



The case of the Missionaries arrested a short time since by the Georgia Guard, seems to have produced some excitement in the minds of a portion of our citizens, and we have heard not only the Guard and its officers, but even the Governor censured for the course that has been pursued. To show the injustice of attaching any blame to the Executive, we would beg leave to refer to his letter to the Rev. Mr. Howard, which will be found on our last page. It contains a most conclusive refutation of all the charges that have been made against him, and exonerates him from all title to censure, except perhaps for too much leniency.

Although the Governor was satisfied that the Missionaries were not agents of the General Government, (on which ground some of them had been discharged in the case of a former arrest,) he nevertheless addressed a letter to the Secretary of War on the subject, in order that no doubt could exist in relation to the affair, and received from him a full confirmation of his opinions. As he was then bound to do, he ordered the commander of the Guard to have them arrested, unless after sufficient time had elapsed for mature deliberation, they chose to obey our laws or remove. Still solicitous, however, to avoid the unpleasant consequences that must ensue from their apprehension, he addressed private letters to some of them, advising them in a courteous and friendly manner either to leave the State, or take the prescribed oath. What answer did he receive? The jurisdiction of the state was denied, and a determination expressed to remain and abide the consequences. For this contempt of our laws they alleged as an excuse that believing Georgia had no jurisdiction over the territory, they could not conscientiously take the oath. We will, in order to show how far that objection is well founded, publish the oath, as follows:

"I A. B. do solemnly swear, (or affirm as the case may be) that I will support and defend the constitution and laws of the State of Georgia, and uprightly demean myself as a citizen thereof, so help me God."

The Missionaries do not profess to interfere with politics. If their professions are true, it is but little consequence to them under what government they live -- whether they conform to Georgia laws or the laws of the Cherokees. Their duty as good Christians is to obey "the powers that be." We have extended our laws over that territory, and having the physical strength to enforce their operation, are necessarily the higher power. It is not for men whose avocations require them to abstain from political affairs, to pervert the object of their mission, by dabbling in such matters -- it is enough for them to know that we have laws, and possess the power to make them observed. Their conscience cannot be affected either way, for it is not a matter which concerns it. Their duty is exclusively to instruct the ignorant and preach the gospel to the unenlightened; and this they can do without arraying themselves in opposition to legal authority. Besides, by taking the oath they acknowledge no principle to be either right or wrong. It would be perfectly consistent for any man who resides in the nation, to agree to conform to the laws of this state, and demean himself uprightly, whether he believed the abstract principle by which he was required to do this, to be sound or not. He only yields his outward action, not his opinion, to the necessity of the case. To this we believe the candid reader will agree, and join with us in condemning the unwarranted and unjustifiable opposition that has been made to the administration of our laws.