect. A lack of emotional writing characterized their remarks, and no evidence of hatred towards the North was displayed. Both emphatically denounced harboring hatred towards the North. See Journal of the 66th Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia held in St. Paul's Church, Richmond, on May 16-17, 1861, (Richmond, 1861), 62-63. Southern Churchman, April 26; May 3, 1861. Religious Herald, May 30, 1861.

86. T.S. Dunaway, Addison Hall, 72-73; Religious Herald, May 9, 1861, Minutes of the Baptist General Association of Virginia held in the city of Petersburg, June, 1861 (Richmond, 1863), 15.
87. Richmond Christian Advocate, June 13, 1861. Religious Herald, May 16, 30, 1861. "Bishop John Cowper Granbery," The John P. Branch Historical Paper, II, No. 3 and 4, 190-191. The Southern Churchman entertained similar sentiments in the April 19, 1861 issue.
88. Central Presbyterian, April 20, 1861; Peyton Harrison Hoge, Moses Drury Hoge, 144.
89. Central Presbyterian, April 27, 1861.
90. Johnson, Dabney, 222-228. Central Presbyterian, April 20, 1861. Another minister who voted for the Constitutional Union party was the Methodist Edward P. Wilson. See diary entry, November 5, 1860.
91. It seems that the more certain the war became prior to Lincoln's call for troops, the more the churches toned down their proposals for God's use of war for purification. Instead, they emphasized the bloody aspects of war and its immense destruction. See Slaughter, Memior, 34; Religious Herald, January 24; March 14, 1861.
92. Central Presbyterian, December 15, 1860, April 27, 1861.
93. Central Presbyterian, April 27, 1861.
94. Johnson, Dabney, 229.
95. T.V. Moore, "God Our Refuge," 8, Meade, Sermon, 24.
96. Johnson, Dabney, 215-217; See also Dr. Dabney's sermon in November, 1860, as cited in Johnson, 213, in which he called on Virginia Christians to lead in temperance and moderation.
97. Meade, Sermon, 24; Religious Herald, April 25, 1861; Central Presbyterian, April 27, 1861; Johnson, Dabney, 225-228.
99. Baptist General Associations, June, 1861, 16; Central Presbyterian, April 27, 1861,
100. Dabney, Defense of Virginia, 5, 354-355; Religious Herald, May 16, 1861. The state as a whole viewed secession similarly. See Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner, April 19, 1861, in which it was asserted "Northern troops fight solely for pay and plunder; we of the South for our lives, our wives, our children and our property."
98. Religious Herald, April 25, 1861.

101. Religious Herald, April 25, 1861; Haskell Monroe, "Southern Presbyterians and Secession," 359.
102. Central Presbyterian, April 20, 27, 1861; Religious Herald, May 16, 1861.
103. See the Richmond Examiner, April 19, 1861, for a representative attack on the "diabolical rascality" of the abolitionists, the "gay, but ginger-bread" northern flag, and the "impotent malevolence" of Wall Street (Virginia bonds ran down thirty percent).
104. Bennett, Shochoe Hill, 58; Religious Herald, May 23, 1861; Synod Minutes of Virginia, October 1860, 284. Journal of the 66th Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 61-62; for grievances of the churches about their plight, see 76, 77, 78, 104; for direct references to the problem of dwindling church attendance, see pages 71, 94, 104.
105. Religious Herald, May 23, 1861.
106. On December 22, 1860, the Central Presbyterian viewed secession as the lot of Virginia, in that all human efforts at compromise and reconciliation could not succeed.
107. Central Presbyterian, May 22, 29, 1860; March 16, 1861.
108. Elon (Dover) Minutes Book, 50, 53, 57; Religious Herald, May 16, 1861; Bennett, Shochoe Hill, 58; Southern Churchman, April 19; May 3, 1861; T.V. Moore, "God Our Refuge," 14-15. For lamentations over the preoccupation of the laity with politics at the expense of spirituality, see the Journal of the 66th Episcopal Convention, 1861, 76, 77, 84.
109. See Bishop Meade's remarks as cited in the Religious Herald, May 30, 1861. Johnson, Dabney, 213, 218. The Southern Churchman, January 25, 1861, asked that Virginia's decision on secession not come from hatred, pride or resentment, but from "duty" - - only then could God sanction the South's position.
110. James Silver, Confederate Morale and Church Propoganda, (Gloucester, Mass., 1964).
111. Southern Churchman, May 3, 1861.
112. Minutes of the Baptist General Association of Virginia held in the city of Petersburg, June, 1861, (Richmond, 1861).

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Primary Sources

The bulk of my research consisted of an analysis of the Virginia denominational serials, with particular reference to editorials.

1. Southern Churchman. September 16, 1859 to May 24, 1861. Richmond, Virginia. An erudite, low church Episcopal weekly with an evangelical and missionary emphasis. Quite helpful for revealing the thoughts and positions of Episcopal, moderate leaders. *Copies can be found in Virginia State Library.*
2. Central Presbyterian. October 15, 1859 to May 25, 1861. Richmond, Virginia. Politically oriented, with many editorials, letters, and articles on the secession controversy. *Complete issues in Union Theological Seminary Library, Richmond.*
3. Religious Herald. October 20, 1859 to May 30, 1861. Richmond, Virginia. In contrast with the Presbyterian and Episcopal papers, the Baptist press seemed reluctant to editorialize on political developments. Especially strong in enumerating religious justifications for slavery, and for information on Virginia colportage efforts. *Located on microfilm in Virginia Baptist Historical Society, Richmond.*
4. Richmond Christian Advocate. September 20, 1860; February 14; April 4, 11; May 2; June 13, 1861. Richmond, Virginia. Only six issues of this ^{Methodist} serial could be located. Consequently, my research had to center mainly on the Presbyterians, Baptists, and Episcopalians.

Two Richmond newspapers were examined. Although they did not show the Virginia Protestants participation in the secession controversy, they were quite useful for comparing the reactions of the Virginia secular and religious community to the crisis.

5. Richmond Semi-Weekly Examiner. October 16, 1859 to May 31, 1861.
6. Richmond Enquirer. October 15, 1859 to May 31, 1861.

Minutes of the denominational state meetings were quite useful, especially those meeting in 1861.

7. Minutes of the Baptist General Association of Virginia held in the town of Staunton, May, 1860. Richmond: 1860.
8. Minutes of the Baptist General Association of Virginia held in the city of Petersburg, June, 1861. Richmond: 1863. Both of these Baptist general associations passed many germane resolutions to our study. *Both are in Virginia Baptist Historical Society.*

9. Minutes of the Synod of Virginia, at their session in Lynchburg, October, 1860. Contained nothing of much relevance for this study.
10. Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for the years 1858-1865. Nashville, Tennessee: 1859-1866. Completely silent on secular matters for the years 1859 to May, 1861.
11. Journal of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Buffalo, New York, 1860. Edited by William L. Harris. London: 1860. Helped to clarify the different stands taken by the anti-slavery Methodist Episcopal Church in western Virginia and the pro-slavery Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in central and eastern Virginia.
12. Journal of the 65th Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia held in Christ Church, Charlottesville on May 17-20, 1860. Richmond: 1860.
13. Journal of the 66th Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia held in St. Pauls Church, Richmond, on May 16-17, 1861. Richmond: 1861.
Both of these convention minutes shed much light on the Episcopal feelings concerning secession. The 1861 convention contained Bishop Meade's important address to the session, also published separately.
14. Meade, Bishop William. Sermon Preached by Bishop Meade at the Opening of the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Convention of Virginia in the City of Richmond, Virginia. Richmond: 1861. This address contained a justification for Virginia secession.

Nothing was gleaned from minutes of individual church meetings, with one exception.

MSS.

15. Elon (Dover) Minutes Book, 1857-1884, The clerk for for the church appended remarks concerning the Baptists' response in the secession crisis. *Located in Virginia Baptist Historical Society.*

An examination of the minutes of the six presbyteries in Virginia from October 1859 to May, 1861, (Greenbrier, Lexington, West Hanover, East Hanover, Montgomery, Roanoke) revealed little but clerical and laity involvement in disputes over jewelry, baptism, temperance, music and whether or not to allow flowers in the churches. *All are on microfilm file in the Union Theological Seminary Library, Richmond, Virginia.*

A major source of information for this paper came from the letters and addresses of important Virginia clergy. Two memoirs were written on the Episcopalian Bishop, William Meade.

22. Johns, John. A Memoir of the Life of the Right Reverend William Meade, U.D.. Baltimore: 1867. Printed copious amounts of letters and addresses, but was poorly organized. There were no chapter headings, and often the letters printed were in random order.

- 23, Slaughter, Philip. Memoir of the Life of the Right Reverend William Meade, D.D.. Cambridge: 1885.
Better organization than John Johns, but along with an increase in narrative came a decrease in the amount of letters and addresses published.

The correspondence between two Presbyterian ministers, Moses Drury Hoge and Robert Lewis Dabney, as cited in books on their lives, proved of immense value as Dabney especially dictated his feelings on the political developments during the secession crisis.

24. Hoge, Peyton Harrison. Moses Drury Hoge: Life and Letters. Richmond: 1899.
25. Johnson, Thomas Cary. The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney. Richmond: 1903.

Dr. Dabney himself published a book after the Civil War in which he traced Virginia's justification for secession.

26. Dabney, Robert L. A Defense of Virginia, and through her, of the South, in Recent and Pending Contests Against the Sectional Party. New York: 1867.

The Baptist Addison Hall, although he was the only clergy represented at the Virginia State Convention, either wrote little about the crisis in his letters, or his biographer printed none of those letters with political ramifications.

27. Dunaway, T.S. Life and Writings of Reverend Addison Hall. Philadelphia: 1872.

Diaries proved of slight value.

28. Edward P. Wilson Diary, ^{MS,} 1860. A Methodist minister.
29. Franck Stanley Diary, ^{MS,} 1859. Another Virginia Methodist minister. *Both these diaries in the Methodist Room of the Randolph-Macon Walter Hines Page Library.*
30. Welles, Gideon. Diary. 3 volumes. New York: 1911.
Useful for insight into northern interpretation of southern reactions during the crisis.

Secondary Sources

To compensate for the lack of primary material on the Methodists, essays, denominational histories, and individual church histories have been consulted, but with little success.

1. "Bishop John Cowper Granbery," The John P. Branch

Historical Papers, II, No. 3 and 4, 187-197. Edited by William E. Dodd. Helpful in revealing Bishop Granbery's attitude towards secession after Lincoln's call for troops.

2. Bennett, Floyd S. Methodist Church on Shochoe Hill. Richmond; ~~Virginia~~ 1962. A history of Centenary Church in Richmond. No mention of church's stand during the years 1859 to 1861.
3. Sweet, William Warren. Methodism in American History. New York: 1961. Nothing on Virginia Methodism during these years.
4. Sweet, William Warren. Virginia Methodism, A History. Richmond; ~~Virginia~~ 1945. Contained but little on Virginia Methodism and the secession movement.

~~Two~~ Two articles ~~which~~ were helpful in revealing Methodist sentiment on secession in Virginia.

5. Daniel, W. H. ^{HAMSON}, "A Brief Account of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the Confederacy," Methodist History, 6. No. 2 (January, 1968), 27-41.
6. Ambler, C. H., "Cleavage Between Eastern and Western Virginia," American Historical Review, XV, 762-780. An excellent examination of the differences in western Virginia Methodism and Methodism in the rest of the state.

Numerous articles have been written examining either a specific denomination's reaction to secession in the South, or the entire southern Protestant reaction to the secession controversy and role in the Confederacy.

7. Daniel, W. H. ^{Hamson}, "Southern Protestantism and Secession," The Historian, 29, No. 3 (May 1967), 391-408. Invaluable for ~~examining~~ what churches in other states were advancing at the different stages of the secession crisis.
8. Daniel, W. H. ^{Hamson}, "The Southern Baptists in the Confederacy," Civil War History, 6, No. 4, 388-402. Contained a brief treatment of Virginia Baptist reactions in the secession movement, starting with the election of 1860.
9. Monroe, Haskell, "Southern Presbyterians and the Secession Crisis," Civil War History, 6, No. 4, 351-360. Good treatment of South Carolina Presbyterian reaction to the secession controversy.
10. Silver, James W. Confederate Morale and Church Propoganda. Gloucester, Mass: 1964. An excellent study into the churches role as justifier and supporter of war.

11. Wight, Willard E., "The Churches and the Confederate Cause," Civil War History, 6, No. 4, 361-374.

Just as histories of denominations contained nothing useful for this paper; neither did histories of specific churches within a denomination. Only one of the many tributes to pastors was of any value.

12. Rev. Charles F. E. Minningerode, D.D., Presbyter of the Diocese of Virginia. New York: 1895. No author was specified in this pamphlet.

Books and articles which dealt with Virginia secession were read to provide a framework of secular thought on secession.

13. Munford, Beverly Bland. Virginia's Attitude Towards Slavery and Secession. New York: 1910. A defensive treatment of the influence of slavery in Virginia. For the purpose of this study, worthless.
14. Shanks, Henry T. The Secession Movement in Virginia, 1847-1861. Richmond; ~~Virginia~~ 1934. The definitive work, with maps by counties, an outstanding bibliography, and voluminous notes. Useful to bring together the reactions of the religious and secular communities into a meaningful whole.
15. Walmsely, James Elliott, "Documents. The Change of Secession Sentiment in Virginia in 1861," American Historical Review, XXXI, No. 1 (October, 1925).
16. Wooster, Ralph A. The Secession Conventions of the South. Princeton: 1962. A statistical monograph on the membership in the fifteen southern secession conventions, including such subjects as occupations, ages, slaveholding, and property. No analysis of the delegates' religious affiliations, which hampered the use of the work for this study.

Other books used in this study were picked primarily to establish a general mood for the period.

17. Craven, Avery, "Coming of the War Between the States: An Interpretation," Journal of Southern History, II, 1936), 303-322, In this essay Craven proposes the Revisionistic view of the Civil War, in which the prime cause was not economic or political but emotional.
18. Dowdey, Clifford. The Land They Fought For. New York: 1955. Good presentment by portraiture, especially of John Brown. Biased pro-South.
19. Kimball, William J., ed. Richmond in Time of War. Boston: 1960.

Although these two books fall out of the prescribed limit of ~~the title to this paper~~, they proved so useful and important in the preparation of the thesis, that they are appended at the end of the bibliography.

1. Helper, Hinton Rowan. The Impending Crisis of the South, How to Meet It. Edited by George M. Frederickson. Cambridge, Mass.: 1968. This was read in order to understand the speakership debates of 1859-60. Helper was a rascist who wanted the inferior race deported due to slavery's impedimental influence on economic progress.
2. Moore, Rev. T.V. "God Our Refuge and Strength In This War." Richmond: 1861. This speech was given on November 15, 1861, but contained so much information on the effects of the early war effort on the churches that I have included it.