

Charles Pettit McIlvaine Letters

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6-29-1865

## Letter to Charles P. McIlvaine

Alfred Lee

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Bp. Alford Lee  
about Bp. Tappan's  
proposed letter to  
Southern Bps -  
65

K. MOJ. 650629

Wilmington. June 29<sup>th</sup> /65.

My Rb. Rev & Dear Brother,  
you have no doubt  
received as well as myself, a  
draft of a letter, from the Pre-  
siding Bishop, proposed to be  
addressed to the Southern Bishops.

May I ask for a free state-  
ment of your opinion on this  
movement? However

desirous of peace and unity, I  
confess that I entertain a  
strong reluctance to affix my  
name to such a paper.

It will be sent, among others,  
to the Bishop of Georgia. You,  
I presume, have seen his fu-  
neral address at the burial  
of Bp. Polk (published in the  
Ev Witness of June 2. /65) in  
which, in the strongest terms, &  
with full deliberation, he justifies

the course of our unfortunate  
brother in taking the word  
and wherein he hurls against  
the loyal Bishops and Clergy of  
the U. S. denunciations un-  
passed in any Papal Bulls of  
Anathema. Is the author  
of such a vituperation to be  
welcomed back to his place  
in our Councils without retract-  
ing or apologizing for his abu-  
sive and slanderous accusa-  
tions? Is he not really more  
culpable than Bp. Polk himself?

The avowal moreover, that  
"the Church to which it is our  
happy privilege to belong, had no  
part, direct or indirect, in pro-  
ducing the melancholy conflict",  
is, to my mind, untrue. The  
Church at the South, by her cur-  
rent teachings on <sup>the subject of</sup> Slavery, by pro-

moting sectional hatred, and  
by rushing with indecent haste  
into the assumption of Southern  
independence, had a great  
deal to do with producing and  
sustaining the conflict. Next  
to the leaders of the Conspiracy  
no class of men have a heav-  
ier responsibility than those Bis-  
hops and Clergy. Are we to be  
drawn individually into such  
action as shall preclude us  
from full examination of these  
delicate and highly responsible  
questions when we meet?

Hoping to hear from you,  
soon and fully, I shall defer  
for the present my answer to  
the Circular.

Affly your bro in Christ,  
Alfred Lee

Bp. McIlvaine