
Charles Pettit McIlvaine Letters

7-7-1865

Letter to Bishop Hopkins

Bishop Alfred Lee

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satisfaction. I enclose you a copy of my reply to Bp Hopkins.

Trusting that your own health will be graciously preserved I remain, affec^y, yours,

Alfred Lee

Will you not arrange to spend a Sunday with me during Convention?

(Copy)

K McI 650707

Wilmington July 7, 65

Rt Rev J H Hopkins D D.

Pres Bishop.

Dear Bro; After giving much thought to the subject of your circular of June 22, I do not feel at liberty to affix my name to the dft of "A Letter proposed to be addressed to the Southern Bishops." While I sympathize with yr desire to promote harmony & unity in the Church, I am constrained to differ from you in regard to this measure.

I am not satisfied, in the first place, as to the propriety or expediency of addressing any such preliminary overture, inasmuch as there has never been any action, on our part, of which the Southern Bishops can reasonably complain.

2. I should particularly object to sending any assurance to the Bishop of Georgia of a "cordial welcome", until he had publicly expressed his sorrow & regret for the extraordinary & abusive language which he applied to his Northern brethren in his sermon or address at the funeral of Bp Polk, and had openly retracted those false & calumnious assertions.

3. I am unable to affirm, with a good conscience that "the Church to which it is our happy privilege to belong had

no part, direct or indirect, in producing the melancholy conflict". On the contrary it is my clear conviction that the Bishops & clergy of our Church in the South by their teachings on the subject of slavery, by countenancing that sectional animosity which they must have known to be groundless & unreasonable, by rushing with indecent and eager haste into the assumption of a separate nationality some of them actually taking the sword and others justifying such a course, & by giving, as far as possible the aid countenance & uncouragement of religion to treason and rebellion, are greatly responsible before God & man, for the bloodshed & miseries of the last four years. And altho' the fact must have been notorious at the South, as it was at the North, that tens of thousands of our brethren were being deliberately tortured and starved to death in Southern prisons, under circumstances of heart-rending barbarity, I have yet to learn that any voice of remonstrance against this cruelty was raised by any of our Bishops, Clergy, Councils or Conventions throughout that whole region---

Respectfully your friend & bro in Xt

A L