

- - VOL. XIV, No. 1.

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# Gouenanter.

JANUARY,

1876.

## J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—*Phil.* 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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March Any one sending a new subscriber, with advance payment of \$1.00, and 15 cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition of the **Testimony**, and the new subscriber u copy of the Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter for a year.

CREDIT has been given on the tabs for all money received up to December 15th.

THE date of Mrs. Keys' death in our last number should have been Nov. 22, 1875, not 23d.

WE regret to hear of the death of the wife of our esteemed brother in the ministry, Rev. D. G. Thompson, of Elkhorn, Illinois.

WE are pained to hear of the death on Sabbath, Dec. 19th, of the wife of Rev. Jas. Kennedy, of New York.

THE Thursday of the Week of Prayer was appointed as a day of fasting by Synod. See Minutes, July No., 1875.

MR James Dunlap, No. 655 Broadway, N. Y., will act as agent for this Magazine in the Second New York congregation.

THE collection of the first Sabbath of January is for the Church Extension Fund. The amount needed is \$3,000. See Minutes, p. 214, as to contributions.

WE call attention to the *Witness*, of New York, a paper of a high moral character, advocating reform, and opposing irreligion in its varied forms. The Weekly is published at \$1.50 per annum, the Daily at \$5.00. Address John Dougall, No. 2 Spruce street, New York city.

THE name in the receipts in December number for Theological Seminary, "Mrs. Corbet," should have been Mrs. Rosanna Corlet. Also, New Castle congregation, per Dr. Sproull, \$1, should have been New Castle congregation additional (see November receipts).

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### THE

## Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

## JANUARY, 1876.

No. 1.

## ORIGINAL.

## THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE-CHRISTIAN UNITY.

Two months have passed since the American branch of the Evangelical Alliance met in Pittsburgh. This meeting was provided for at the time the General Alliance was gathered in New York—in 1873. The verdict must be that in many ways this meeting was a success, in point of numbers, and in the character of the papers prepared for it, and read at the various sessions. These papers commanded attention, and secured a wide reading

If any one were asked, what was the most prominent matter in connection with this meeting, he would at once say, the paper by Dr. Hopkins, of Auburn Theological Seminary, on "the Sabbath," wherein he denied the perpetual obligation of the fourth commandment. The report of this has gone throughout the land; the feeling awakened by it among the Reformed churches is expressed in terms that even go so far as to say, dissolve the Alliance, if such teaching has a place under its consensus. We quote first from the United Presbyterian:

"Our Sabbath desecrators do not need the encouragement given them by such a production, all the more demoralizing and disgraceful as coming from a man in such prominence in an evangelical church so influential.

"We will add that if the Alliance, as now constituted, has no power to restrain its members from so abusing their places in it, it had better reorganize or dissolve. One such paper going out from it, however answered on its floor, does more harm than all its other papers do good."

With this the *Evangelical Repository* accords, using the following language:

"His utterances did much harm. Papers unfriendly to the Sabbath gave them a wide circulation; and we do not doubt that they will be greedily devoured and zealously circulated all over the land by the enemies of the Sabbath. This one address, we are persuaded, did more harm than all the other addresses before the Alliance did good; and we quite agree the now, and cry with the trusting thief: "Lord, remember us when thou art now in thy kingdom."

5. As we "stand beholding," we see Christ forget his own sufferings to care for others. Among men the immediate result of suffering is selfishness, contraction of the sympathies. After the suffering there is an expansion of the sympathies, a capacity for understanding and aiding those similarly tried. You may notice how petted and selfish children become when they are sick; you may notice the same among older people, too. If a man is suffering any severe pain, the most pressing question with him is how he may be freed from his suffering. And while enduring the pain he is not in a mood to care for the wants of others, or bestow kindly attention upon his neighbor, or be very tolerant of the neglect of friends. But see the Son of man in his great agony in Gethsemane, ready to find apology for the sleeping disciples, though he longed for them to watch with him. See him on the cross turn a ready ear to the thief's petition and more than answer it. See his filial affection from the cross commend his mother to the care of John. See him even in the torture of crucifixion pray for those who nailed him to the tree. These are straws on the surface indicating the current of his being-ever outward. Even when hanging upon the cross the great love wherewith he loved o'ermasters all thoughts of self which suffering might force upon him. Reproach, even while breaking his heart, could not stop its great beats of sympathy for men. How deep and tender that sympathy, how strong and true that love, which the contradiction of sinners cannot for a moment eclipse, nor such dark clouds of suffering for one instant dim.

And we beholding this would take to ourselves this confidence, that he who in his agony cared for his mother, "blessed among women," will not, that his agony is past, forget his mother and sisters and brethren—those who hear the word of God and keep it. We would rest assured that the great High Priest who, as he was reviled and mocked of men, prayed, "Father, forgive them;" still as he is worshipped by saints and angels pleads for those given him of the Father. We know and are assured that he who, as he was lifted up on the cross, listened to the prayer of the repentant thief, will not now, that he is exalted to the right hand of the Father, turn away from our prayer as in this mount we plead: "Give us this day the joy of thy salvation, and make us rejoice and be glad in our God."

## REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHUBCH IN AMERICA. SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY.

BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

"THE Reformed Presbytery was constituted in America for the first time in the year 1774 by three ministers, the Rev. Messrs. John Cuthbertson, Matthew Linn and Alexander Dobbin, with ruling elders. These ministers had been sent over from Europe, in order to organize the church in America."

This statement in the historical part of the Testimony gives the date of the organization of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in this country. For twenty-two years Mr. Cuthbertson, who was sent over in 1752 by the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, labored alone in ministering to the spiritual wants of families and societies. In 1774 Messrs. Linn and Dobbin were sent out by the Reformed Presbytery in Ireland, and, as stated in connection with the above extract, "a judicatory was constituted, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church put on a regular appearance as an organized visible society in the colonies of America." Whether Rev. Mr. Martin, who had arrived in South Carolina two years before the constitution of this presbytery, ever attended any of its meetings, we have no means of knowing. It is probable that from distance of place, and the unsettled state of the country in those revolutionary times, he had not the opportunity. This presbytery was dissolved in 1782 by the three ministers mentioned above going into the union with a part of the Associate Church, which constituted the Associate Reformed Church.

After the independence of the country was secured, and its affairs had become settled, the church in Europe again directed her attention to the condition of Covenanters in this land. Mr. Martin by irregularity of conduct had ceased to be acceptable to them. Rev. James Reid was sent out in 1789 on a mission of exploration. As the result of this mission, Rev. Mr. McGarragh was sent over by the Irish Presbytery in 1791, and Rev. William King by the Scottish Presbytery in 1792. The instructions to Mr. King were "to join Mr. McGarragh, and as a committee of the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, these gentlemen were empowered judicially to manage the concerns of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America."— Hist. Part, Testimony. They were subsequently joined by Rev. James Mc-Kinney, who came over from Ireland in 1793, and Mr. Martin, who was restored to his ministerial standing, was received as a member of the committee.

It is interesting to inquire what place this court occupied in the regimen established over the church in this country. It was not a committee in the sense in which that term is used in our ecclesiastical practice. A committee is not a court, it has no judicial power. It was not a commission; it was subordinate to the court that appointed it. A commission is the court itself acting in representative character. Besides, this court had general powers; the power of a commission is specific. It was in fact a presbytery, but in the anomalous condition of subordination to the Scottish Presbytery. It claimed to be a presbytery. In the Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter, January, 1861, pp. 10-15, will be found a paper containing causes of fasting, with this title: An act of the Reformed Presbytery in North America for a day of public fasting, with the causes thereof. This paper is dated Rocky Creek, S. C., Chester District, August 5, 1795, and signed by William King, moderator, and James McKinney, clerk. This was nearly three years before the constitution of the presbytery in Philadelphia. The relation of this court to the Scottish Presbytery seems to have been that of a presbytery to a synod. The Scottish Presbytery assumed as a temporary arrangement synodic authority over the court that it created in this land.

It is not unlikely that the defection of the presbytery constituted in 1774, induced the church in Scotland to adopt this plan, in order to guard against another failure. It was wise to take precaution, but it is questionable if the success of the second effort was due to the plan adopted. There were other causes than independent jurisdiction to account for the dissolution of the first presbytery. A church is not weakened by conforming to the law of her head. A plurality of ministers with ruling elders have the inherent right, whenever the interests of religion require it, to constitute themselves into a court in any territory that is beyond the limits over which the church has jurisdiction. This right is sanctioned by Christ himself, Matt. 18:20: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In the Act of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland, approving the Confession of Faith, August 17, 1647, it is declared, that "the ministers of Christ, without delegation from their churches, may of themselves, and by virtue of their office, meet together synodically in such kirks not yet constituted." In order to do this, good order requires that they be certified and dismissed from the court to which they belonged. And when they constitute a presbytery it is co-ordinate with every other presbytery, amenable only to a superior court under the Head of the church.

To the discerning eye of Mr. McKinney the irregularity of this mode of managing the affairs of the church was apparent. We are told in the historical part of the Testimony, that "he always disapproved of the method of performing judicial transactions by a committee at so great a distance from the parent judicatory. When he visited Carolina, although he acted as a corresponding member of presbytery, he could not be considered as fully approving of its organization. He was there, however, informed that it was never intended by the presbytery in Scotland that the committee should continue in its present state any longer than convenience required, and it was no more than a temporary expedient. All were sensible that a presbyterial organization should be speedily given to the church."

Circumstances occurred that opened the way for the accomplishment of this object. The conduct of Mr. McGarragh laid the necessity on the presbytery to suspend him from the exercise of the ministerial office. Mr. Martin relapsed into intemperate habits, and Mr. King was left alone in the South to watch over the interests of the church. The time had come for carrying out Mr. McKinney's plan of organization. As stated in the historical part of Testimony, "he considered it more advantageous to the interests of the reformation in the United States, that the affairs of the church should be conducted by a presbyterial judicatory, subsisting in a connection with its sister presbyteries in Scotland and Ireland, than in the form of a committee subordinate to one of the European courts."

At a conference held by appointment in Alexandria, probably in 1797, the three ministers, Messrs. McKinney, King and Gibson, agreed to meet in 1798 in Philadelphia, to constitute the Reformed Presbytery of North America. Before the time appointed Mr. King died.\* The remaining two ministers with ruling elders met at the time and place designated, and the presbytery was constituted, and a permanent organization given to the church that has continued till the present time.

The constitution of this presbytery was an era in the history of the church in this country. Those by whom it was done were well fitted for the service. Fully convinced of the soundness of the principles that required them to testify against the government of Britain, they saw clearly that these principles, in their application to the government of the United States, demanded on the part of those who maintained them a similar position of dissent. The constitution had been adopted. Its objectionable features in regard to the authority of God and the rights of men, could not stand the test of these principles. Its entire omission of all reference to God and Christ and his church, and its sanction and protection of slavery, were bar-

\* There is a discrepancy here as it regards dates that we cannot explain. In the historical part of the Testimony it is stated that the presbytery was constituted "in the spring of 1798," and that "Mr. King did not live to meet his brethren in a presbyterial capacity. He departed this life before the time of this meeting." On what seemed to be good authority. we stated in a former sketch that Mr. King died August 24, 1798, and of course, was alive when the presbytery was constituted in the spring of that year. It is clear that he was not present, detained most probably, if the above date be correct, by the sickness that ended in his death.

riers that excluded all intelligent Covenanters from accepting it as the moral ordinance of God, and called for a public testimony against it. With such views, and under a sense of their responsibility as called to maintain in this land the cause of Christ's crown and covenant, those men constituted the Reformed Presbytery of North America.

The circumstances in which this presbytery was constituted were widely different from those at the organization of the presbytery of 1774. Justice to all seems to require that this difference receive a distinct notice.

The trials to which Covenanters were exposed by the revolution which threw off the yoke of Britain were of peculiar difficulty, and were well suited to test their firmness. They were accustomed in their native land to connect the dishonor done to Christ and his church with the throne, which they maintained was, after the establishment of 1688, erected on the ruins of the Reformation. With this view, unquestionably right, they could not but sympathize with the attempts in the colonies to get rid of the yoke that had become insupportable. To this, and not to any viciousness in their independent organization, may be ascribed the course of the ministers who constituted the first presbytery, in giving up their organization and uniting with others in forming the Associate Reformed Church. The steps that led to this result were taken in the midst of the struggle for independence. In the excitement of the times there was not a favorable opportunity to calmly weigh those matters that demanded immediate consideration and The country was divided into two parties, Whigs and Tories; the action. former were in favor of throwing off the British yoke, the latter for continuing in colonial relation to the mother country. Covenanters, with their traditionary opposition to that government, could not but sympathize with those who were seeking to be independent of it. In their earnestness they might reason, that now there is an opportunity to strike an effective blow at tyranny, and advance the cause of liberty, for which they and their fathers had contended and suffered. They might have hoped, and the hope seems reasonable, that the American people having gained their independence, would, in framing the constitution of this government, " render to God the things that were God's," and secure to all men their inalienable rights. They never thought of abandoning any of the principles to which they had pledged themselves at their ordination; and they did not hesitate to assert while they lived, that if they were back in their native land they would be in no communion but that of the Reformed Presbyterian Church : and it is a pretty well authenticated tradition, that one of them, after he had time for calm reflection, expressed his regret at the course he had This statement of facts seems to be due to those men whose memtaken. ory is still cherished in the church, notwithstanding their defection ; and it is especially due to those private members of the church, who in the midst of these severe trials, intensified by the defection of their ministers, stood firm in the practical maintenance of their principles, and waited and prayed until the Head of the church sent men to raise up the banner that had fallen. God did not leave himself without witnesses.

It does not appear that the constitution of the presbytery was in pursuance of direction or appointment by the courts in Scotland and Ireland. The men who were on the ground knew better what the condition of affairs in this country demanded, than their brethren beyond the Atlantic. They saw before them a vast territory receiving constant addition to its population from abroad. Among the emigrants were many Covenanters seeking to better their worldly condition, and at the same time to enjoy the administration of ordinances. A court co-ordinate with the courts abroad, exercising independent jurisdiction throughout the country, was what was needed. They were careful not to trammel themselves by a position subordinate to the courts in Britain. Their idea was that the church here should be an American church, as distinct from the churches in Scotland and Ireland as they are from one another. The application of the principles of the Testimony to the civil institutions of this land, as well as to the position of other churches, which had departed, to a greater or less degree, from the standard of doctrinal unity established when the Reformation in Scotland was at its zenith, demanded a court of independent jurisdiction, composed of men conversant with the whole range of affairs that lay before them in the vast field given them to cultivate. The work was one of immense magnitude, requiring wisdom, energy and faithfulness to those to whom it was assigued. Their comprehension of it, and the means which they employed to accomplish it, will afford material for the next paper.

## WINE.

#### BY REV. ROBERT SHIELDS.

THE CUP.-FRUIT OF THE VINE. Matt. 26:27-29; Mark 14:23-25; Luke 22:18-20.

THE action of Synod recommending to sessions not to use intoxicating wine in the celebration of the Lord's supper, was, in my opinion, wise. But I would not feel called upon to defend it, were it not that many fail to see the reason for it, and a recent writer has, with a great show of learning, called it in question. I had hoped that some one more able than myself would have taken up the subject and discussed it thoroughly; but if anything that I may present will help those who are studying the question, I shall be content. I wish to say that I do not claim originality for all the following thoughts. Some of them are borrowed.

The cup, means the wine in the cup, which is said to be the "fruit of the vine." Whether it possessed intoxicating properties does not appear on the surface. We can only learn this by observing the use of the word in other cases. It will not do to say that wine necessarily means a fermented liquor, for the common language that we use speaks of unfermented wine, and even the dictionary, which tells us that wine is the "fermented juice of grapes," says also that must is "wine pressed from the grape but not fermented." The essential point of the definition, that which constitutes a thing, wine then is not fermentation, but that it is the juice of the grape,

Neither will it do to say, as some do, that because Noah, Lot and others got drunk upon wine, therefore, all wine is intoxicating, for we would esteem him a very shallow reasoner who would say, the water of the Atlantic and other seas is salt, therefore all water is salt. Nehemiah had store of all sorts of wine. One writer may think that these were all fermented, another that none of them were, but is it not more likely that among these sorts were new and old, fresh and fermented, sweet and tart, thin and boiled, the produce of different varieties of the vine and of different vineyards? When I read that "wine is a mocker," and "wine maketh glad the heart of man," I cannot but think there are different kinds of wine to which such different qualities are ascribed. If it be true that intoxicating wine in its effects on the human family is evil, and only evil, and that continually, and that the unfermented juice of grapes is an exhilarating and nutritious drink, then we can readily see how such a di-

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FEBRUARY.

COMBINED SERIES,

1876.

J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

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- - - Vol. XIV. No. 2.

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."-Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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EDITORS' ADDRESS,

ALLEGHENY, PA.

PITTSBURGH:

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### BOOK NOTICE

43 Any one sending a new subscriber, with advance payment of \$1.00, and 15 cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition of the TESTIMONY, and the new sub-scriber a copy of the *Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter* for a year.

MR. JAMES R. LATIMER, a student of the second year, joined the Seminary class in January. The health of the students has been good. There are now twenty in attendance.

THE Christian Instructor, published in Philadelphia, Pa., and conducted in the interests of the United Presbyterian Church, is always a welcome visitor. Its editorial department is managed with ability, and its selections are made with care.

The Ladies' Missionary Society of the Allegheny congregation held their annual meeting on Friday evening, January 7th. Their contribution this year to the Foreign Mission was mainly the preparation of a box of made-up children's clothing for the Syrian school. The outlay for the material accounts for the smallness of their annual contribution to the Treasury.

AGENTS and friends will accept our thanks for the interest taken in the magazine. We are sure they will be glad to know that never before was it in so prosperous a condition as at present. The number of discontinuances is no larger than in former years, while the number of new subscribers has much increased. We ask a continuance of the interest, and will do what is in our power to make the *Reformed Presbyferion* and Covenanter worthy the hearty support of all.

REV. S. M. STEVENSON writes that three boxes sent for the benefit of Kansas sufferers to his care were never received. This accounts for the fact that they have never been acknowledged.

NEW CONCORD, O., January 15, 1376.—Please give the following notice in the REFORMED PARSENTERIAN AND COVENANTER: All persons sending mail matter to Rev. J. A. Thompson will please address him at Wahoo, Sanders county, Nebraska. Editors of *Our Benner* and Statesman please change address accord-ingly. J. A. TROMPSON.

THE names of T. J. Allen, Stirling, N. Y., ordained and installed pastor of Stirling congregation by Rochester Preshytery, Nov. 11th, 1875, and E. G. Elsey, Columbus City, Iowa, pastor of Rohoboth congre-gation, were omitted in the alphabetical list of ministers published in our January number.

Rav. S. Bownew writes that the date of the organization of York congregation was September 8, 182), and Rav. R. Shields that the date of his ordination is July 13th, 1865. The congregation of Ranneay was first organized in 1827 or 1828 by Rav. James Milligan. Perth was reorganized Oct. 9, 1888, and again reorganized in 1861.

In the article entitled Wine, in our last issue, the following corrections should be made: Page 14, line 16 from bottom, the comma after "thing" should be after "wine"; page 16, line 8, "honey" should be "dates," see margin; line 32, "packages" instead of "package."

Copies of the new edition of the Testimony can be obtained from Walter T. Miller, Box 553 New York, N. Y. Single copies 35 cents, three copies \$1, ten copies \$3. Fine binding, \$1 per copy. Postage, per copy, 12 cents in addition.

THE price of subscription of the REFORMED PRESETTERIAN AND COVENANTER is \$1.00. No additional charge for postage.

A NUMBER of communications and some interesting Home Missions correspondence have been crowded out of this number. They will appear in our next.

THE Sacrament of the Supper was dispensed in the First Congregation, New York, January 1st Sab-bath, Rev. B. Somerville, assistant; and in the First Congregation, Philadelphia, January 2d Sabbath, Rev. J. H. Boggs, assistant.

WILL pastors please send us notice of time for holding communion, and names of assistants, as soon as arrangements are completed? We request, also, for publication marriage notices. In order to secure publication in the next number all notices should be sent so as to reach us not later than the 15th of th e month.

## THE

## Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

Vol. XIV. FEBRUARY, 1876. No. 2.

.....

## ORIGINAL.

## THE BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Is the last annual report of Professor Wickersham, Superintendent of Public Schools in Pennsylvania, occurs the following interesting and gratifying statement:

"In 14,500 of our 17,000 schools it (the Bible) is now read without giving serious offence to anybody."

There are two things in the above deserving attention. The first is the fact that the present system of education gives general satisfaction. If any one has an opportunity of knowing with what degree of favor the reading of the Bible is regarded by teachers, parents and scholars, the State Superintendent has. It is his business to visit the different counties, attend the teachers' institutes, receive the reports, &c., &c. Any dissatisfaction that may exist he is likely to be the first to hear, and if it be great, it is his duty to refer to it in his annual report. It is not likely there would be any hesitation on the part of Professor Wickersham to refer to any dissatisfaction occasioned by the reading of the Bible, if such existed, as he states clearly his willingness to exclude it entirely from our schools if there be manifested much opposition to its use. It appears from his statement, that notwithstanding all that has been said about sectarianism and sectarian teaching, the Bible continues to be read in six-sevenths of our schools without giving "serious offence to anybody."

There is really no general dissatisfaction with our present system of public education, not even among the Roman Catholics. The priesthood unquestionably is opposed to it, but not the great mass of the people. From them come no complaints. They express no wish for a change. So satisfied are they with the instruction received in the schools as at present conducted, and so unwilling are they to have their children go to the church schools, where are inculcated the dogmas of their creed, that in, different places threats have been made to withhold the sacraments from those who"The Bible is a holy book. It is the chief corner-stone of our civilization. Its sacred pages are the source of our faith, and the guide of our lives. By it sanctity is given to the oaths of men when the truth and the fulfilment of important trusts are required of them, and the patriot, no less than the Christian, finds in it that inspiration which forms the basis of his devotion. I would like to have a copy of the Bible upon the desk of every teacher in the sight of all the children in the land. If never opened, it would still be God's book, ever teaching its silent lesson and imposing something of selfreflection and reverence for sacred things upon the character of youth; if solemnly read by a loved teacher, its holy precepts would sink, like seeds into fallow ground, deep into tender hearts, to ripen in after days in harvests of good works."

We were not prepared, after reading the above, for such an expression of willingness to give up, if occasion seemed to require it, the use of a book whose teachings are acknowledged to be so beneficial, as immediately follows:

"But sooner than take from a single citizen his equal rights; sooner than trample upon the conscience of one honest man; sooner than violate the heaven-born principle of religious liberty, that ark of our covenant which our fathers bid us guard with our lives and fortunes, and transmit, unsullied by unholy hands, to the generations to come, I would, if necessary, discontinue the reading of the Bible in the public schools, and relegate all religion to the home, the Sabbath school and the church, and limit the common school to the performance of its intellectual and moral duties."

There is only one way by which the Bible can keep its place. Its friends must exercise increased vigilance, and absolutely refuse to accept any compromise. The Bible is in the schools now, and in the schools it must remain.

## REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY.-No. II.

#### BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

THE first record we find of the judicial proceedings of the Presbytery after its organization in 1798 is that of a commission that met in Coldenham, Orange county, N. Y., in July, 1801. We may presume that the Presbytery had assembled at least once each intervening year, but the minutes of these meetings seem to have been lost. The commission had been appointed at the last of these meetings to attend to some affairs in the congregations of York and Walkill. A part of the business was to take steps to secure the manumission of three slaves held by a member of the church. So early did the Presbytery evince by deeds its judgment of the injustice of slavery. At the same time Rev. Alexander McLeod was ordained and installed pastor of the congregations of York and Walkill. Mr. McLeod accepted the call on the condition that at the end of three years he might give up either of those congregations, or both, as he thought proper. The action of the commission was subsequently reviewed by the Presbytery, and sustained by the casting vote of the moderator.

by the Presbytery, and sustained by the casting vote of the moderator. This action cannot be pleaded as a precedent for constituting the pastoral relation for a limited time. It was simply, as we understand it, a prudential provision by the candidate that the pastoral relation might then be dissolved in his case at his request. In those days that relation was held almost as inviolable as that of marriage. The act of the commission was no more than a recognition of a right to change for sufficient cause,—a right on all hands now admitted.

The Presbytery now consisted of six ministers: Messrs. McKinney, Gibson, McLeod, Wylie, Black and Donnelly. The work before them was one of vast magnitude. Covenanters were scattered over the country from Vermont to South Carolina, and from the Atlantic indefinitely towards the West. Besides supplying their own congregations, they were required to perform a large amount of missionary labor. As stated in the Historical part of the Testimony, "It was esteemed a light thing for each of them to travel upwards of a thousand miles in one season. Some of them in less than a year performed journeys of upwards of two thousands of miles in extent." As these journeys had to be made in a great measure on horseback, the amount of toil endured can hardly be overestimated.

Besides their pastoral and missionary work other duties claimed their attention. The church had received an organization in a new country. That organization required to be perfected, and the relation of the Presbytery to the courts abroad be defined and settled. This last was a matter of no minor importance. Occupying not as in the former case a position of subordination to those courts, but as co-ordinate with them, every consideration of courtesy and propriety required that they should be informed of what was done, and their approbation secured. To obtain this, Mr. Wylie was commissioned to visit them in 1802. "He was instructed to inform these judicatories of the constitution of the Reformed Presbytery in America—to consult with them about some plan to preserve an intimacy and unity among the sister churches until they could be united under one judicatory."

It is evident that the Presbytery were aware that in taking this position, they were in danger of giving offence to the courts in Scotland and Ireland. Claiming justly a maternal relation to the church in this country, these courts might think that in the constitution of the Presbytery without consultation with them there was a want of due respect to their authority. And in fact the movement was viewed with disfavor, especially by the Irish Presbytery. A knowledge of this made the mission of Mr. Wylie a delicate, and at the same time necessary one. The following instructions were given to him at the meeting of the Presbytery that gave him his appointment:

"He shall, First, give them a just representation of our present situation as a church in North America. Second, That he shall assert both the *right* and *fact* of our presbyterial existence in this country, signifying at the same time our sorrow that the exigencies of the church did not admit of waiting for their previous acquiescence in such a measure, but that the want of this by no means precludes our rightful existence. Third, To intimate our unfeigned wish for a friendly connection, and express our sorrow that the court had so long neglected making intimation to this effect."

The wisdom and firmness evinced in this action of the Presbytery are worthy of admiration. Four years had passed by since its constitution, and as yet it was not recognized by the courts abroad. Nor had they been consulted in regard to the measure and their acquiescence sought. This certainly required an apology, or at least, an explanation. This they with all readiness presented. The point on which the most difficulty would arise was the independent position which they assumed. They had seen the inefficiency of the plan of a quasi court subordinate to a Presbytery so far distant, and with which communication must necessarily be infrequent. The demands of the church required immediate action. Feeling the responsibility of their situation, they determined on their course, and the results amply show that they were wisely directed.

The result of Mr. Wylie's mission was propitious. At a meeting of the Presbytery after his return, in September, 1804, he presented two papers, being addresses respectively from the foreign courts, in which the action of the Presbytery was approved, and it was recognized as a sister judicatory. At first the Irish Presbytery demurred to a full recognition. Their letter was not addressed to the proper officers of the court, but to its ministers. It seems that it had not the sanction of the court in Ireland. It, however, stated the fact that the court from which it came received Mr. Wylie as a commissioner from the American court, and recognized it a sister Presbytery. This was satisfactory, and a committee was appointed to address letters to both the courts in Europe.

It is stated above in an extract taken from the historical part of the Testimony, that in the instructions given to Mr. Wylie he was to consult with the Presbyteries abroad "about some plan to preserve an intimacy and unity among the sister churches, until they could be united under one judicatory." The union of all under one supreme court was a catholic and grand idea. Of the prosecution of this part of the mission we have no account; but we cannot but regret that the design has never been accomplished. The Reformed Presbyterian Church, as now existing, lacks one great element of unity and strength in not having a common judicatory, exercising a supervisory control over its courts in all lands where they exist. The centralization or power is a true ecclesiastical idea. Jesus Christ is the alone Head of the church. She is his body, and it is one. "Holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together increaseth with the increase of God." Ecumenical councils, in the early ages of the church, were eminently useful in conserving the truth and opposing error. And in our own day we see the working of the same principle in the Evangelical Alliance and other representative assemblages of religious associations throughout the world.

The want of such a common judicatory was seriously felt at the time of the schism of the church in this country in 1833. We well remember our anxiety and disappointment on account of the tardiness of the churches abroad to recognize us as the Reformed Presbyterian Church in this land. They had a difficult duty to perform. They had no jurisdiction in regard to our acts, and yet it was their duty to judge and decide on the question of our identity as the church with which fraternal relations had been established. This delay gave occasion to reports that we had broken the connection with that body, and in the judgment of the foreign courts were to be accounted as separatists. We lost for a time the prestige of their approval, and were subjected to the inconvenience which a wrong construction put on their apparent indecision produced.

We have adduced this as an instance to show the defectiveness of any presbyterial organization that is without a central force exercising supervisory jurisdiction over all the parts. Whether in regard to our own church the desideratum will be supplied, remains with the three Synods to determine. We would like to see ours taking the initiative.

The question of the relation with the foreign courts being satisfactorily adjusted, the Presbytery was required to devise plans to carry on successfully the work at home. Already it had divided its members into three committees, denominated the Northern, Middle and Southern Committees of the Reformed Presbytery. Those committees were authorized to take judicial cognizance of all ecclesiastical matters in their respective jurisdictions. It is evident that they were not committees in our sense of the term. They were commissions; not, however, to do specified work, but with judicial power to attend to whatever matters might require their notice within their limits. Their relation to the Presbytery was precisely the same as that of the committee formerly existing in South Carolina to the Scottish Presbytery. They were in fact courts. They acted not under the instructions of the Presbytery, but in the exercise of their own judgment, amenable to the Presbytery to which at its annual meeting they were required to report all their proceedings.

What a work these men had before them; and how wisely and bravely did they set themselves to perform it! They viewed the whole country, from the St. Lawrence on the north, to the Gulf of Mexico on the south, and from the Atlantic on the east, to the unexplored west, as the field of their labor. Messrs. Gibson and McLeod were the Northern Committee, whose jurisdiction lay between the Canada line and the southern part of New York; Messrs. Wylie and Black were the Middle Committee, bounded on the north by the State of New York, and on the south by North Carolina and Tennessee; and Messrs. McKinney and Donnelly were the Southern Committee, whose jurisdiction extended to the Gulf of Mexico. By this division of labor and territory they hoped to accomplish the best results, in gathering together in ecclesiastical organizations the scattered members of the church, supplying them with ordinances, and raising and maintaining the standard of Christ's testimony, which had been entrusted to their hands.

Another business of importance claimed the attention of the Presbytery. In this land, whose population was made up by emigration from various parts of the Old World, it was necessary to a successful promotion of their work, that they should exhibit in suitable form the system of truth and order for which, as the witnesses of Christ, they proposed to contend. Truth is unchangeable. But the manner of its exhibition, the forms in which it is to be presented in order to commend it to the minds of men, and make it effectual as the divine agency in building the kingdom of Christ, need to be varied in order to be adapted to the condition of society in which it is promulgated. With the Westminster formulas the people in Scotland and Ireland were familiar. They occupied a prominent place in household learning, and children were taught to regard them as inferior only to the Sacred Scriptures.

In this land the case was widely different. It was settled by emigrants from the Continent as well as from the British Isles. The Puritans of New England held the independent mode of church government. While they adhered to the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith, they found it expedient to exhibit them in a form adapted to their circumstances. This they did in what was called the Savoy Confession. The Reformed Presbytery decided to remodel the formula of doctrine and order to be used as standards of the church, declaring at the same time their continued adherence to the Westminster standards, retaining them as a part of the summary of their profession, and thereby identifying themselves with the church of the Second Reformation, and the Reformed Presbyteries of Scotland and Ireland.

The views of the Presbytery in regard to its duty in this business are fitly expressed in the following language of the Historical part of the Testimony, written by Mr. McLeod :

"Nevertheless as an ecclesiastical judicatory, exercising authority in the name of Christ, the Head of the church, they deemed it their duty to bind up the testimony and seal the law among his disciples. After mature deliberation, the Presbytery resolved to exhibit their sentiments to the world in the most simple form. They were unanimous in opinion that the church should be one in every nation under heaven, and that the subordinate ecclesiastical standards should also be one. They were certain this would not be the case if anything local or peculiar to any one part of the world was admitted into these standards. Such an admission would necessarily prevent the unity of the church. Truth is not local. Abstract principle is universally the same in every part of the world. The particular application of this one system, however, should be left to each part of the church, and should be regulated by local circumstances. This application should be plain, pointed and argumentative, adapted to convince, to persuade, and to confirm. The Presbytery expected that a period would come in which the Reformed Presbyterian Church would be found in the different nations of Europe, Asia, Africa and America. It was their intention in exhibiting a testimony for truth, and against error, to render it such as might be applicable to Reformed Presbyterians in Italy and in Egypt, in India and Tartary, as well as in Great Britain or in the United States."

Taking such a comprehensive and correct view of the work to which they were called in planting and cultivating the Reformation vine in this land, these brethren set themselves with all earnestness to accomplish it. The consideration of what they did will be the subject of the next paper.

## THE SCRIPTURAL RULE OF EVIDENCE IN ORIMINAL CASES.

## BY JOHN BROWN, A. M.

It is the law of the land, that a man be held innocent until he be proved guilty; and the law of the land, in this instance, is the law of God. Lev. 24:14; Numb. 35:30; Deut. 17:6, 19:15-19; Matt. 18:15-18; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19. On comparing these passages together, we observe:

I. That under the former dispensation, circumstantial evidence *alone* was inadmissible. The person who attested guilt, required to be an eye or ear witness of what he testified. "Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that *heard* him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him." Lev. 24:14.

II. It was not lawful to put a murderer to death on the testimony of one witness only. Two witnesses, at least, were necessary. "Whosoever killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses; but one witness shall not testify to cause him to die." Numb. 35:30.

III. This rule applied to all cases of capital punishment. "At the mouth of *two* witnesses, or *three* witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of *one* witness he shall not be put to death." Deut. 17:6.

IV. This rule of evidence was not applicable to capital offences only; it was of general application. "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." Deut. 19:5. Our Lord applies this rule to every possible offence. Matt. 18:15, 16. Strict justice requires the same amount of evidence in every case; for if it would be unjust to put an innocent man to death, it would COMBINED SERIES,

Vol. XIV, No. 3.

THE



# Cohenanker.

MARCH,

## 1876.

## J. W. SPROULL,

D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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65 Any one sending a new subscriber, with advance payment of \$1.00, and 15.cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition of the TESTIMONY, and the new subscriber a copy of the *Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter* for a year.

COMMUNICATIONS, "The Chinese," &c., crowded out, will appear next month.

THE name M. Jivers, on p. 62, February number, should have been M. McIver.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT of moneys received subsequent to Dec. 20th, will be made in our April number.

PARTIES sending money and wishing the same acknowledged by mail, will please send stamp or card.

MR. D. S. ERWIN, Cedarville, Ohio, is agent for the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN AND COVENANTER at that place.

BACK numbers have been sent in all cases where requested, also Testimonies to those who were entitled to them.

ELDER Stephen Babcock, of the Craftsbury congregation, well known throughout the church, died January 15th, 1876, in his 72d year.

THE mail from the East on Saturday night, Feb. 12, was burned, owing to an accident near Johnstown,

A CALL has been issued for a National Reform Convention, to meet in the Academy of Music, Philadelphia, Wednesday evening, June 28th, 1876, at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  o'clock, and to close on Friday evening, June 30th.

THE first Sabbath of March has been designated by Synod as the time for the collection for the Superannuated Ministers' Fund. William Wills, Treasurer, 110 Market street, Pittsburgh, Pa.

WINCHESTER, KANSAS, Feb. 17, 1876.

Pleasant Ridge congregation was organized November 24, 1871. J. DODDS, Clerk of Presbutery.

J. DODDS, Clerk of Presiguery.

THE examination, and other closing exercises in the Theological Seminary, will begin Tuesday, March 28th. Board of Superintendents will meet at 4 P. M.

S. O. WYLIE, Ch'n.,

D. MCALISTER, Sec'y.

THE congregation of Ramsay, Ontario, Canada, was first organized in 1827 or 1828, by Rev. James Milligan, reorganized October 9th, 1833, by Rev. James McLachlau, and again reorganized in 1861, by Rev. D. Scott. The congregation with the consent of the Ssottish Synod, dissolved its previous connection with that body, and were taken under the care of the Presbytery of Rochester, in 1851.

NOTICE.—The remaining copies of the new edition of the Testimony have been sent to the Treasurer of Synod's Literary Fund. All orders should be addressed to Walter T. Miller, P. O. Box 553, New York. The price, it will be remembered, is 35 cents for single copy; ten copies for \$3. On fine paper, bound in full Turkey morocco, extra gilt, \$1. When ordered by mail, 12 cents for postage on each copy will be required in addition.

## THE

## Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

MARCH, 1876.

No. 3.

## ORIGINAL.

## CHURCH DEBTS.

AMONG the questions that are forcing themselves upon public attention, the matter of Church Debts is not the least. The origin of the system of burdening down a congregation, even in its infancy, with a huge debt, and the results of such a course, are well deserving of study. This subject might long have remained a matter of inquiry merely within the church, had not a recent event of a political character brought it before the people. But, before referring to this, we might well mark how the minds of the members of the church have been prepared to examine it, by being made to feel the difficulties in their way, occasioned by this custom of running into debt. The stringency in money affairs has been their teacher. Many members of the various churches are crippled, and obligations that they once readily assumed, calculating upon uninterrupted prosperity, are now growing heavier and heavier.

The event, however, that presses this subject home at the present time, is the proposal of the President of the United States, in his last Annual Message, that "all church property shall bear its own proportion of taxation." This is one of the questions that he deems of "vital importance, which may be legislated upon and settled at this session." He gives a modification of this recommendation in the earlier part of the paper, where he speaks of "exempting only the last resting place of the dead, and possibly, with proper restrictions, church edifices."

Since he has spoken, many persons have laid hold of his words, and are now using them as a fulcrum for efforts against the church. The affairs of the church are looked into. Her representatives, however, are coming forward, and pleading for exemption,—in many cases with but a feeble conception of the arguments wherein their strength lies, from the duty of the state to the religion of Christ. Their present burdens are brought to view, and this, in order that the state may not further weigh them down 2. We can be saved from this fearful condition only through Christ's obedience and satisfaction.

3. Let our souls swell with gratitude, that when we could be saved in no other way than through that awful death, Jesus died to save us. He loved his own to the death. The cup was bitter; if sinners could be saved without his drinking it, he desired it to pass; if not, he was willing to drink it. The work was stupendous, but sinners must be saved. He came to save them, and no sacrifice was too great to accomplish it. "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, bless his holy name, who forgiveth all • thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

4. Let us personally see to it, that we are in possession of a true and . living faith in him. "For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

## REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

#### SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY .- No. III.

#### BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

In the minutes of the meeting of Presbytery in New York, June 18, 1802, we find the following record: "The Presbytery, anxious to display a judicial testimony for truth and against error, at last meeting agreed to partition the work among the different members; but it having been found, on inquiry, that through the pressing multiplicity of business, only some of the members had made any considerable progress in the business, it was found most advisable to renew the injunction to each member, under pain of censure, to have their parts in as correct a state as possible against mext meeting."

The records of the meeting at which the action here referred to was taken, are not to be found. It appears, however, that soon after the Presbytery was first organized, its members, though few in number, set about this difficult and important work. Unforeseen hindrances interfered from time to time to prevent its accomplishment. The task when attempted was found to be greater than at first anticipated. Those on whom it devolved were separated from one another, and each one had enough to employ all his time and energy in attending to the interests of the people under his pastoral care. It is not at all strange, notwithstanding the menace of censure for neglect that hung over their heads, that the work in their hands made slow progress.

At the meeting of the Presbytery in the following year the members to whom the work had been parcelled out were called on to report. On the paper read by Mr. Black, a discussion took place in regard to the matter of testimony-bearing, and the particular testimony that was now required. As nothing further on the subject seems to have been done at this meeting, we are left to infer that the views of the members had undergone a change in regard to the nature of the work in which they had engaged.

Three views were probably before their minds in the discussion. First: That the Testimony should supersede the Westminster Confession, and be the only doctrinal standard of the American Church. To this it was obvious to object, that as that Confession was adopted by the Church of Scotland, it was not competent to a part of the church, though in another land, to set it aside by substituting a testimony in its place. And besides, it would endanger, if not entirely break up, connection with the Church of Scotland in the purest times of Reformation with which it has ever been the honor of the Covenanting church to identify. Another view of the subject was, to make the Testimony supplementary to the Confession of Faith. But this assumes a defect in the Confession, that would impair its obligation as a standard of the church; and if the supposed defect be supplied, then it would be materially changed, and the acceptance of it would break the line of identity with the church that had adopted it.

The third view is the true one, and the one taken by the Presbytery. The proper idea of a testimony is a formal and authoritative application of truth to existing systems, civil and ecclesiastical, pointing out and condemning what is wrong, and approving of what is right. In the Confession, the doctrines and precepts contained in the Holy Scriptures are exhibited in their abstract form, and in their relation to each other as constituting a complete system. But these are not mere abstractions. They are living and operative principles, to be acted out under the moral government of God, in order to accomplish the chief end of man, "to glorify God and to enjoy him forever."

It was clear to the members of Bresbytery that the people under their care needed explicit directions in applying the principles set forth in the Confession of Faith, to the various forms of social life with which they came in contact in this land. Here were people from different parts of the old world, with all the variety of belief and practice which necessarily arose from early habits and associations. And here was a government in its form entirely different from that of Britain, and free from the objectionable features, against which the testimony of the witnesses there was directed. By the obligations of their covenant, and by the profession of their faith, they were bound to regulate their conduct with respect to the civil authorities of the land where they lived. As the witnesses of Christ they must testify for his claims to national recognition and homage. The constitution must be tried, first and especially by the divine standard of the word of God, and then by those subordinate standards of doctrine and practice prepared in reforming times by the church, and maintained in the face of all opposition.

At the next meeting of the Presbytery, September 20th, 1804, measures were adopted to go forward with this work. The following action was taken: "Whereas, The circumstances in which the Reformed Presbytery exists in this country, rendering it necessary that a testimony for truth and against error be emitted with all speed, and the situation of those around them, and of the people under their care, requiring that it be simple, plain and particular; therefore, Resolved, 1. That an *act, declaration and testimony* for all the truths contended for by all the churches of the Reformation, and against all the prevalent and contrary errors, be exhibited in a plain and abstract form, without entering into a full investigation of the various denominations around us.

2. That this shall be our bond of union, and acquiescence to it our term of communion.

3. That an appropriate and introductory narrative shall accompany it to the world.

4. That a member be appointed to have it completed for the inspection of next Presbytery."

The terms " act, declaration and testimony" were intended to designate merely that part of the proposed work that should exhibit and prove the doctrines witnessed for; and condemn the opposing errors. The title of the whole, consisting in addition, of history and argument, was to be "Reformation Principles Exhibited." The part designated the "act, declaration and testimony," alone has the authority of official sanction, and of this it is said in the second resolution, "That this shall be our bond of union, and acquiescence to it our term of communion."

It was not designed by the Presbytery to exclude by this the Confession of Faith from its place as one of the standards of the church. What is meant, evidently, is that in addition to the acknowledgment of the Confession, it would be necessary in order to membership in the church, that applicants approve of the Testimony. They must agree not only in the principles which constitute their doctrinal profession, but also in the application of those principles to all the forms of error, whether in church or state, that are opposed to and subversive of these principles.

Great care was taken in the preparation of the Testimony. Rev. Alexander McLeod was appointed to complete it, and have it in readiness to be reviewed by a committee in May following, and transmit copies of it and the introductory narrative to the sister judicatories in Scotland and Ireland.

The next meeting of the Presbytery was in May, 1806. It appeared that the committee had sent the work completed and reviewed by them, in overture to the foreign judicatories. A paper from the Scottish Presbytery containing remarks was referred to a special committee to act on them, and report to Presbytery. In the meantime, the preface and historical views were approved, and ordered to be published. The overture of the declaratory part was carefully considered by the committee and afterwards by the Presbytery. Additions recommended by the Presbytery in Scotland were inserted, and the whole, after prayer for divine direction, was unanimously approved.

We find as part of the action of the Presbytery of 1804, the following in regard to the argumentative part of the testimony: "That the Presbytery shall moreover publish, with all convenient speed, a particular testimony and warning against each of the denominations of professed Christians who have adopted systems hostile to the witnesses of the Reformation, and that each member do what lies in his power to perfect for a distinct publication, the task formerly assigned to him, of examining a particular church or system of doctrines in order to a full refutation of its errors."

This part of the original design of the church in this country has never been executed. The work was one of great delicacy and difficulty. The object was to draw clearly the lines of distinction between the Covenanting Church and other denominations, as witnessing for Christ in all the relations that he fills as Mediator. Fidelity to him and the efficient maintenance of the testimony urged this as a necessary duty. Several attempts have been made to perform this act of finishing the Testimony; excellent arguments at different times have been written and published, but none of them have ever received the sanction of Synod. And it is not at all likely that this part of the proposed plan will soon be executed.

Another subject that received the attention of the Presbytery was the duty of covenanting. At a meeting in New York in 1802 it was ordered : "That a draft of a covenant containing the spirit of the National and Solemn League, shall be prepared by each committee and laid before the Presbytery at their next annual meeting." These committees were the Northern, Middle and Southern committees, into which the Presbytery was divided. The draft of a covenant to be made was to contain the spirit of the federal deeds of Scotland. It never entered the minds of those fathers that there could be a literal renovation of the covenants in the very same words in which they were at first taken. Change of circumstances required a corresponding change of language in which to express the duties to which those who entered into them were bound by the spirit of their obligations. At the same time they were jealously careful lest any attainment to which the church had advanced and which was included in those federal engagements, should be left behind. In the terms of communion adopted in 1807, they drew the line with great distinctness between the letter and the spirit of those deeds, in these words of the fourth term : 'The obligation of those covenants extends to those who were represented in the taking of them, although removed to this or any other part of the world, in so far as they bind to duties not peculiar to the church in the British Isles, but applicable in all lands.'' The moral principles of the covenants, unimpaired by lapse of time or change of place, are their animating spirit that with all its vitality and force must pervade every subsequent deed in which the church renews her obligations. Anything else than this would be damaging to the cause and testimony of Jesus Christ, and dishonoring to his name.

These considerations, there is no doubt, account for the slow progress that was made in accomplishing this part of the work, which the members of the Presbytery saw was required of them. Conscientious men naturally shrink from a duty of such responsibility, and where a mistake would involve so much danger. We find that at the next meeting of Presbytery, the committee had not prepared the draft. This duty was then assigned to another committee. At a meeting a year later this committee reported that "they had it not in their power to prepare the draft, and were exculpated by the court."

At the meeting of the Presbytery in 1807, "Rev. Alexander McLeod was appointed to report at next meeting a draft of a covenant embracing the spirit and design of the vows entered into by our fathers in the Reformation." After the organization of the Synod in 1809, the subject was at different times brought to the notice of the court, but nothing effectively seems to have been done until 1830. At a meeting of the Scottish Synod that year, at which Dr. Alexander McLeod was present from this country, a bond was prepared with a view of uniting the three Synods in swearing it. The difficulties that resulted in the division of 1833 again deferred the work, and it was not until 1871 that the church succeeded in carrying out the original purpose expressed above, of renewing her covenant in "a draft embracing the spirit and design of the vows entered into by our fathers in the Reformation."\*

The preparation of a Form of Church Government, Directory for Worship, and a Book of Discipline, occupied the attention of Presbytery. The first two of these, the work of the Westminster Assembly, as received by the Church of Scotland, had been accepted and used by the church in Scotland and Ireland as manuals of government and worship. The references to these in the third term of our ecclesiastical communion show the light in which they were received by the Presbytery in this country. It is there declared that the Form of Church Government and the Directory of Worship, which are of divine right, are "for substance justly exhibited" in the Westminster formulas of government and worship as they were received by the Church of Scotland. Whether it was the design of Presbytery to present those parts of our standards in such a form that they could be accepted without the qualifying words "for substance," we do not

\* A history prepared by the writer of these sketches, of the steps by which this consummation was reached, may be found in the REFORMED PRESEVTERIAN AND COVENANTER of September, 1871, pp. 278-281.

know. If it was, we need not wonder that they found it a difficult task, and finally failed to execute it. That the scriptural form of church government is Presbyterian, and the worship that Christ has instituted in the New Testament church is spiritual, are truths to which absolute assent should be required. But in the details that are necessary to observe them as practical institutions, there is need for human arrangements that may vary at different times and in different places. Such is the teaching of the Confession of Faith. "There are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are alway: to be observed."—Chap. 1, Sec. 6.

At the meeting of the Presbytery in 1807, Rev. John Black was ap pointed to "prepare for the inspection of Presbytery at its next meeting, : 'Directory for the Worship of God,' and Rev. Alexander McLeod t draft a 'Book of Discipline.'" At the meeting of Synod in 1816, a com mittee to which these papers, then in overture, were assigned, was directed to prepare and include in their report a draft of a Form of Church Government, to be presented at the next meeting of Synod. The subsequent course pursued by Synod in regard to these papers is involved in a good deal of obscurity. We find that Synod in 1819 adopted the Directory o. Worship and Book of Discipline, and ordered them to be printed; and directed the Form of Church Government to be published in overture. At the next meeting, in 1821, however, the Book of Discipline seems to have been still under consideration, for two amendments, one on secret societies and the other on marriage, were proposed and adopted. At the following meeting, in 1823, a resolution was adopted postponing the consideration of all these till the next meeting. Nothing that we can find in the minutes shows that anything more was done with these overtures.\* A Book of Discipline was prepared de novo, and adopted at the meeting of Synod in 1841. This was again subjected to amendment, and it was not until 1863 that it was authoritatively published as the law of the church. The Westminster Form of Church Government and Directory for Worship remain as defined in the third term of communion, our subordinate standards of government and worship.

The preparation of Terms of Communion also claimed the attention of Presbytery. At the meeting in 1807, the following recommendation of the committee to which that subject had been referred, was adopted: "That however desirable it is to read out in every congregation, immediately before the distribution of tokens of admission to the Lord's table, a summary of articles in which they join in church fellowship, these cannot be reduced to a permanent definite form until their whole system of ecclesiastical order be completed; it is nevertheless requisite that church members should be referred to the faithful efforts of their predecessors in reformation, and kept in remembrance of their unity with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Europe. They therefore recommend the present adoption of these terms of communion, which they now present to the court. They were adopted accordingly."

These are the terms which are still in use by the church. An addition was made to the first term at the meeting of Synod in 1841. The words added are, "and the only rule of faith and manners." It is evident from

\* In the Historical part of the Testimony, it is stated that these overtures were indefinitely postponed at this meeting. The record in the published minutes is as we have stated above. They do not appear, however, to have come before the next meeting as unfinished business. the above action of Presbytery, that these terms were not in their form and language designed to be permanent. Until the time they were adopted, the terms of the church in Europe seem to have been used, in so far as they were applicable to the condition of the American church. The Presbytery viewed the church in this country as in a nascent and formative state, in which she could neither do without terms of communion, nor yet adopt such as might suit permanently when fully formed and established. It is highly creditable to the skill and faithfulness of these fathers that in such circumstances they were enabled to present the principles on which fellowship in the church is based, in a form that has secured the confidence of the church and preserved her unity till the present time.

On the subject of the duty of Covenanters in their relation to the government of the country, the Presbytery gave no uncertain sound. At its meeting in 1806, the following resolutions were adopted: "1. That it appears to this court, that serving on juries in the civil courts of judicature in the United States, or in any one of the States, is inconsistent with the testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church against the civil constitutions from which these courts derive their authority. 2. That though swearing an oath in the presence of the civil rulers of America does not imply a holding communion with the administrator in his official character, yet where administration is considered as the exclusive right of the magistrate, required and understood as an evidence of our allegiance to him, compliance in that case is inconsistent with our Testimony."

In the narrative of the Testimony the reasons are given for this position of dissent from the government "There are moral evils essential to the constitution of the United States, which render it necessary to refuse allegiance to the whole system. In this remarkable instrument there is contained no acknowledgment of the being or authority of God ; there is no acknowledgment of the Christian religion or professed subjection to the kingdom of the Messiah. It gives support to the enemies of the Redeemer, and admits to its honors and emoluments Jews, Mohammedans, deists and atheists." In the declaratory part of the Testimony, it is asserted that "Christian rulers appointed to office according to a righteous civil constitution, have authority from God to rule in subserviency to the kingdom of Christ;" and that "it is the duty of the Christian magistrate to take order that open blasphemy and idolatry, licentiousness and immorality be suppressed, and that the church be supported throughout the commonwealth." That the omission of any one of these requirements is fatal to the claim of a nation to be recognized as God's ordinance, is asserted in the narrative part already quoted from. "Were every article which it (the constitution) contains, and every principle which it involves, perfectly just, except in a single instance in which it was found to violate the law of God. Christians cannot consistently adopt it." There is no obscurity as to what amendments the fathers in the church believed to be necessary in order that the constitution should receive the allegiance of Covenanters.

Nor were they silent or ambiguous in regard to a testimony against other churches. In the end of the narrative we find the following, which we learn from the minutes was at first the close of the declaratory part, but was transfered to what was deemed its appropriate place. "They cheerfully appreciate the talents and piety of their acquaintances, and as opportunity may offer, commune with them as friends and as Christians; but they cannot extend the right-hand of fellowship in the visible church upon any other principles than those contained in their Declaration and Testi-

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mony; nor can they consistently join, either statedly or occasionally, in the communion of any other church, by waiting on its ministry, either in word or sacraments, while they continue to oppose these declared sentiments."

## MORE ABOUT THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

MESSRS. EDITORS :- The editorial in the January number, in regard to the late meeting of the American Branch of the Evangelical Alliance in Pittsburgh, is a pointed and timely article. It is not an agreeable task to criticise so venerable a body, and it is certain to be a thankless one in many quarters. Many excellent and able men are identified with it, and its general objects are good, praiseworthy, and such as all Christian people must encourage and approve. We must accord to it, too, the credit of having exerted in some cases a most beneficent influence in favor of both civil and religious liberty. But with all these concessions, it is to be feared that in a good many minds there are exaggerated ideas concerning it. The unstinted laudations of the religious press and of many religious leaders, at the time of the meeting in New York, two years ago, have led some who have not taken the trouble to examine the matter closely, to look upon it as the perfection of religious organizations. The very church herself is thought to suffer in comparison; her divisions are rebuked and a model of union is held forth which she would do well to copy.

When the Alliance was first organized in Great Britain, many years ago, one or two of our ministers felt it their duty to become active members of it, but the jealousy of the church, lest the principles of her Testimony should in some way be compromised and damaged, kept the body of her ministers and people aloof from the organization. Its proclaimed objects were heartily endorsed. It was claimed, however, that the terms of the Alliance were too indefinite. Exception was taken to them, not so much for what was in them as for what was conspicuously absent. The late affair in the Pittsburgh meeting justifies the apprehensions which were entertained, and shows, if anything can show, that its basis cannot be accepted as satisfactory by the earnest friends of evangelical interests. Alliance in the interests of the Christian religion, which tolerates among its constituency persons holding the opinions on the subject of the Sabbath vented by Professor Hopkins, is not only not "evangelical," but is antiscriptural, considered from the stand point of what is now accepted by the Christian world as evangelical interpretation. No matter what the body of the members may think of the sentiments propounded, the terms of the Alliance did not forbid Professor Hopkins to prepare and read just such a paper as he did, nor is there anything in the terms to exclude him from its fellowship for having so done. Combination of effort is good in itself, but a position from which the guns can be turned not only against the ramparts of the enemy, but against important points of the citadel of truth, is not a wisely selected nor a safe one to occupy. Witnesses for evangelical truth will do more efficient work in guarding its interests by handling their guns from some other position. The Pittsburgh denouement very naturally recalls to recollection the story of the Trojan horse.

It has always appeared to the writer that Covenanters dilute their influence, mix their wine with water, and enervate their power as witnesses by identifying themselves with religious associations, some of whose established modes and methods are in open and unconcealed antagonism to those convictions by which they justify themselves in maintaining opposiTees March 29, a.M.

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COMBINED SERIES,

1876.

J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."-Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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BOOK NOTICES
Any one sending a new subscriber, with advance payment of \$1.00, and 15 cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition of the TESTIMONY, and the new sub- scriber a copy of the <i>Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter</i> for a year.
THE Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church will meet in the Allegheny church, Allegheny, on the 4th Tnesday of May (the 23d), 1876, at $7\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock, P. M., and will be opened with a sermon by the retiring moderator, Rev. James Kennedy.
MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERIES.—Lakes—Rushsylvania, April 11th, 7 P. M. Pitts- burgh—April 11th, 7 P. M. Ohio—North Salem, April 12th, 10 A. M. Illinois—Old Bethel, April 26th. Rochester—Rochester, May 2d, 10 A. M. Iowa—Washington, May 2d, 2 P. M. Kansas—Olathe, May 16th, 7 P. M. Philadelphia—1st church, Philadelphia, May 22d, 7½ P. M. New York—3d church, N. Y., May 16th, 7½ P. M.
CALLS have been moderated in Allegheny congregation in favor of Professor Sloane. Pine Creek, in favor of A. Kilpatrick. 1st Miami, in favor of J. C. K. Milligan. Sylvania (Mo.), in favor of P. H. Wylie.
COMMUNIONS AND ASSISTANTS.—March 26th, 2d Philadelphia, S. R. Wallace. April 23d, Brooklyn, S. O. Wylie, D. D. May 14th, Olathe, S. M. Stevenson. May 21st, New Castle, C. D. Trumbull.
THE name of Rev. S. R. Wallace was omitted, by mistake, from our alphabetical list published in the January number. His address is 306 Grape st., Syracuse, N. Y.
ALL moneys received as late as March 21st are acknowledged this month. Subscribers will please examine the date, and if proper credit is not given notify us immediately. Those in arrears will oblige us by paying promptly what is due.
"TAXATION of Church Property" is crowded out, in type, and will appear next month. We regret that the poetical answers came too late for this number.
APPOINTMENTSJ. M. Crozier, 1st, 2d, 3d and 4th Sabs. April, Muskingum and Tomica. 5th Sab. April, Coshocton. J. W. Dill, Middle Wheeling, 1st, 2d and 3d Sabs. April; Brownsville, 4th and 5th Sabs. H. P. MCCLURKIN.
THERE are 106 boarding scholars in the mission school in Latakiyeh—the largest number we have ever had. We regret to learn that some cases of measles and small- pox have appeared in the school. Mr. Beattie is unable to preach, and withhis family will leave soon for a visit to the United States. Mrs. Metheny had a slight attack of bleeding from the lungs, but was better.
WE understand that the church of the Kossuth congregation, Iowa, was completely demolished by a storm a short time ago.
APPEAL,
THE attention of all the congregations, but especially of those that as yet have not taken up the collection for the Home Mission Fund, is directed to its present needs. If the Board is to conduct efficiently its missionary operations in the West, there must be increased liberality. The amount of money asked for has not been raised. It is all now needed. The extent of the Board's operations must depend on the response that is made to this appeal. J. W. SPRCULL, Sec. C. B. M.

## THE

## Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

APRIL, 1876.

No. 4.

## ORIGINAL.

## THE BIBLE QUESTION.

BISHOP MCQUAID, of Rochester, N. Y., is by common consent regarded as the ablest exponent of the views held by Roman Catholics respecting our common schools. His many public deliverances show that he has given the subject the most careful study, and is thoroughly acquainted with the arguments of those who defend and desire to maintain the present system as it is, as well as of those who oppose it, and desire on its ruins to establish another. In his efforts to maintain his theory he invariably manifests ability, skill, courage, and seemingly great candor.

Francis E. Abbott, the editor of the *Index*, is the ablest, the most courageous and consistent representative of those who believe in the entire secularization of the state and education. He is the champion of "the demands of liberalism." It is almost impossible not to admire his willingness invariably manifested to follow his theory to its legitimate conclusion. This trait, so exceptional, has done much to interfere with his success, as multitudes who at first would accept the theory, shrink from what they are forced to see are its legitimate consequences.

In Boston is an organization called the Free Religious Association. Under its auspices is given a series of lectures embracing a great variety of subjects, on Sabbath afternoons. It was arranged that Messrs. McQuaid and Abbott, as representative persons, should deliver addresses embodying their opinions on the school question, and that the addresses should be printed in pamphlet form for general distribution. In accordance with the arrangement the addresses were delivered, that by Bishop McQuaid on the 13th of February, on "The public school question as understood by a Catholic American citizen," and that of Mr. Abbott on the 20th of February, on "The public school question as viewed by the Liberal American citizen."

In regard to the two addresses one general remark may be made. So.

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year. They are justified in voting all schooling, in excess of these long hours, a bore. They who go into a bank, or any other place of business, are men grown, fully competent to judge of insidious or open attempts to prejudice their minds on points of religion or morals. These business offices are not monopolies like the state school, and their proprietors know the danger of meddling with their customers' religious opinions. The example of a man asking for a Bible in a hat shop has not yet occurred, and when it does occur, it will be met by calling in a policeman to arrest an escaped lunatic. But a child asking a teacher to tell it something about God, Christ, the redemption, sin, or the life to come, would ask a proper question, entitled to an answer from a competent teacher."

The conclusions deducible from the principles contained in the address are not by any means those presented. Bishop McQuaid very naturally desires his audience, and all who read his utterances, to regard him as "speaking only for myself and my country, and in no way responsible for Mexico, South America, Spain, or any other country in the world." The education for which he contends, unfortunately for him, cannot be separated from the church he represents, and which is responsible, to a great extent, by its mode of educating the people, for the very evils for which he is anxious not to be held responsible. His logic only proves that education entirely secular is impossible, and, even were it possible, is greatly to be deprecated. Such being the case, it does not follow that the state should not interfere in the school, but relegate it to parents and the church. It does, however, follow that the state should see that no successful attempt is made to separate morality and religion from education.

How the efforts of those who wish to exclude the Bible from the schools are interpreted by so distinguished a prelate, and the manner in which the success of their efforts would be regarded, can be seen by the following:

"It is conceded by free religionists, by the ablest of the secular press, by many representative ministers of the Evangelical churches, and by large numbers of the people, that to tax Catholics, Jews, and infidels for schools in which the Bible is read and religious exercises are held, is a wrong, an act of injustice, a form of tyranny. So understanding the case, the cities of Troy, Rochester, Cincinnati, and Chicago have forbidden religious exercises of any description in their common schools. This is a confession that would not have been made thirty years ago. It is a partial reparation of the past. The Catholic, however, is equally unwilling to transfer the responsibility of the education of his children to the state. His conscience informs him that the state is an incompetent agent to fulfil his parental duties."

## REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHUROH IN AMERICA.

## SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY .- No. IV.

BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

THE subject of providing for the education of young men for the ministry received the attention of the fathers who were employed in planting the church in this country. Enjoying themselves the advantages of thorough instruction, they felt that it was important to the success of the cause

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to which they had devoted themselves, that they should meet the calls for the administration of ordinances, by furnishing to those who should offer themselves to the service of Christ, the opportunity of obtaining those acquirements that this high calling demanded. Then, as well as now, there were some who, mistaking enthusiasm for enlightened zeal, were ready to declaim against the need of literary training in order to fit for the work of the gospel ministry. If a departure from established precedents could be justified by necessity, the circumstances of the church in those times might have warranted such a departure. Calls for the dispensation of ordinances came from all parts of the vast territory over which the jurisdiction of the Presbytery extended, to which, from the want of laborers, no favorable response could be given. And there were among the people some, who, in theological attainments, ability to speak in public, and attachment to the cause and testimony of Jesus Christ. were qualified to supply the urgent need. But it was steadily kept in mind that the Covenanting Church had an important mission to perform. Those appliances that thorough mental culture furnishes were wielded with great power and effect in the interests of the kingdom of the god of this world. The same agencies must be taken up by the ministers of Christ, and used to sustain his claims to universal recognition and worship. While it is true that the efficiency and success of the ministry depend on the blessing of God, it is no less true that the blessing is not promised to those who neglect to use the means that he has appointed as channels through which it is conveyed. Paul's direction to Timothy is of continued obligation : "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others."

We find in the records of the meeting of 1804 an interesting illustration of the diligence of the Presbytery to secure literary attainments in candidates for the ministry. Matthew Williams had been reported at the meet-ing the preceding year, as a student of theology taken under the care of the Middle Committee. He was required to deliver a discourse before the Presbytery. At the meeting in 1804 he delivered the usual pieces of trial for licensure. These all being sustained, he was examined by the members of the court. It is to the extent and thoroughness of this examination that we especially refer. The following is the record: "The examination of Mr. Williams was taken up. The court appoint that every one of the ministers take a part in the examination. Mr. Donnelly is to examine him on Latin and Geography; Mr. Black on Greek and Church Government; Mr. McLeod on Moral Science, Logic, Metaphysics and Elocution; Mr. Wylie on Hebrew, Physics and Mathematics; Mr. Gibson on Theology, theoretical and practical." It is added : "On all these subjects Mr. Williams underwent a critical examination, which was sustained, and a vote passed by the court that he be licensed to preach the everlasting gospel under the direction of this court." Such was the care taken in these times to prevent an unlearned ministry from finding its way into the church.

The first movement towards the establishment of a seminary for preparing candidates for the ministry, appears to have been made at the meeting of the Presbytery in 1807. A committee consisting of Messrs. Gibson, Wylie and McLeod was appointed, "to inquire whether it be eligible for this church to make exertions for the establishment of a seminary for the education of youth for the ministry; and if eligible, to report to the court an outline of a plan of theological education." That committee reported at the same meeting, stating that "in their opinion the church was loudly called on to establish such an institution." They also presented "a draught containing an outline of a plan of a Theological Seminary." It is added in the record, that, "After a long and very minute discussion of the principle, and the various articles of this draught, the Presbytery determined to adopt the principle, and with amendments, the plan in its several parts." Rev. Samuel B. Wylie was appointed professor of theology. and a board of superintendents was appointed and directed to meet in Philadelphia on the third Tuesday of May, 1809, to organize and put it into immediate operation.

As an interesting part of the subject of this sketch, as well as on account of its own excellence and merit, we present the entire paper adopted by the Presbytery, on "THE CONSTITUTION OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH."

"The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are given to miserable man, as the lively oracles of God which are able to make wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus; and it is the institution of Heaven, that the living preacher should accompany the word of inspiration, in order to explain and apply its doctrines for the salvation of souls. It is accordingly of the greatest importance to the church of God that fallen man should be regularly and extensively supplied with a legitimate gospel ministry.

"The Head, Christ, in providing for his body, the church, 'pastors and teachers,' employs the ordinary advantages of a good education, as well as natural endowments, and the gifts of grace. He will not, it is true, at any time be destitute of suitable instruments for the execution of his purpose of love; for when the ordinary course of Providence appears to fail in furnishing qualified men for the work of the ministry, he confers by miracle the necessary ability on his chosen servants. In the faith of his power it is the duty of every church to use the best exertions for procuring faithful men who shall be able to teach others; and as it does not fall within the province of human labors to communicate supernatural gifts, it becomes necessary to provide a good system of theological instruction for those who have it in view to preach the gospel of God. To withhold such exertions would be grossly criminal, and to expect without them a succession of well qualified public laborers, would certainly be presumptuous. For the necessary gifts which are beyond our power, let us pray and hope; but for attaining whatever lies within the reach of ordinary agency, let the church spare no exertions. This is the dictate both of piety and religion.

"Piety is the first qualification for ministering in holy things. No man can be lawfully admitted into the Christian church, much less to office in it, while evidently devoid of practical godliness.

"Good sense is the second qualification for the ministry. A teacher without talents for giving instruction would be an injury to any society; and an officer without discretion in the exercise of his authority would be no better. To call to the ministry a man of no talents is an incongruity not to be charged on the Head of the church.

"A good theological education is a third prerequisite in a candidate for the office of the holy ministry. Education itself can never be sustained as a substitute for sense and piety. Nay, learning and talents unsanctified are a curse. But the very injury which the church has suffered, and does still suffer, from abused literature, is a powerful argument for the necessity of employing the best education in support of the truth. The weapon which is so detrimental in the hand of an adversary, must be valuable when wielded by a faithful friend of Zion. It is not mere learning that is recommended: it is Christian erudition. This is always desirable to the youth of piety and sense; and it is absolutely necessary to an able minister of the New Testament. Miracles have ceased, and instruction must be sought for in the use of suitable means.

"It behooves the sacred teacher to be acquainted with those languages in which divine revelation is written. Every ambassador ought to be able to read the text in which his instructions are delivered. An able minister must of course be a linguist.

"The nature and character of mankind ought also to be understood by him who is appointed to instruct, to persuade, to direct and to reduce sinners to the discipline of righteousness. He should, therefore, be acquainted with the philosophy of the mind and the kindred sciences. The minister should be a metaphysician.

"Error in order to be refuted, and truth in order to be taught and applied, must be understood. The correct exposition of the Bible, however, depends on a knowledge of ancient usages, and of events which have long since come to pass. The able expositor of Scripture must be versed in history both civil and ecclesiastical. "A preacher of the gospel must not be a novice; but should study to show himself approved, a workman that needed not to be ashamed. The Christian minister should accordingly be acquainted with the state of science and the other literary attainments of the age in which he lives.

"The long experience of the church proves, if proof be necessary, that such a ministry cannot be attained without a regular system of instruction in theology.

"In order, therefore, to provide a succession of able men for the gospel ministry, through the medium of such a system of theological instruction as may, with the blessing of Heaven, cultivate and improve the minds of pious and sensible youth, the supreme judicatory of the Reformed Church in America has established a Theological Semin-ry with the following Constitution:

#### ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. "The Theological Seminary shall be under the direction of the highest judicatory of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States of North America; and to that judicatory it shall alone appertain to alter or change this constitution -to appoint all the officers employed in the establishment—to determine the place in which the seminary shall be established or continued - to fix the salary of the professor or professors, and to decide on the manner in which in other cases its funds shall be applied.

SEC. 2. "No candidate shall be licensed to preach the gospel by any of the judicatories of the Reformed Presbyterian Church after the organization of the seminary, unless he produce a regular certificate of his having attended with approbation to the course of instruction prescribed for the last two years, or exhibit such testimonials as shall in the estimation of the court prove equivalent.

SEC. 3 "All officers belonging to this institution, whether appointed for a definite or indefinite term, shall have a right to perform the duties of office until they are superseded by the appointment of others; and no alteration of this constitution shall take place during that session of the judicatory in which such alteration is first proposed.

#### ARTICLE II.

SEC. 1. "An ordained minister of competent abilities shall be appointed professor of theology; and it shall be his duty to see the plan of instruction carried into execution; he shall hinself personally execute the plan of instruction for the last two sessions; and he shall have power at his own discretion while unassisted, and with the consent of such other professor, or professors, as may be appointed to aid him in the instruction of students (in which case they shall constitute a faculty), to admit students into the seminary, and to admonish or suspend for misdemeanors, subject, nevertheless, to the ultimate decision of the board of superintendents.

SEC. 2 "There should be appointed, at every meeting of the competent judicatory, from among the ministers of the church, three superintendents, whose duty it shall be to meet annually, on the first Wednesday of May, and in conjunction with the professor of theology, examine both students a id applicants, assigning to them their places in the first, second, or third classes, according to the proficiency they may have made in the proper literature of the institution; hear public discourses from the students; grant certificates to those who may have completed their studies, and legislate, consistently with the constitution, on ev rything respecting the seminary.

SEC. 3. "There shall be appointed from among the officers of the church, a treasurer, who shall have charge of all the funds of the institution, and shall exhibit a regular statement to the superior judicatory on each stated meeting. He shall continue in office during the pleasure of the court, and shall answer the drafts made on him by the secretary of the board of superintendents.

#### ARTICLE III.

SEC. 1. "No student shall be admitted into the seminary unless he have previously graduated at some college or seminary; but the supreme judicatory may direct the superintendents to admit such applicants as, upon examination, are found to possess literary qualifications equivalent to those which usually entitle a student of college to the first degree of the arts. SEC. 2. "The students shall pay strict attention to the direction of the professor of

SEC. 2. "The students shall pay strict attention to the direction of the professor of theology or faculty. They shall pursue the course of reading, and of moral conduct marked out for them; they shall behave with respectful demeanor towards all the constituted authorities of the seminary, and shall, on their admission, subscribe this constitution.

SEC. 3. " Each student shall pay annually into the hands of the professor of theol-
ogy, the sum of twenty-five dollars; and the superintendents may grant, either as a loan or gift, this sum, and with the permission of the judicatory, any other necessary sum, to those whose resources are inadequate to their expenditure during the session of the seminary.

#### ARTICLE IV.

SEC 1. "The course of instruction shall occupy four successive annual sessions, and each session shall be of six months continuance; from the first of November to the first of May. The whole course shall be divided into three several parts, appropriated to three distinct classes, the first, second and third, into any of which students duly qualified shall be admitted.

SEC. 2. "The first shall be called the Class of Biblical Literature, and in it shall the student, during the first session, attend, in order that he may be qualified to understand the sacred text. The students in this class shall be instructed in the languages of both the Old and New Testaments, and in the cognate dialects, reading such portions of the Greek classics as shall be presented to them. They shall attend twice in each week, lectures on history. And it shall be the duty of the professor to condense into fifty-two lectures the outlines of history, sacred and profane, from the beginning of the world until the then present time; following the line of prophecy, and connecting civil with ecclesiastical history, referring the students to the proper authorities, and directing them to consult the other explanatory historians.

SEC. 3. "The second shall be called the Class of Pulpit Eloquence, and in it shall the student, during the second session, attend in order to qualify him for expounding, in a persuasive manner, the oracles of God. It shall be the duty of the professor to deliver to this class a course of lectures on Metaphysics, including the science of the human mind and Christian experience; on Logic, on Ethics, including political morality and on Elocution and the method of sermonizing, giving a corresponding direction to their reading.

SEC. 4. "The third shall be called the Class of Systematic and Polemical Theology, and in it shall the student, during the third and fourth sessions, attend, in order to establish him in the analogy of faith, and enable him to resist gainsayers. It shall be the duty of the professor to deliver to this class a series of lectures on Divinity pursuing the plan laid down in 'Reformation Principles Exhibited,' the Testimony of the Church, and directing the students to peruse and compare the Confessions of the Reformed Churches, together with the most approved systems of theology. The whole course must not exceed the number of one hundred and four lectures.

SEC. 5 "All the students throughout the several classes shall be directed occasionally to attend to reading Hebrew and other oriental languages; they shall also pay attention to sacred criticism, compose dissertations, and deliver discourses, as the professor of theology shall see meet to direct them; and they shall deliver discourses in public, at the annual examination, before the board of superintendents.

in public, at the annual examination, before the board of superintendents. SEC. 6. "Those students who shall have with approbation completed their studies, shall be duly certified; they shall be delivered up for trial to presbyteries, and disposed of to those courts at the will of the superior judicatory, or at the discretion of the superintendent, until such judicatory meets; provided, however, that no such candidate shall be ordained to a pastoral charge previous to the first meeting of the superior judicatory after he shall have completed his course at the seminary. Students not in the communion of this church, shall upon receiving their certificates be at their own disposal."

To the constitution is appended the following formula to which the students were required to subscribe:

"The undersigned entering themselves as students in the seminary, promise to conduct themselves agreeably to this constitution."

The seminary was not organized until May, 1810. This was one year after the constitution of the Synod. In the minutes of the meeting of the following year mention is made of Mr. James Milligan, a student of theology, who was returned to Synod from the seminary duly certified. Mr. John Thompson was chosen treasurer, and agents were appointed in different places to collect money for the seminary, and transmit it to the treasurer. In the minutes of the meeting of 1812 it is stated that there were four students in the seminary the preceding session, two of the first and two of the second class. To the meeting of 1814 the board of superintendents presented the following report. We give it as an interesting part of the history of the seminary:

"The students of the first class, Messrs. Johnston, Beattie, Gibson and Crawford were called respectively to deliver discourses connected with biblical literature, which had been assigned them by the professor. These students, with the exception of Mr. Beattie, who was absent, were afterwards examined on the proper literature belonging to their class. In all which exhibitions and examinations this class acquitted themselves to the satisfaction of the board, and afforded a pleasing prospect of future usefulness in the church of God. They are referred to the second class in the seminary.

"The students of the second class, Messrs Wylie and Cannon, were called on to deliver discourses as specimens of pulpit eloquence. They were also examined on metaphysics. The science of the human mind was particularly inquired into, logic, ethics, &c. In all which these gentlemen acquitted themselves respectably, affording satisfaction to the board, and anticipation of greater improvement hereafter, when the sphere of their operations shall be enlarged.

"The students of the third class, Messrs Lusk, Gill, Wallace and Rohinson, were called severally to deliver discourses in relation to systematic and polemical theology, and were also examined on theology and the analogy of faith, proving the plan laid down in the Testimony of the church In all of which the students severally gave such satisfaction to the board, that they hereby declare they have honorably passed through the proper series of literature belonging to the institution, and are now discharged from this seminary, and delivered up to the Synod, the highest judicatory in our church, duly and fully certified, wishing them guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit."

Notwithstanding these efforts the seminary, owing to the want of funds and other causes, began to decline. It prolonged a sickly existence till 1817. when, by the resignation of the professor, Dr. Wylie, it expired. It was resuscitated at the Synod of 1823. and Dr. Wylie was again chosen professor. He resigned again in 1827, and the education of the students for the next ten years was attended to by the presbyteries. It is worthy of remark that during the last period of the existence of the seminary, the professor changed his views of the relation and duties of Covenanters to the American government, and as the result and evidence of this, of all the students that passed through the seminary during that time, but two who entered into the ministry stood firm in the maintenance of the testimony of the church at the disruption of 1833. These were Rev. James Faris and Rev. John Fisher, both long since gathered to their fathers.

#### THE PRAYER MEETING.

In the Christian convention which lately met in the city of Philadelphia, one of the topics suggested for discussion was: "How to conduct prayer meetings." Of late years the attention of Christian workers has been largely directed to this means of grace. It is felt by all, that it may be made a still greater power for good, and the great question now is: How shall it be conducted so as best to bring out this power? The prayer meeting has been a power for good in days gone by. It has to a large extent supplied the place of the public preaching of the word. It has proved a most important agency in the spiritual growth of the saints; it has bound together the fearers of God, with cords that persecuting violence could not sever; it has kept the holy fire burning in their hearts, even when compelled to face difficulty, dauger and death; and when fleeing before persecuting rage from valley to mountain, from moss-hag to caveru, the persecuted ones "spoke often one to another," and their faith was strengthened, and they were enabled to "endure to the end."

It has been well said by one, that " the prayer meeting is the thermometer

#### COMBINED SERIES.

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Reformed Presbykerian

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MAY.

#### 1876.

#### J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

#### EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."-Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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# Any one sending a new subscriber, with advance payment of \$1.00, and 15 cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition of the TESTIMONY, and the new sub-scriber a copy of the *Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter* for a year.

THE Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church will meet in the Allegheny church, Allegheny, on the 4th Tuesday of May (the 23d), 1876, at 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> o'clock, P. M., and will be opened with a sermon by the retiring moderator, Rev. James Kennedy.

MEETINGS OF PRESEVTERIES.—Rochester-Rochester, May 2d, 10 A. M. Iowa-Washington, May 2d, 2 P. M. Kansas-Olathe, May 16th, 7 P. M. Philadelphia-1st church, Philadelphia, May 22d, 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> P. M, New York-3d church, N. Y., May 16th, 71 P. M.

A CORRESPONDENT from the West requests us to warn Covenanters not to give their money to a person who asks assistance, unless they know he is a worthy object of charity. A worthless character in his neighborhood had been writing to our members in different parts of the church, representing himself to be a Covenanter, asking assistance. The response to his appeal has been so liberal that he is able now to live comfortably, and "drinks freely" without working. In this case the money given is worse than thrown away. This leads us to say, that unless where the parties are personally known and their circumstances, as well, it is far better to let benefactions take the ordinary course, through the hands of the officers of a congregation.

#### AN APPEAL FOR THE SEMINARY.

The Church has called ministers away front congregations where they had a sure support, to labor for the general good of all her congregations, in the Theological Seminary. She promised these laborers a reascnable maintenance in their responsible and raduous work. And yet, at the close of the present ses-sions of the Seminary, the Treasurer was compelled to announce that a large part of the professors' salaries for the current year still remains unpaid. Two thousand dollars are required to supply the deficit, and meet the obligations under which the Church has come to the teachers in her Seminary. In view of these facts, we make an appeal to all who hold the interests of the Seminary dear, and who regard them of vital importance to all the work of the church. Seventy congregations have already con-tributed. Every one of the remaining congregations should, with ut delay, forward a generous contribu-tion; and every congregation, and every individual, that has already contributed, should make an earnest effort to adf further contributions, and as large as possible, that the contral and all-important work of the whole Church be not hindered.

Contributions should be forwarded to the Treasurer, Wm. Wills, Esq., 110 Market street, Pittsburgh, Pa. S. O. WYLIE, Chairman. D. MCALLISTER, Secretary. By order of the Board.

MR. JAMES MCCONAGHA, Norwich, Ohio, is agent for the Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter.

ALL Testimonies and back numbers ordered have been forwarded, unless parties have been notified to the contrary.

PARTIES owing us will greatly oblige by forwarding amount due. If not before, an opportunity will be afforded when delegates come to Synod.

THE

### Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

#### MAY, 1876.

No. 5.

#### ORIGINAL.

#### THE REVIVALISTS.

WE watched with great interest the religious revival in Great Britain, under the leadership of D. L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey, and we rejoice in common with Christians of every name, that so many have been awakened to a concern about their immortal souls. We only int rpret what everywhere appears, when we say that the Christians of this land have been looking to the same agency to bring about a similar result in the United States-that is, an extended revival of religion. It may seem strange that the church of Christ, with so many ordained preachers of the word of God, should even appear to wait for two unordained men to begin the work of revival. Have we not the means of gra e? There must be a cause for this looking to certain men, which is so general. We believe one great reason of this and of the success of these men, lies in the very fact of their being unordained. They are not regarded as representatives of any denomination, and their own denominational relations are kept in the background. The Christian desire for union can find expression in meeting in them with brethren in Christ, without the charge being incurred of ignoring denominational connections. And we have seen during the winter a widespread union among Christians in this revival work. Invitations had been sent to Mr. Moody from various cities; the course pursued here being the same as that used abroad, the ministers of the various churches in signing the invitations promising "hearty co-operation in presence, word and prayers." Looking at Mr. Moody's work, however, it seems strange that he should deem endorsement necessary. His labors are confessedly extraordinary. Why ask any permission from the ministry? We have not in this land parishes, having boundaries, and including a certain population as an entire charge. There is in every city a vast out-lying population who are classed with no church, to whom any earnest laborer can go. The organized churches certainly should cultivate each its field; but the community apart from the circle which is called

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#### THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY, No. V.

#### BY REV. THOS. SPROULL, D. D.

ON the subject of the unrighteousness of slavery the Covenanting Church in this country early took a decided stand. It seems strange that a system so repugnant to our natural sense of right, and so directly at variance with the feelings of humanity as that in which the African race was held in bondage, could find any to maintain or defend it. The wonder is increased when professed Christians, members of the church, are found claiming an ownership in their fellowmen. But it is perfectly marvellous that Covenanters, who by their training as well as by their sufferings in other lands, learned the injustice and the bitterness of oppression, should in the land to which they field for the enjoyment of liberty, subject their fellowmen to a state of personal bondage. It is painfully true, however, that this was the case. Not only in South Carolina, where the evil had already extensively prevailed, but also in New York, slaves were held by Covenanters.

We find the following statement in the Historical part of the Testimony, pages 122, 123:

"In the year 1800 Mr. McLeod had received a call to the congregation of Walkill, and among the subscribers there were the holders of slaves. He urged this fact as a motive for rejecting the call. The Presbytery now having the subject regularly before them, resolved to purge the church of this great evil. They enacted that no slaveholder should be retained in their communion. This measure was greatly facilitated by the spirited and faithful exertions of Rev. Messrs. James McKinney and Samuel B. Wylie, who had been appointed a committee to visit the Southern States and regulate the concerns of the church in that part of America. These gentlemen set out on their mission in the month of November, 1800. They travelled through Pennsylvania, and from Pittsburgh sailed down the Ohio to Kentucky. They rode from thence to South Carolina, and having settled the affairs of the church, and abolished the practice of holding slaves among church members in the South, they returned in the spring to the State of New York. The Presbytery approved of the services of their committee, and required of their connections a general emancipation. No slaveholder is since admitted to their communion. Moreover, there is good evidence that Mr. King, some years previous, had applied the principles of the church as now understood, to this great evil in his own bounds."

As the fruit of the faithfulness of the Presbytery a member of the Walkill congregation at once emancipated his slaves. Faithful discipline is always blessed for purifying the church. The evil of the atrocious system was kept before the people. Mr. McLeod preached and published a sermon entitled "Negro Slavery Unjustifiable," in which he showed the injustice and cruelty of the practice in a clear light. It was made one point of the church's testimony against the government, exhibited in her judicial decisions, and in the ministration of her ministers. Those parts of the constitution that sanctioned slavery—the clause that forbid Congress to prohibit the importation of Africans to be enslaved prior to 1808, and that which required the free States to deliver up the slaves that might escape from their masters—were adduced as reasons why Christians should not incorporate with the nation. The effect of these testimonies practically exemplified, was seen in the great abolition movement that resulted, in the wise and mysterious providence of God, in the destruction of the entire system of slavery in this land.

It is due to the memory of those men to state that they stood alone among all the churches called evangelical, in the position which they maintained in refusing allegiance to the government on account of its sanction of this great crime. In all others, slavery was tolerated, and by some it was excused and even justified. The discerning men who took the stand of dissent from the government on account of its constitutional protection of slavery, saw clearly that to incorporate with the government, whether by swearing allegiance or accepting offices, or performing acts that implied allegiance, would be to become partakers of the sins of the nation, and be exposed to the judgments of God inflicted for its sins. Keeping their hands pure and their consciences clean, they at the same time gave a practical warning to the nation of its dangers, and employed the only proper means for its reformation.

The irreligious character of the nation was another ground on which they maintained their dissent from it. The principle that the law of God is the rule by which the conduct of men is to be tried both individually and in their social relations, was fundamental in their creed. For it the witnesses of Christ in the old world contended, and their sincerity in the maintenance of it, many of them sealed by their blood. National organizations are no more exempt from the obligation to obey the law of God than the persons of whom they are composed. Covenanters in Britain had tried that nation by this standard, and they found it wanting. How natural for them to apply the same rule to the American nation, and determine their course in regard to it by the results. This they did, and while as they said, "The Reformed Presbyterian Church approve of some of the leading features of the constitution," they nevertheless "perceived immorality interwoven with the general and state constitutions of government in America, and have uniformly dissented from the civil establishments."

They did not shrink from pointing out the irreligious character of the goverment, on account of which they dissented from it. Their language is: "It gives support to the enemies of the Redeemer, and admits to its honors and emoluments Jews, Mohammedans, deists and atheists."\* The toleration which the constitution extends to all forms of false religion was one of the evils in it against which they testified. Its omission to recognize the church of Christ, and extend to her, as such, protection and support, was a defect that forbade them to accept it as existing by the appointment and according to the law of God. The clamor of no union between the church and state had with them no effect to silence them in asserting the right of the church of Christ to the fostering care of his national subjects. Against the blending of church and state they indeed contended, as an infringement on the prerogative of Jesus Christ as the head of the church. But for their mutual recognition of one another, each in its own domain, and their cooperation as co-ordinate departments of the government of the Mediator, they contended, as their fathers before had contended in the midst of great tribulation.

\* Historical View, page 121. The clause in the constitution on which this statement is based is that which declares that "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office of public trust under the United States." Art. 6, Sec. 3. Under this provision Brigham Young, the high priest of Mormonism, is constitutionally eligible to the office of president of the United States; and so is F. E. Abbott, the apostle of atheism.

<sup>+</sup> "The notion that church and state should stand aloof from each other, has been derived neither from the Bible, nor from a careful study of Christ's claims, nor from the practice of nations. It has no better foundation than infidelity, or at best an inconsiderate reaction against the gross abuses of the governments of the old world, where the church is largely a mere engine of state power, or the state a tool of ecclesiastical arrogance and usurpation. Each should be kept distinct. They should move in their own spheres, but recognizing and co-operating with each other in promoting, according to their respective functions, the great ends of the glory of God, and the well being of man." Argumentative Iestimony of Civil Government, published in overture, according to a resolution of Synod, 1853.

The part of the constitution against which their testimony on this point was especially directed is the first amendment. It is in these words: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." By this amendment Congress is prohibited from enacting any law that would discriminate between Christianity and false religion. We have seen that our fathers in settling the position of the church towards the civil establishment in this land, declared as the ground of their dissent, that "there are moral evils essential to the constitution of the United States, which render it necessary to refuse allegiance to the whole system." Two of the evils specified are: "That there is contained in it no acknowledgment of the Christian religion," and " that it gives support to the enemies of the Redeemer, and admits to its honors and emoluments Jews, Mohammedans, deists and atheists." These views and the amendment referred to are in irreconcilable opposition to one another. So long as this amendment is a part of the constitution, Covenanters are bound by their profession to "refuse allegiance to the whole system."

It would be unjust to the memory of those who were engaged in settling the polity of the church, to charge them with indifference in regard to visible unity among the professed followers of Christ. They were no advocates of sectarianism. It was their earnest desire that all true Christians would constitute one organic body under the living Head. Believing and loving their principles, they were ready by discussion and argument to commend them to others. Persuaded of their truth and importance, they could not sacrifice them for the sake of outward harmony. They knew well that the unity that is obtained at the expense of any truth committed to them to hold and maintain as a part of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and the substitution of error in its stead, would be unity only in appear-Sooner or later, as has been often proved, the elements that are ance. foreign to the idea of a church united on the basis of divine truth, reveal their heterogeneous character and work danger to the cause they were expected to aid. If those witnesses of Christ would yield nothing, either in doctrine or practice of the testimony they had engaged to maintain, it was because they felt the obligation of the divine injunction to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." They were never taught that peace and harmony can be secured by a compromise of any part of the truth that had been committed to them, and which they were required to hold fast. Nor could they admit to the fellowship of the church those who either dissented from any of the truths for which they contended, or held any of the errors which they condemned, in their Testimony. On this point they were tried early in their history.

On page 14, printed Minutes, we find the following action recorded :

"A paper was presented by Rev. John Black containing a proposal from the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery, of a union with this court, upon certain grounds explained in the paper. It was resolved, I. That this court cannot admit the members of the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery on the grounds specified in the paper. II. That a committee be appointed, consisting of Messrs. Wylie, McLeod and Black, to draught an answer to the paper from the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery, and forward it to them before the next meeting of Presbytery. III. That a copy of these minutes, together with an extract of the minutes respecting our intended Testimony, be, in the meantime, sent to the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery."

At the next meeting of the Presbytery, May, 1806, the matter was finally disposed of by the following action:

"The committee reported that they had taken up the business of the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery, and had sent such an answer to them as testified their disapprobation of their constitution, as recorded in their minutes. The Presbytery approved the proceedings of the committee."

The proposal made and refused was for a union of the two Presbyteries, without any adjustment of the points on which they differed. Such a union could have been of no permanent advantage, and was therefore wisely rejected.

At the meeting of Synod in 1825, the following communication was received: "At a meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, on the 31st of May last, the following resolution was presented through the committee of overtures, and adopted: '*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed by this General Assembly to confer with a similar committee to be appointed by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, should they deem it expedient to appoint such a committee, and to prepare a plan of correspondence between the two bodies.'" The Synod unanimously agreed to appoint such a committee, in accordance with this resolution of the Assembly. The two committees met and agreed on a plan of correspondence. As a part of the history of synodical action, we give the report:

"After mutual and friendly consultation, the following plan was unanimously adopted, to be recommended to their judicatories:

ARTICLE I. The General Assembly and Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, lamenting the existing separations between the members of the body of Christ, and believing that all the members of that body, being many are one body, and trusting to the word of God that these separations shall not be perpetual, do agree to use all scriptural means, in the exercise of patience and prudence, to bring their several ecclesiastical conventions to uniformity in doctrine, worship and order, according to the word of God.

ARTICLE II. In order to bring about this desirable object on the basis of the proposed unity of the visible church, it is mutually covenanted that the ministers, members and judicatories of these churches, treating each other with Christian respect, shall always recognize the validity of each other's acts and ordinances consonant to the Scriptures ; and yet that any church judicatory belonging to either body, may examine persons, or review cases of discipline or points at present peculiar and distinctive to themselves.

ARTICLE III. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, shall severally appoint two commissioners, with an alternate to each, to attend these judicatories respectively, who shall hold their offices till they are superseded by another choice; and these commissioners shall have the privilege of proposing measures important to the church of Christ, and of delivering their opinions on any question under discussion, but they shall have no vote in its decision."

It is in the remembrance of the writer that this action of Synod was received by many of the people with a good deal of distrust. They could not see what the Covenanting Church would gain by this proposed correspondence, but they could see what she might lose by it. They applied to themselves the declaration made of the church of old: "Israel then shall dwell in safety alone." They feared that the result would be the lowering of the testimony, which would be damaging to the cause of truth that they were pledged to maintain. The subject was earnestly discussed, and the effect was that at the next meeting of Synod it was disposed of by the following action:

"While the Synod cordially recognize the principle embraced in the proposed plan of correspondence between the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and this Synod, yet, aware of the scattered state of the churches under their care, the duty of preserving their mutual confidence unimpaired, and their strength undiminished, and the importance of the subject itself, both to the present edification and the future operations of the people of God in their communion, *Resolve* to postpone indefinitely the further consideration of the proposed plan of correspondence with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church."

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A communication was received at the meeting of 1827, from the Associate Synod of North America, complaining of misrepresentation of some of their principles in the Testimony of the Church, and asking for a correction of the alleged misstatements.

In the Historical Testimony, pages 99-104, new edition, will be found a brief sketch of the Associate Church, and of the failure of the efforts of the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland to induce the founders of that body to come to the ground occupied by the Presbytery. Conferences were held, and ultimately a very earnest controversy was carried on between the two dissenting bodies. In presenting in the Testimony the state of the question at issue, the historian, in six propositions stated the points on which the Associate Church differed from the Reformed Presbyterian, as they were deduced from their writings, and in substance embodied in their standards. The Associate Church held that injustice was done to them, and called the attention of the Synod to the alleged incorrect statements. A lengthy correspondence ensued, extending over four meetings of Synod. And though little appears to have been effected in regard to the object aimed at, the entire discussion carried on by letters is a fine specimen of Christian kindness that is not always found in controversial correspondence. On the part of the Associate Synod there was a disavowal of some of the sentiments ascribed to them. and on the part of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod an acceptance of the disavowal, and the expression of satisfaction that it had been made. The matter was finally disposed of by the following action of the Synod of 1831: "Whereas, this Synod is persuaded that the subject in discussion between it and the Associate Synod, from the turn it has taken, might be carried on indefinitely without advantage to the interests of truth, and being desirous of promoting that object and nothing else in the historical narrative of our Testimony; therefore, *Resolved*, That the committee of foreign correspondence be directed to inform the Associate Synod, that if furnished with a brief and distinct statement of the views entertained by Seceders on the points in question, such statement shall be embodied in the next edition of our Narrative."

Such a statement has not been furnished, and so the matter rests.

#### THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD.

#### BY JOHN BROWN, A. M., STRAWBERRY POINT, IOWA.

UNDER the former dispensation there was a very marked distinction between the priests and the people. For every high priest taken from among men was ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he might offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. And no man took that honor unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron. This distinction, however, is abolished by the gospel. Under the evangelical dispensation, Christ is the only proper priest, who by his one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. But the term is figuratively applied to Christians in general, of whom it is asserted that they are "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;" and that they are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthod, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Pet. 2:5-9.

Let us mark some of the points of analogy between the Levitical priesthood and the Christian. The priests of the Christian dispensation resemble those of the Levitical in their consecration to God, and in the sacrifices which they offer. COMBINED SERIES, -

- - - Vol. XIV, No. 8.

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AUGUST,

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1876.

#### J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing,"-Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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**160**<sup>37</sup> Any one sending a new subscriber with advance payment of \$1.00, and 15 cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition either of the TESTIMONY or of the BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, as he may elect, and the new subscriber a copy of the Reformed Preebyterian and Covenanter for a year.

#### THE LOYAL ARCHITE.

There are some copies of this Sermon still for sale. They can be had at fifteen cents each, or eight for one dollar.

Address the author, REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D., 259 North avenue, Allegheny, Pa. They are to be obtained, also, at the U. P. Book Depository, 9th street, Pittsburgh.

#### PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY APPOINTMENTS.

North Jackson (transferred to Monongahela)-July, 3d Sab., W. McKinney; August, North Jackson (transferred to Mononganeta)-July, 3d Sab., W. McKinney; August, 4th Sab., Shanks; Sept., 1st Sab., J. R. Wylie; 3d Sab., W. M. Shanks; Oct., 3d Sab., J. Crozier. Springfield-Aug., 1st and 3d Sabs, W. M. Shanks; Sept., 1st Sab., J. Crozier; 3d Sab., J. R. Wylie; Oct., 1st Sab., J. Crozier. Adamsville-July, 5th Sab., W. McKinney; Aug., 2d Sab., W. M. Shanks; Sept., 2d Sab., J. R. Wylie; 4th Sab., J. C. McFeeters, dispense sacrament, assisted by R. J. George; Oct., 2d Sab., J. Crozier. Sandy Lake-Sept., 1st Sab., W. M. Shanks; 4th Sab., J. R. Wylie. Otter Creek-Sept., 2d Sab., W. M. Shanks. Allegheny-J. J. McClurkin, Sept., 1st Sab., and supply itself. Conneautville-Sept., 2d and 3d Sabs., J. J. McClurkin. July, 4th Sab., W. McKinney; Sept. 4th Sab., J. McClurkin.

S. J. CROWE, Ch'n Com. of Supplies.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made by which there will be preaching in Elizabeth the first and third Sabbaths of each month.

THE call on Rev. T. C. Sproull, from Poland and North Jackson congregation, was presented to the candidate by the commission appointed for that purpose at a meeting held in the Central R. P. church of Allegheny on the 3d of July, and by him accepted. A commission was appointed to meet in the North Jackson church, Tuesday, July 18, 9 A. M., and attend to the installation. The appointments for North Jackson were transferred to Monongahela. Licentiates and ministers interested will please take notice.

#### THE

### Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

#### VOL. XIV.

#### AUGUST, 1876.

No. 8.

#### ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LOED.\*

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."-1 Cor. 15: 58.

In everything he has made God is eminently practical, and always seems, in the production of every creature, to have contemplated something that would serve a practical end, and accomplish a practical mission in the economy of his works. As a modern naturalist has well observed, "The most insignificant insect or reptile is of much consequence, and has a mighty influence on the economy of nature. Even the earthworm, though in appearance so despicable, is a most important link in nature's chain, and if destroyed and lost, would not only make a lamentable chasm, but pull down many other parts of the system with it." As Darwin has shown, even the gaudy colors that bedeck the flowers of the field, and which man by culture can so vary and improve, serve a double purpose, being designed to attract bees, and other insects, to their stores of honey, and thus feed the animal; whilst the pollen covered insect, brushing over the organs of the flower, secures its more certain and perfect impregnation, and thus the perpetuation of the plant. So likewise might be said of the highly ornamented case in which the beetle folds his wings, or the brilliant dust so artistically laid on the wings of the butterfly; if we only knew it, we would find that they serve an end, worthy of the wisdom of Him who claims to have given "the goodly wings to the peacock, and wings and feathers to the ostrich." When we pronounce anything to be useless, we rather express the conclusions of our own ignorance, than the facts of the divine plan.

And if so in the physical, may we not expect that it shall be still more so in the social and moral world, nothing without a practical end, and a mission worthy of God who assigned it. And this idea we find often in the word of God, especially in regard to the church and her members. Thus Moses, probably referring to the construction of the tabernacle, and the setting up of the national and religious institutions in the wilderness, as a preparation of the chosen nation to fulfil its high destiny in the land of promise, prays, "Establish thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the

\* Sermon preached in the Allegheny church, Pa., at the opening of Synod, Tuesday evening, May 23, 1876, by the retiring Moderator, Rev. James Kennedy, of New York. 2. A lesson of unceasing activity in our Master's work.

"Always abounding," "and be not weary in well doing." Scientists tell us that all life is just the molecules in perpetual motion. And spiritual life and church life is all the parts and powers in constant motion to accomplish some work and service for Christ. It is said that Dr. Carey gave, as the secret of his success in his vast literary work, "I can plod," and there is no doubt but unceasing labor and unwearying diligence will always be blessed with a measure of success when the work is for God.

3. A lesson of strong confidence in him whom we serve.

"Forasmuch as ye know." The cry, "Remember that ye follow Cæsar," was, it is said, sufficient to stimulate the Roman soldiery into hope and action, even when the conflict seemed to be going against them. How much more should such assurances as, "For ye serve the Lord Christ," "Ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord," "In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not," animate and quicken us. On many grand and brilliant scenes, to be realized on earth, the light of prediction falls. but they are all sure, as sure as the word of the faithful and true witness can make them, and in regard to them all we might change the words of Joshua from the historic to the prophetic tense, and say, "There shall not fail aught of any good thing which the Lord hath spoken to the house of Israel; all shall come to pass." And, away beyond this life and world, all that grand resurrection picture, from which our text is only a practical deduction, and all the crowns sparkling with glory, promised as the reward of those who shall be "faithful unto death," all these are certain too, "all laid up," and "reserved in heaven for us," and we may take home all the certainty of such a prospect to cheer us in every holy undertaking. May we, and all who serve the same faithful Master, be stimulated and strengthened more and more, by such encouraging assurances, to be "steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord."

#### REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN OHUROH IN AMERICA. SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY, No. VI.

BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

WHEN the Synod was organized in 1809 it consisted of seven ministers, Messrs. Gibson, McLeod, Wylie, Black, Donnelly, Williams and McMaster. On these devolved the labor and the responsibility of settling the order of the church according to the original design, and of dispensing ordinances to those who were calling for the bread of life. To this work they set themselves with all earnestness. They were at peace among themselves, and by harmonious co-operation they were enabled, with the divine blessing, to maintain the testimony of Jesus Christ, and extend the knowledge of it into remote parts of the land. The wilderness and the solitary place began to be glad for them, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

At this juncture a series of difficulties began that for a time disturbed the peace of the church, and retarded her progress in the work to which she was called. Fidelity to our purpose in these sketches requires us to notice a painful episode in her history, which otherwise might as well be left to sink into oblivion.

In 1808 Rev. David Graham, a minister in connection with the Reformed Presbytery in Ireland, arrived with his family in this country. His departure from Ireland was precipitate, occasioned by embarrassments in

worldly matters and attempts to relieve them, that seemed to be of doubtful propriety. He came without any certificate of his ministerial standing. A stranger and in need he drew to him the sympathy of Covenanters and others in New York, where he remained for a time. It was seen that he possessed popular talents that might be usefully employed in the exercise of his office. Steps were taken to remove the disability under which he was placed. To the Northern Committee that at this time attended to matters in that part of the church in the interim of the meetings of the Presbytery, he had made application shortly after his arrival in this country. He informed the committee "that he had been an ordained minister in Ireland, and a member of the Reformed Presbytery," and admitted "that he had left his country and the Presbytery in a disorderly manner, and now wished his case to be taken up by the Reformed Presbytery in this country." The committee wrote to the Presbytery in Ireland, asking for a statement of his case, and documents necessary in order to take proper action. The Presbytery directed their reply to the Reformed Presbytery in this country. From the documents sent it appeared that Mr. Graham had been tried by the Irish Presbytery, and the charges against him being proved, he was deposed from the office of the ministry.

The Presbytery in this country met in May, 1809, and at once adopted the deed of the sister court in Ireland. Mr. Graham being called on testified his submission to the court in the Lord, and professed a strong desire to be restored to the office of the ministry. The court then proceeded to take the proper steps for his restoration. On professing sorrow for his conduct and repentance, he was rebuked by the moderator, and restored to his privileges as a private member of the church. "A committee was also appointed to meet in the course of the summer and restore him to the office of the holy ministry, provided that nothing afresh should appear against him to render that measure in their judgment ineligible."

On the 12th of August the committee met, and the way being in their judgment clear, restored him to the exercise of the ministerial office. The following is a copy of the act of restoration :

MILTON, Aug. 12, 1809.

The committee appointed by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America to restore Mr. Graham met and was constituted by prayer. Present, Rev. Alexander McLeod and Gilbert McMaster, ministers; John Burns and Alexander Glenn, ruling elders; A. McLeod, moderator; G. McMaster, clerk. Mr. Graham being present, was called upon to declare whether it continued to be his desire to be restored to the office of the ministry. He declared it did. Having promised a steadfast adherence to the canse of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and submission in the Lord to the Northern Presbytery in subordination to the Synod of said church, after prayer for divine direction by the moderator, Mr. Graham was, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, restored and absolved from all scandal attaching to the sentence of the Reformed I resbytery in Ireland.

We next meet this case of Mr. Graham in the records of the Synod of 1811. After the court was constituted he found fault with the omission of his name from the list of members. He was told that inasmuch as he was received since the last meeting, a formal introduction was necessary in order to his membership. As he insisted on what he claimed as his right, the documents that related to his restoration to the ministry were called for and read. There were also produced extracts from the Minutes of the Middle Presbytery, which showed that he had received a call from the congregation of Canonsburg, and "that a petition for his installation had been rejected for reasons which implicated his ministerial character." An address from the Presbytery in Ireland was also read, which represented

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him as "a dangerous man, destitute of integrity and unworthy of the holy ministry." The Synod at last adopted resolutions enjoining on the Middle Presbytery to institute process against Mr. Graham, and bring it to an issue with all convenient speed.

From our views of ecclesiastical order and in the light of our practice, the course of the Synod in this case seems to be scarcely defensible. It was evidently proper that the name of Mr. Graham should not appear on the roll until he was formally introduced. In so far the Synod was right. But it appears that it was the design of the members not to admit him to a seat at any time in that meeting, and in fact it does not appear that he was admitted. If he had been tried or even under process, an intimation of this by the Presbytery would have justified the Synod in refusing him a seat. But this was not the case. It seems that he had pursued a course, after his restoration, that lost the confidence of his brethren, and, in the judgment of the Presbytery, as we learn from their subsequent action, furnished sufficient ground for bringing charges against him. But certainly the fact that these things were known to the members of the court, and yet no formal process was begun, ought not to have been a bar to his seat in Synod. And we cannot see how the reading of the representation of character given him by the church in Ireland could be used to sustain the action of Synod. We have no disposition to judge harshly in the case; the Synod found itself beset with difficulties, and to this may be ascribed what seems to us to have been unwarrantable. We may have occasion to refer to this again, as a precedent overlooked by some of the actors in this scene, when afterwards a member who had been tried and suspended, was sustained as competent not only to take his seat in Synod, but to officiate as moderator.

The Middle Presbytery met in Philadelphia on the 24th of May, immediately after the adjournment of Synod, to proceed in the case as directed by that court. A libel was framed on *fama clamosa* against Mr. Graham, the main counts of which were: withdrawing his profession of repentance, and employing his ministry to the injury of the church. The Presbytery also suspended him from the exercise of the ministerial office until the trial should be completed, and agreed to meet on the second Tuesday of August, the same year, in Pittsburgh, to proceed in the trial.

Presbytery met according to appointment, August 13, 1811. The members were Messrs. Black, Wylie and Williams, ministers, and John Renfrew, William Gormly and William Mitchell, ruling elders. Dr. McLeod from the Northern Presbytery being present, on invitation, took his seat in the court. The trial lasted until the 19th. The case excited deep interest in the surrounding community. It is said that the church was crowded every day with spectators. Men left their business in town and country to be present and witness the trial. The fine address and personal popularity of Mr. Graham drew to him the sympathies of many both in the church and the world. As the trial progressed, the impression spread and deepened that he was a persecuted man. He possessed a singular readiness to turn to his account anything in the trial which seemed like oppression. The Presbytery had the difficult task to deliberate and decide against the prejudices of the majority of the people.

We have before us the Presbytery's report of the trial presented to Synod, and we have read the narrative published by Mr. Graham. Two statements professedly of the same facts could scarcely be more unlike. We well remember the impression made on our mind at the time by readng the narrative, was that he was a persecuted man. This was the conviction of many who witnessed the trial. Some of the best men of Pittsburgh and Canonsburg congregations acted out their convictions, and when, before the decision of the Presbytery, Mr. Graham declined its authority, they joined in his declinature. The finding of the Presbytery was, that he was guilty of the first and second charges in the libel, and that there was strong presumptive evidence in behalf of the third. The sentence was, that he be deposed from the office of the ministry, which was formally done by the moderator after prayer by Dr. McLeod.

Had Mr. Graham adhered to his declaration in the close of his declinature in which he "called God to record, upon his soul, that in the name of Jesus Christ, he took his stand on the blessed Scriptures, with the doctrine, worship, government of the Reformed Church," he would have made a serious rupture in the church. But he lacked stability, and as his subsequent course showed, the ministry was to him only a means to preferment. In a short time he abandoned those who followed him, went to New York, and engaged in the practice of law. Like a meteor he darted athwart the ecclesiastical heavens, dazzling and bewildering in his course, and then went out in obscure darkness. The greater part of those who at first adhered to him, either returned to the Covenanting Church or joined in the fellowship of the Associate and Associate Reformed Churches.

#### SOUTH CAROLINA COVENANTERS.

EDITORS REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN AND COVENANTER-Your correspondent in the April number, dissenting from my Reminiscences in an earlier number, in reference to Mr. Riley's views on the government question, is fair, and deserves consideration. His witnesses are very respectable, and as they are well known to me, I would have gladly consulted them before writing, if it had been practicable. I am glad to compare notes with all that have any knowledge of these matters, knowing that no human testimony is infallible. I have written from the standpoint of a near relation of Rev. T. Donnelly. My views of Southern matters are no doubt those of Mr. Donnelly, liable however to more or less error in the statement, as coming to me second-hand. The quotation at the end of the article more than intimates that I wrote without evidence. A careful perusal of the article itself will reveal the fact, that the more important statements are based on the testimony of two persons whose position in the church, as well as their relation to the affairs of the South, ought to give their opinions some weight. The article whose statements are questioned was prepared under the supervision of Elder Thomas Smith, father of Rev. J. C. Smith, and nephew of Rev. T. Donnelly, under whose ministry he was brought up, and with whom he was intimately acquainted, both as pastor and uncle. The article had been bespoken by the editors of Our Banner more than a year before it was written. A sketch was made after eliciting all the facts known to him. Then I took my notes to Elder John Donnelly, oldest son of Rev. T. Donnelly, and a member of Elkhorn session. He corroborated some of the statements, and added others. Then I went to Mrs. Nancy Linn, daughter of Rev. T. Donnelly, and several other persons, and read the notes to them, and obtained whatever information they could give. As to the opinion of Rev. T. Donnelly that Mr. Riley held liberal views on our civil relations, I have the two elders above named as living witnesses. Mr. J. Donnelly recollects distinctly hearing his father say that "Mr. Wylie sent Rev. J. Riley to form a liberal party." We do not suppose that New Light was then developed ; but is it not likely that a man of Mr. Donnelly's reserve observed the entrance of the thin edge of defection be-

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SEPTEMBER,

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I atk, A. D. Dennew, 044

The address of Rev. T. C. Sproull is North Jackson, O., instead of as before, McKeesport, Pa.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be dispensed in the Central R. P. Church, of Allegheny, on the second Sabbath of October. Rev. T. A. Sproull will assist.

Kansas Presbytery will meet in Winchester, on Tuesday, October 17th, 1876, at 7, P. M. J. Dorbs, Clerk.

Lakes Presbytery will meet in Second Miami Church, Northwood, September 5th, at 7 P. M. Sessions are required to forward their minutes for examination at this meeting.

The Seminary Session for 1876-77 will begin Tuesday, September 12. Opening lecture by Prof. Sloane. S. O. WYLLE, Chm'n.

D. MCALLISTER, Sec.

Board of Trustees.

A. Kilpatrick was ordained and installed in Pine Creek Church, pastor of Union and Pine Creek congregations, on the 17th of May, 1876. Rev. J. Galbraith presided and addressed the pastor; Rev. D. B. Willson preached the sermon, and Rev. S. J. Crowe addressed the people.

#### THE

### Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

#### SEPTEMBER, 1876.

No. 9.

#### ORIGINAL.

#### THE POLITIOAL OUTLOOK.

For a long time, indeed ever since the close of the war, rumors have been widely circulated that the entire Civil Service of the country had become to a greater or less extent corrupt; that if the facts were known some of the most prominent and respected officers of the government, instead of occupying positions of influence, would be compelled to flee to foreign lands, or remaining home would receive the punishment due those who commit great crimes. As, however, all such reports could generally be traced to disappointed politicians, or members of the opposition party, and were stouly denied or ignored by those most deeply interested, comparatively little attention was paid to them. They were regarded as simply the reckless statements of persons who took this way either to abuse those who refused to grant their wishes, or hoped to make political capital.

For the first time for many years a majority of the House of Representatives belong to the Democratic party. One good result, whatever may have been the motive that led to the appointment of the investigating committee, and the diligence with which the committee have prosecuted their work, is the bringing to light some of the truth respecting the rumors of corruption so long in circulation. However humiliating, it is good that all the facts be known. From what has already been revealed, it would appear that the most damaging charges fell short of the truth. We venture to say, there were very few persons, if any, prepared for such a disclosure of corruption and fraud as thus far has been made. What will be the result of the investigation it would be useless to attempt to predict. Nothing now would surprise us.

The testimony lately given by Bluford Wilson, ex-Solicitor of the Treasury, contains the fullest statement of the efforts made by the late Secretary of the Treasury, B. H. Bristow, to break up the Whiskey Ring, the most formidable of all. The story as published in the papers is as interesting, long as his political prospects was advanced thereby, so long and no longer is he willing to act in that capacity. No wonder such a reformer is regarded with suspicion. Besides, Mr. Hendricks, the candidate for Vice President, represents the worst element of his party. Loyal people hesitate to give their support to a ticket whose success will elevate to the Vice Presidency a man who never had a word to speak on behalf of the black, who never by word or deed showed any sympathy with the country in the dark days of the rebellion, and whose influence would be wholly hostile to the freedmen of the South. The Hamburg massacre in South Carolina, and the cruelties and indignitics daily perpetrated on the blacks in the South, the details of which are given in the papers, awaken grave apprehensions as to the result should the Democratic party triumph next fall. Many a Northern man feels that let suffer who or what may, the only persons that were loyal in the South during the rebellion must not be left uncared for.

The honest voter this fall will find himself in a strange predicament. If he support Mr. Hayes he will vote for a man whose reputation is good, but who is little known, who belongs to a party once the synonym for purity and progress, but now corrupt from centre to circumference, completely controlled by its worst element. For aught to the contrary he knows, he may be helping to continue the present lamentable state of affairs four years longer. If he support Mr. Tilden, he helps a candidate not wholly himself unobnoxious, but long connected with a party whose history is that of opposition to progress, and whose success would be most hurtful to the freedmen of the South.

If ever there was a time when the duty of the Covenanter Church was plain it is the present. The evils now so clearly seen are the legitimate results of defects in the constitution of the land, against which we have long testified. For them we are not responsible, and complete deliverance from them can never be obtained until the nation is reformed in accordance with those principles for which we contend. Covenanters have not the same perplexity in regard to which candidate they should support as have others. Their duty is plain—support neither.

#### REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA. SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY, No. VII.

BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D.D.

THE position of dissent that the Reformed Presbyterian Church assumed towards the government of the United States rendered her unpopular in the eyes of the surrounding community, and subjected the firmness of her members to severe trials. The principles that were involved in the issue that she joined with the world demanded for their maintenance a spirit of self-denial. Abstract theories, true and important, may be held, but unless they enter into the life and are exemplified in the practice of those who profess them, they are powerless to influence and mould the conduct of men, either as individuals or as associations. Any ecclesiastical organization that rests on a mere profession of faith to accomplish the end of its existence will prove a failure. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

The principles of the church on the subject of civil government, taken from the Bible, furnished the test by which she tried the Constitution of the United States. Weighed in this balance it was found wanting. It had both negative and positive evils against which she, as witnessing for the whole truth committed to her as a trust to hold and use in her conflict with irreligion in all its forms, was called on to testify. What these evils were she stated in her Testimony, in the maintenance of which she required all who entered into her communion to refuse to incorporate with the government by any act that would involve identification with it. They were prohibited not only from swearing allegiance to the government, but also from doing anything that would imply allegiance. They could not hold offices under the government, nor vote for candidates for office, nor take any active part in its official administration.

That this was her position from the organization of the Presbytery in 1798 appears not only from the declarations found in the Historical part of the Testimony, but also from the acts of her courts—sessions, presbyteries and synod. To offenders against the statutes of the church prohibiting swearing allegiance, voting, and sitting on juries, discipline was faithfully applied. They were required to profess sorrow and promise amendment in order to enjoy their privileges. The cases of offence of this kind were few, for care was taken in the admission of members to see that they understood and prized the principles which they professed, and accounted it no sacrifice, but a privilege, to exemplify them in practice. In the public ministrations it was held up as an important part of the present truth, that a true follower of Christ should have no political fellowship in any national association that was not constituted in accordance with the requirements of the divine law. They viewed the command as imperative, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing."

It required no little firmness in the church to censure for acts that in the estimation of others were right and even praiseworthy. And nothing less than a conscientious conviction of wrong-doing would induce any one who had transgressed the law to submit to censure. It was clearly seen and believed that any act that identified with the government was an act of disloyalty to Christ as King of nations. Such was the teaching and such the practice of the church in those times.

And the consistent maintenance of this testimony for the authority of Jesus Christ as King of nations, required them to abstain from fellowship with those churches that allowed their members to incorporate with the government. To wait in their ordinary ministrations on the preaching of the word, they held, was to compromise their testimony and practically to concede the points on which they set up a separate communion. They were required to hold society on Sabbaths when they had no preaching by covenanting ministers, and as frequently as practicable on other days of the week. They were thus taught that as witnesses for Christ they were a peculiar people, standing aloof from all associations civil and ecclesiastical, that denied to him any part of the glory due to him as "King of kings and Lord of lords."

It would be a reflection on the wisdom of our fathers to offer an apology for the position that they assumed. No apology is needed. It was delib. erately and conscientiously taken and is fully defensible. They were neither uncharitable nor bigoted. It never entered their minds to claim that they were the only true church, in which alone salvation was to But they believed that they were the witnessing church, the be found. descendants of the martyrs and confessors of Christ, and that it bebooved them to hold fast all the attainments that the church had reached in those times of trial when her testimony was scaled with the blood of her faithful children. They accounted it an honor to be "followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." They learned from history that the persecuted remnant in Scotland under the tyrannical rule of Charles II. and James, refused to hear the curates and indulged ministers, at the peril of their lives. They knew that the Revolution Settlement of 1688 was Erastian, and that the church then established had no claim to be the true descendant of the church of the Second Reformation. They knew, moreover, that the remnant in that time of trial refused to accept that settlement, and without a ministry for nineteen years preserved their existence and maintained their testimony in their fellowship meetings for religious worship.

Called to build up the witnessing church in this new world, the course thus marked out for them was the only one that in fidelity to their covenant engagements they could follow. A heavy responsibility rested on them. They had an arduous work to do, and God fitted them for it. As their day was, so was their strength. In the pulpit and through the press they exhibited their distinctive principles, pointed out the sin of the nation in its disregard of the authority of God and the obligations of his law in its constitution, and warned the people of the judgments that are denounced against the nations that forget God. Arguments from Scripture in support of their position were not without fruit. Intelligent and conscientious men were convinced that their position was the true one, and did not hesitate to decline the exercise of the elective franchise and join with them in bearing practically, testimony for the authority of Jesus Christ as "Prince of the kings of the earth."

It was not to be expected that they would escape opposition in their advocacy of their principles. Those who from ignorance or prejudice refused to adopt their views, when they failed in argument to refute them, tried by reproach to weaken their influence or to silence them. Opprobrious names, the usual weapons of the advocates of a weak cause, were unsparingly applied to them. They were called anti-government men, anarchists, pronounced defective in patriotism, and charged with having a haukering after a kingly government. No treatment could be more unjust. They were, indeed, opposed to immoral governments, but they advocated a true scriptural government. They were the friends of law and order. They accounted it sound patriotism to point out the sin and danger of the country in order to have the evils that exposed it to the judgment of God removed. And so far were they from objecting to the republicanism of the government, they declare in the Historical part of the Testimony, that "A definite constitution on the representative system, reduced to writing and rendered the bond of union among all the members of the civil association, is a righteons measure, which should be adopted by every nation under heaven.

The two things in the constitution that they held up as the ground of their testimony against it, were its irreligion and its immorality—its entire omission of any reference to the authority of God and the obligations of his laws, and its recognition and protection of slavery. Believing that it

[Sept.

is the duty of a body of people when framing their constitution to glorify God by recognizing him as the source of authority, and Jesus Christ as the appointed King of nations, and to secure to every man a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, they could not incorporate with the nation under a constitution that withheld from God the glory due to him, and that fastened the chains of slavery on multitudes of the African race. To swear allegiance to the constitution would have been, in their judgment, constructively to abjure allegiance to God, and to give a pledge to support slavery. They defended their position in the pulpit and through the press, and many, convinced by their reasoning, for conscience' sake gave up their political privileges and united with them in their dissent and testimony.

It might be supposed that the exclusiveness of the church would materially hinder her success and that her growth would be very slow. correctness of such a supposition is set aside by the facts of the case. Taking into account the fewness of her ministers and their remoteness from one another, the increase of her membership and of her congregations was equal to that of any other of the Presbyterian bodies in the land. The truth is, that her strict maintenance of her distinctive principles was a chief element of her success. If she had held them in abeyance, or treated them as of little importance, intelligent and conscientious persons would be able to see no reason why they should prefer her communion to that of a more popular church. And in proportion as she allows them to sink in importance she will find the difficulty increasing of freeing herself from the charge of schism. Our fathers saw that their principles and practice demanded of them a separation from other churches. They were required to bear witness against the political institutions of the land, and against the churches that allowed their members to incorporate with those institutions. Hence to join the Reformed Presbyterian Church was considered a step of advance. The position which she held was admitted to be a higher position than that reached by other churches.

And, besides, it was generally agreed that the covenanting ministers were men of singular ability. They were popular preachers. Thoroughly educated, they were qualified to present the truth with clearness and power that rarely failed to secure the attention of the hearers and often resulted in their acceptance of it. Crowds attended on their preaching, especially on sacramental occasions. In explaining the terms of communion on Saturday, and in the debarring exercise on the Sabbath, the testimony of the church was directed against the immoralities of the nation and the errors of other churches; and usually the sermon on Monday at the close of the sacramental services had special reference to the distinctive position of the church as witnessing for the headship of Jesus Christ as King of nations.

The law of the church that excluded from her communion those who exercised the elective franchise was a stumbling block to many. The remark was often made, that if we would allow our people to vote, we would increase rapidly in numbers, and soon become a large body. There is something plausible in this, but facts are far from showing that the opinion is correct. And it will not stand the test of sound philosophy. The distinctive principles of any church constitute its denominational strength. In proportion as these are given up she becomes weak, and the inducement to leave other churches for her communion are lessened. And besides, if these distinctive principles are truths witnessed for in the past, and committed to her as a sacred trust, to yield them would be unfaithfulness to her Head and King, for which he will not fail to chastise her. He does not require her to advance his cause by compromising his regal claims. He will bless with success only those who feel the obligation laid on them when they assume to be his witnesses, and whereunto they "have already attained, walk by the same rule and mind the same thing."

We have seen what was the position of the church as settled in the earlier stage of her existence in this country. In her dissent from the government and in her practical testimony against it, there was entire barmony among her ministers and members. The students in the Seminary were trained in the knowledge of the truths of her testimony, and were thus fitted to teach them to the people. And when they went forth into the church to labor in her vacancies, their acceptance by the people was just in proportion to the soundness of their belief in these doctrines and their ability to defend them.

It was not to be expected that they would escape trials in maintaining a testimony that was unpopular, and subjected to privation and reproach. The adversary knows to "corrupt by flatteries," as well as to intimidate by fear. To maintain a struggle with the prospect of a speedy and a triumphant termination is comparatively an easy matter. But when success seems almost hopeless, and the conflict is to be continued for life, it is not strange if patience begin to fail, and a spirit of compromise take the place of faithfulness. So long as the truth was openly opposed, it was natural that it would be earnestly defended. While the parties were publicly in the field, the truth was safe. For more than a quarter of a century after the organization of the church in this country this was the state of the testimony. It was not until the enemy changed his tactics that there was an appearance of a disposition to relax the efforts to maintain it. It is to the point in our history, when, on the part of some, there was found a disposition to yield the practical application of the testimony against the government, that we are now broughi. Then began the movement that resulted in the disruption of 1833. An account of the beginning and progress of that movement is reserved for the next chapter.

#### JESUS AN EXAMPLE OF FILIAL PIETY.

THE fifth commandment is greatly honored by the divine Lawgiver. It is placed first in the second table of the law as the most important of the duties next to those which we owe to God. It has a promise. Under the Jewish dispensation a dreadful penalty was attached. Deut. 21:18-21. All nations acknowledged it. Its chief glory, however, is, the Lord Jesus honored it in his life and at his death, and here he has left to all children and youth an illustrious example that they should follow his steps. In connection with a very interesting incident in his life, it is recorded that he went down with his parents, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. The character of his obedience should be diligently considered.

It was a *loving* subjection. "The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Jesus loved his parents. You may say they were worthy of his love. That is true. Joseph, from all that is recorded, was a lovely character. And Mary, his mother, in all the relations of life was "blessed among women." But you object, how does this bear on the case of those parents who are harsh, improvident, vile and unworthy? Must I love them? Children cannot help seeing and feeling the habits and character of their parents, and they are apt to think that any unworthiness in the parents relieves them of the divine

- VOL. XIV. No. 10.

THE

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OCTOBER,

COMBINED SERIES,

1876.

#### J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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We need No. 21, volume 6, of the Christian Statesman, to complete our file. Can any of our subscribers furnish us with it?

The recent edition of Dr. Houston's works can be had of Mr. John Caldwell, No-3617 Spring Garden street, Philadelphia.

Pittsburgh Presbytery will meet Tuesday, October 10th, at New Galilee, Pa. Members will take the morning mail train from the city. Iowa Presbytery, Vernon, Wis., October 2d, at 2 P. M. Iilinois Presbytery, Coultersvile, October 4th, 2 P. M.

Lakes Presbytery met Sept. 5th, at Northwood, O., An organization was granted a Bellefontaine. A call from Cedarville on Rev. J. J. McClurkin was sustained, and forwarded to Pittsburgh Presbytery. Rev. J. R. Hill was appointed to labor in Tuscola and Detroit.

Rev. Dr. Sloane delivered the opening lecture of the Seminary session, Sept. 12, in the Allegheny church, on Preaching. Of last year's class three have finished their course, and four are engaged in teaching. Messrs. Dauerty and Wylie, who attended the winter of 1864-5, have returned, and Mr. R. H. Abraham of Toronto, F. M. Foter of Bellefontaine, O., and T. A. H. Wylie of Rushsylvania, O., are added to the class.

THE ANNUAL COLLECTION FOR THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY FALLS ON THE FIRST SABBATH OF OCTOBER. The amount needed is \$5,000. The necessities of the case are urgent. The salaries of the Professors must be paid, and the efficiency of the Seminary cannot be maintained without a prompt and generous response from the several congregations of the church. S. O. WYLIE, Ch'n.,

D. MCALLISTER, Sec'y.

The first Sabbath of October having been designated by Synod for the collection for current expenses of Theological Seminary, the Treasurer desires to call the attention of the church to the fact that it will take all of the amount called for (\$5,000) to pay the expenses. The salaries for the year ending August 31 have been paid, but the fund is overdrawn \$950. Taking the entire membership in round numbers at 10,000, the officers of each congregation can readily estimate its proportion. It is hoped that it will not be necessary to incur any debt this year. W.

COMMUNIONS.—Muskingum and Tomika, Aug. 2d, Sabbath, Rev. H. P. McClurkin, assisted by W. McKinney: Londonderry, 3d Sabbath, Rev. H. P. McClurkin, assisted by Rev. S. R. McClurkin, New Concord, 4th Sabbath, pastor assisted by Rev. S. R. McClurkin. Sept., 2d Sabbath, Whitelake, Rev. Joseph Beattie; 3d Sabbath, 1st New York, Rev. Joseph Beattie; Clarksburg, Sharon, Rev. M. A. Gault; 4th Sabbath, Lind Grove, Rev. R. C. Wylie; 2d Philadelphia, Rev. J. W. Sproull. October, 1st. Sabbath, Pittsburgh, Rev. R. J. George; 2d Sabbath, Manchester and Pannassus, Rev. J. C. K. Milligan; Central Allegheny, Rev. T. A. Sproull; Slippery Rock, Rev. R. A. McFarlane; 4th Sabbath, Allegheny, Prof. Sloane; New Alexandria; 2d Sabbath Nov.; West Hebron, Rev. Joseph Beattie.

PAGF.

#### THE

## Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

#### OCTOBER, 1876.

No. 10.

#### ORIGINAL.

#### CENTENNIAL SERMON.

#### PREACHED AT WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS, NEWBURGH, N. Y., SABBATH, JULY 2, 1876.

BY REV. SAMUEL CARLISLE.

"Thou hast brought a vine from Egypt. Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to fill the land."—Ps. 80:8.

GOD reigns in providence, upholding, preserving, and governing all things by his almighty power and wisdom. Of this the text furnishes a striking illustration. It refers to the remarkable deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, their journey through the wilderness, and their settlement and establishment in Canaan. The vine is a figure, a metaphor symbolical of the church and nation of Israel, the verse being descriptive of the transplanting of that people from Goshen, in the valley of the Nile, to Palestine.

The text is suggestive of God's dealing with this nation. He brought us from Egypt, planted our fathers in this land. It is a century since the nation was founded. The heroes of the revolution are gone. They, together with their children and their children's children, have passed away; but the nation lives, and in the expressive language of the Psalmist, it has filled the land; the hills are covered with the shadow of it. The commemoration of important events in a nation's history is agreeable to right reason, in accordance with long established custom, and sanctioned by the moral governor and ruler of the universe.

The Israelites had an annual feast, commemorative of their deliverance from Egypt, and on the western bank of the Jordan there was erected, by the divine command, a monument of stone to keep in remembrance its passage. And from the earliest period in our history, our independence has been annually commemorated. Our fathers, in building their noble structure, built upon a rock, and though the rains of political and revolutionary changes have descended, and the winds of infidelity have blown, it remains stable and prosperous, because it was founded upon a rock.

It is not without embarrassment, and the earnest desire for your kind indulgence, that I appear, by the appointment of my ministerial brethren,\* to ask your attention to the divine goodness in planting and prospering this nation. It is exhibited—

I. In the people planted in this land. The husbandman carefully selects

\* Of the Newburgh Ministerial Association.

#### REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN OHUROH IN AMERICA.

SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY, No. VIII.

BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

At the meeting of Synod in 1812, the following report, prepared and presented by a committee, was adopted :

"I. That this Synod, in the name of its constituent members and of the whole church which they represent, declare that they approve of the republican form of the civil order of the United States, and of the several States; that they prefer this nation and its government to any other nation and government; that they will support to the utmost the independence of the United States and the several States, against all foreign aggressions and domestic factions, and disclaim all allegiance to any foreign jurisdiction whatever.

"II. That believing it to be the duty of nations formally to recognize the sovereignty of Messiah over all persons and things, and to construct their system of government upon principles which publicly recognize the authority of that divine revelation which is contained in the Scriptures as the supreme law; their disapprobation of the presently existing constitutions is with them a matter of conscience, and wholly founded on the omission of this duty.

"III. That emigrants from foreign nations, lest they should be esteemed alien enemies, be instructed to give to the proper organ of this government the following assurance of their allegiance to this empire, each for himself, when required. 'I, A. B., do solemnly declare, in the name of the Most High God, the searcher of hearts, that I abjure all foreign allegiance whatsoever, and hold that these States, and the United States, are and ought to be sovereign and independent of all other nations and governments, and that I will promote the best interests of this empire, maintain its independence, promote its peace, and support the integrity of the Union to the best of my power.'

power." "IV. That a delegation be appointed to proceed, so soon as they shall deem it eligible, to the seat of government, and confer with the government of these States upon this subject, with a view to obtain the protection of the laws in maintaining their present testimony."

The war with Great Britain, in which the country was involved, was the occasion of this action. As foreigners who joined the church could not take the ordinary oath of naturalization, there was danger of their being suspected as secret enemies, and on that account exposed to hardshipe. As, however, it appeared that there was no ground for the apprehens on, the application referred to in the fourth resolution was never made.

The next record that we have of any action of Synod with reference to the application of the law of the church to civil affairs, took place at the meeing of Synod in 1821. A paper was received from James Wilson, of Illirois, asking for information on certain points. The Synod stated in disposing of the paper, "that no connection with the laws, the offices, or the order of the State, is prohibited by the church, except what truly involves immorality." This declaration plainly implies that a connection not immoral may exist with the government. It is probable, though we have no certain data from which to draw the inference, that the aubject of sitting on juries was particularly referred to in this action of Synod.

In 1833, the late Rev. Robert Gibson, gave in the Albany Quarterly the following as his opinion of this act: "This act appears to me to have been an evasion of the question of Mr. Wilson. The church received it in this light. The system which is now developed was then working secretly. Here I am constrained to refer to the Testimony that was at that time unmutilated,\* to show that Mr. Wilson needed to have no difficulty

\* This refers to an edition of the Testimony published about 1823, in which in the narrate e the acts respecting giving testimony on oath before magistrates, and sitting on juries, v ere omitted by direction of Synod, to be published in a statute book. The church generally viewed it as defective, and refused to receive it as the genuine Testimony. in settling the question in his own mind, and if he had a Testimony, no need of information from Synod."

About this time there was evinced on the part of some a restlessness under the strict construction of the principles of the church in their application to civil affairs. With two classes especially this was the case. The one class was of those who were received into the church without a full understanding of her distinctive position and without any strong attachment to it. Convenience, the influence of friends, attachment to a minister, or some other similar consideration determined them in their choice, which was often hastily made without taking into the account the sacrifices that might be required. These, not being held by love of the principles which they had professed, too often yielded to pressure brought against them to vote, sit on juries, or do some other prohibited act, and having once committed themselves they were very reluctant to submit to discipline. With them it was an inquiry whether the church would not yield these minor points and thus enlarge her membership and increase her power.

The other class was of those who by their position were exposed to temptation from their intercourse with men in public life, of learning and influence. The honor and the emoluments of office had their attractions that it was found hard to resist. These, like forbidden fruit, were looked at with covetous eyes, and the inquiries would press on the attention, Might not political favors be enjoyed in consistency with membership in the witnessing church? Is it not possible that the lines of ecclesiastical communion have been drawn too closely, and that our fathers made a mistake in regard to some things that they prohibited members of the church to do?

On the same points the firmness of some of the ministers was frequently tried. They were brought into contact with politicians, men of culture and of literary tastes, and were expected to take an interest in such public questions as were employing the attention of the country. The constant struggle to maintain the position of dissent assumed was a strain on their firmness. It seemed desirable to co-operate with Christian men in promoting the welfare of the country. It was difficult to convince those who had not examined closely into the ground of their dissent, that standing aloof from the actual working of the government would do anything towards its reformation. Hence they were subjected to reproach as finding fault with what they were making no effort to amend. This state of things, which might have been anticipated, was in due time actually realized.

The first disturbing question that found its way into the courts of the church on the subject of political relations, arose at the meeting of Synod in 1823. A memorial from Mr. Wright and others that had been presented to the Southern Presbytery came before Synod. It had reference to slavery, free masonry, and sitting on juries.

From a review of Dr. McMaster's "Calm-Examination," in the Albany Quarterly, edited by Rev. J. R. Willson, D. D., in 1833, we give the following extracts in regard to the action of Synod on the last of these points:

"From 1806 until 1823, a period of seventeen years, this subject was not agitated. No reference seems to have been made to it in any legislative act. Sound principles, well understood, preserved harmony, good order and purity in the private walks and public courts of the Lord's house for so many years. Like a band of brethren united in the closest bonds of friendship and affection, her ministry all cheerfully co-operated in maintaining a noble testimony against corrupt constitutions of church and state. Brotherly love continued until it could truly be said of us, 'See how these Christians love one another.' But pride, ambition and a worldly spirit entered like the serpent. into Paradise, and where all was peace, now there is war; where love reigned, we find discord and enmity; where we heard no voice but a faithful testimony for the truth, we now hear reproaches, invective and calumny. The 'new light,' some of whose fruits we have just mentioned, made its first appearance in 1823. A little before this it might be occasionally seen in the recesses of study rooms and conclaves, but not even at this time did it show its genuine hues. Synod passed the following act on the subject of juries: 'The committee recommend that the inferior judicatories of this church be directed to determine, on a due consideration of the practice of the several courts of jurisprudence, whether the juror comes under the operation of an immoral law in the several courts in their own bounds, and give instruction to their people according to the special state of the case.'

"This was, on the part of the majority, an inconsiderate measure. Some men then deemed worthy of confidence, whose praise was in the churches, and whose influence in the church from the peculiarity of their relation to it, was very great, succeeded in pushing through this resolution. By it they thought some relief might be afforded to their people who had experienced much inconvenience from adhering to the act of 1805. If the practice of the majority of the people had been opposed to that act, would the resolution of 1823 have been enacted? It bears on the face of it its intent, and thereby affords a strong corroborative proof of what the common law of the church was on the subject of juries." Pages 33 and 34. \* \* \* 'This is the history of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, so far as it has any reference to sitting on juries. We find her, early in this century, prohibiting her members from even this connection; we find this writings, sermons and conversations of all her clergy; we find it ratified by the consent of the whole of her members, and to such an extent was the separation from the government carried that Covenanters were scarcely ' reckoned among the nations,'—this for seventeen years.'' Page 37.†

The one, and perhaps the principal question, that gave the occasion for this action of Synod was, whether Covenanters could consistently sit as arbitrators to judge of any matter that might be in dispute between neighbors.1 Sitting on juries was connected with courts of justice. An arbitration is a self-constituted tribunal to determine in regard to the points submitted from convictions of justice. Arbitrators do not decide by legal enactments. To these the jury act did not apply. But the act of Synod went much farther. It was, indeed, as termed in the above quotation, an "inconsiderate measure." The principle enunciated was, that it was only when the law to be applied was unrighteous that the prohibitory act was of force. This unsettled the position of the church, and was received with general dissatisfaction. By those who were desirous of a change, it was interpreted as a permission to sit on a jury when the law to be applied in the case was a righteous law. Sessions were to judge, not by the act of the church prohibiting to sit on juries, but by the particular enactment, civil or criminal, which applied to the case on trial. If it was a righteous law, then there was no offence committed by sitting on a jury.

It would not be easy to show that this is not a fair interpretation of the above action; and the wonder now is that the Synod ever passed such a loose and equivocal act. It is pretty evident that those who held to the old prohibitory law were off their guard, and that those who were seeking a change were cautiously taking steps to accomplish their object. The design evidently was, under color of allowing members of the church to act as arbitrators, to limit the application of the prohibitory act to those cases where the law by which the person was to decide was an im-

\* The title of a sermon by Rev. S. B. Wylie.

<sup>+</sup> These extracts should satisfy any candid inquirer that there was no attempt to introduce new light doctrines or practices in the church prior to 1823.

<sup>†</sup> This statement is made from the writer's recollection of what he heard from Rev. John Black, D. D., Rev. John Cannon and others who were conversant with the facts of the case. moral law, and of this the subordinate judicatories were to be the judges The subject came before Synod at its next meeting in 1825. The following extract from an article in the Albany Quarterly, by Rev. Robert Gibson, already quoted from, gives in a few words the account of the introduction of this business into Synod: "Complaints had come up from different parts of the church that the synod was abandoning its former ground, or seemed disposed to it; or at least, that the former act produced confusion in different churches; that there was no conformity. The church was not fully ripe for incorporating with a slaveholding nation, and one that had not acknowledged Jesus as moral governor, nor the Son of God as its ruler."

The action of Synod in disposing of these complaints was as follows :

"Some misunderstanding having occurred relating to the meaning of the act passed at our last session respecting serving on juries, the Synod passed the following resolution: *Resolved*, That this Synod never understood any act of theirs relative to their members sitting on juries as contrary to the old common law of the church on these subjects."

From another article in the *Albany Quarterly*, we give the following extract, containing a historical notice of the action of Synod by one of its members: "A committee was appointed to report on the act of 1823. Messrs. McMaster, S. M. Willson and Cannon were that committee. They reported unanimously a recommendation to repeal the obnoxious law. On the floor of Synod, Dr. McM. was the strongest advocate of repeal, and he even went so far as to say that were it not done he would protest. However, it was judged better to disavow it so far as it was incompatible with the known law of the church, and leave it in the statute."

This act, it was hoped, would settle the question, and for several subsequent years the agitation of the subject ceased. But, as it afterwards appeared, the design to change the position of the church as dissenting from the government was not abandoned, and as we will show in the next paper, was pressed with such persistence as to form a party in the church and result in the disruption of 1833.

In 1823, Synod changed its form into that of a General Synod, to consist of representatives from presbyteries. We give the action of Synod :

"Resolved, That a General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, to meet biennially, be formed by delegates from the several presbyteries; that each presbytery shall have the right of sending two ministers and as many ruling elders, and that the ratio of increase of the number of delegates be, until further order be taken on the subject, two ministers and as many ruling elders, for every three ministers of which the presbytery consists."

There was not wanting the suspicion in the minds of some that this movement, for which there was no real necessity, had an ulterior object, the acquisition of power to accomplish a change in the relation of the church to the government of the country. By skilful management in choosing delegates from presbyteries, persons known to be in favor of the contemplated measure would be appointed to Synod, and a majority obtained on a decisive vote, while those in favor of it were still a minority in the church. And we find, in fact, in the Synod of 1831, the Presbytery of Philadelphia was increased by the ordination of two licentiates who were known to be on that side; and of the five ministers of which it was then composed, four and an equal number of elders were delegated to Synod. The right of more than three ministers and three elders to sit was warmly contested. It was carried, however, by a vote of fourteen to twelve. This was the more significant, as it was then evident that a struggle in the Synod was impending on the question of changing the position of the church in regard to the government. At this meeting, as a part of the same policy, two subordinate synods, the eastern and the western, were decreed. We will see in the next paper how these changes in the organic form of the church were made to contribute to the object that it was designed to accomplish.

Besides these public movements, there were other influences at work more concealed in their operation but tending in the same direction. Here the writer draws on his memory in regard to matters that fell under his own observation.

The true idea of the Covenanting Church, as exhibited by her founders in this country, was that of a witnessing church standing apart from all other denominations. In maintaining her Testimony she condemned judicially errors in other churches, and testified against those who held them. Her testimony was practical, and hence she did not allow her members to commune in hearing the word with those whose standards contained the errors that she condemned. By statute laws this kind of communion was prohibited. In the close of the historical part of the Testimony it is declared: "They cannot consistently join, either statedly or occasionally, in the communion of any other church, by waiting on its ministry, either in word or sacraments, while they continue opposed to these declared sentiments."

With this position of the church some began to find fault. Lame apologies were offered, and reasons other than the true one were assigned for it. It was alleged that it was only when the members had the opportunity of attending fellowship meeting or preaching by their own ministers, that the prohibition applied. The reason of the prohibition—the necessity of a practical maintenance of the testimony, was kept out of view. By degrees, but at first cautiously, the restraints were broken over. After some time this course was more openly pursued, and the law respecting occasional hearing was held up to reproach as a relic of an illiberal age. The result was that the practice of the church in this respect grew into disrepute and disuse. This lowering of the Testimony did much to weaken its force, and prepared the way for abandoning the position of the church as dissenting from the government.

There was also manifest on the part of those who were in favor of what they called a more liberal policy, a desire to invest the government with attributes of excellence that had not before been discovered. In a report adopted by the Synod of 1831, on the publication of the argumentative part of the Testimony, we find the following assigned as one of the reasons why the work should be given up for the present: "The imprudence of committing the supreme judicatory of our church by making statements that time might show to be erroneous, and which, of course, must be retracted." This was significant. It looked towards a change of the position of the church in what she had testified against as error would be accepted as truth. Reference to a Supreme Being in early documents in the history of the colonies, in the Articles of Confederation, and in the Declaration of Independence, were brought forward in proof of the religious character of the nation, and used as offsets to the irreligion of the constitution.

Though these movements were observed by the friends of the Testimony, they were slow to take any steps publicly to counteract them. It was not until their authors committed themselves that a decided stand was taken, and the discipline of the church employed to arrest the evil and save the Testimony that was brought into jeopardy.



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# Cohenanter.

NOVEMBER,

COMBINED SERIES.

J. W. SPROULL,

D. B. WILLSON,

1876.

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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Subscribers in arrears will oblige us greatly by paying promptly what is due.

BACK numbers have been sent to those who have requested them, and also Testimonies and Books of Discipline to those who are entitled to them.

THE offer of a Testimony or Book of Discipline to any one sending a new subscriber, and forwarding advance payment and postage for book, is still open.

MR. JAMES DUNLOP, of 2d New York congregation, is agent for the Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter.

PITTSBURGH PRESEXTERY appointed Thanksgiving day as the one on which collections are to be taken up for its Home Mission Fund.

COMMISSION to present calls to candidates in Pittsburgh Presbytery consists of Profs. Sproull and Sloane, and Elder Wm. Martin.

A UNANIMOUS call was made at Hebron, Kansas, on October 5th, upon Rev. M. Wilkin, for half of his time.

WE again call the attention of our readers to the edition of the doctrinal and practical works of Dr. Houston, D.D., the first volume of which has appeared, and copies of which can be had by applying to Mr. John Candwell, 3617 Spring Garden street Philadelphia, Pa.

JOHNSON, Clay and Cloud counties, as well as other counties in Kansas, rejoice over abundant crops this year. Last year Pleasant Ridge congregation suffered more from grasshoppers than many others, as it was further east and bordering on western Missouri, where the suffering was so great.

COMMUNIONS:—October, 2d Sab., 2d New York, James Kennedy: Wilkinsburg, Rev. R. A. McFarlane; Bovina, Joseph Beattie. October, 3d Sab., Slippery Rock, Prof. Sproull; Old Bethel, D. G. Thompson; New Castle, J. C. K. Milligan; Hopkinton, D. H. Coulter; Baltimore, James Kennedy; 3d Philadelphia, S. O. Wylie. Oct. 4th Sab., Miller's Run, J. Hunter; Parnassus, J. C. K. Milligan; Morning Sun, M. A. Gault; Walnut City, J. Love; New Alexandria, J. F. Crozier; North Cedar, J. M. Armour; Brooklyn, Jos. Beattie. October, 5th Sab., Rehoboth, J. R. Dill; Pleasant Ridge, J. M. Armour. November 1st Sab., Mahoning, Pa., J. Hunter; Syracuse, Jos. Beattie.

IT will be a matter of gratification to the church to know that the first year class of the Theological Seminary has been doubled since our October issue. In addition to the names then given, we have to add the following: R. C. Allen, of Mercer county, Pa., W. R. Laird, of West Barnet, Vermont, and Thomas McFall, of Philadelphia. Of the six, one is from Toronto University, one from Westminster College, and four from West Geneva. There are now in all nineteen in attendance, and a few more are expected.

#### THE

### Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

#### NOVEMBER, 1876.

No. 11.

#### ORIGINAL.

#### **OHURCH OBLIGATIONS.**

Номе; Sept. 13, 1876.

MESSRS. EDITORS :--Will you please insert the enclosed in the next number of the REFORMED PRESEVTERIAN AND COVENANTER, if you can conveniently, and oblige Yours, \*

"In the history of the First Presbyterian church of Allegheny, Pa., by the pastor, Rev. E. E. Swift, D. D., son and successor of the Rev. Elisha P. Swift, D. D., the following honorable and rare testimony is borne to the integrity of that noble congregation:

"'She has always been faithful in meeting her financial obligations to her pastors. She has conformed to the highest type of commercial promptness in this regard. We have sometimes thought that this was due in part to the example of John Irwin, Sr., who'filled for many years the office of treasurer in this church. At 9 o'clock on the first Monday of each quarter, on his way to his office in Pittsburgh, he would call at the dwelling of Elisha P. Swift. The children of the pastor would hear his vigorous tread and familiar voice in the hall above, and they would cry, 'It is Mr. Irwin. It must be the first Monday of the quarter.' It was as certain that he would be there with his check, as any event of a similar nature could be. And a promptness approximating this has been displayed by the successive treasurers of this church from that day to this. They may have suffered in their own financial interests, and the trustees may have been perplexed by the delinquencies of a portion of the people, but the church obligations to her pastors have been always met.'"

"A church should pay as it goes, and pay what it agrees. No bank in our country, not even the Bank of England, should have a better reputation for promptness in making its payments, than a church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have a great many churches who have been educated to pay every week, or month, or quarter; and at the end of the period everything is squared up. Everybody feels well. In such societies the spirit of God is not straitened, the word of God is not bound. The preacher prays with more inspiration, and preaches with greater power. The sexton keeps windows enough open to give every person at the service wholesome air; the church is kept clean and tidy, and the approval of the community is secured, because it practises as a whole what it professes as individuals.
worships, and I know that he pays his pew-rent, and all subscriptions promptly and cheerfully—that he subscribes to the *Presbyterian*, and from the label on his paper, which I sometimes see in the hands of the postman, he pays in advance. Besides—'

'That's enough! Mr. B—. That's enough! It is the opinion of the court that any man who pays pew-rent and subscriptions cheerfully, and for the *Presbyterian* in advance, is competent to fill any place of trust in this commonwealth. Make out the papers, and affix the seal of the court at once, Mr. Prothonotary.'"

# THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN OHUROH IN AMERICA. SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY, No. IX,

#### BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

In our last paper we referred to movements by some ministers that indicated a secret dissatisfaction with the position of the church as dissenting from the government, and witnessing against other churches. There was no attempt at that time to show, when the question in regard to sitting on juries came before the courts, that those who were in favor of prohibiting the people from doing this, had misunderstood the position first taken by the church. What was aimed at, though not avowed, was a departure from the original position, on the ground that the legislation was hasty, and was not demanded by faithfulness to covenant engagements. It was not proposed to rescind the acts by which the church prohibited her members from incorporating with the nation. It seems to have been thought that the same object could be accomplished by a gradual process of ignoring them-allowing them to be violated without calling the offenders to account-until ultimately these acts would become a dead letter, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church would admit of her members taking part in political affairs the same as the other churches.

It is the business of the historian to state facts, and not to deal in comments. At the same time, when his facts seem to be incredible, he is justified in endeavoring to show that they are in accordance with the operations of the human mind, and that they can be accounted for by the laws that regulate the mental operations and actions of men. The philosophy as well as the facts of history, lies within his domain.

To many now, after the lapse of half a century, it seems almost beyond the limits of probability that ministers highly esteemed in the Covenanting Church should, in this indirect way, labor to pull down what they had formerly been active in building up. And hence we have heard it asserted that the church had never occupied a position of non-incorporation with the government. The assertion is made from ignorance of the history of the church, and has no stronger basis than the improbability that such men would pursue such a course. That they did so is beyond denial, and we present neither ignorance nor insincerity as an explanation of their conduct. We believe the position taken at the first was taken intelligently and in sincerity, and when a change was made, it resulted from a change of conviction. We do not think that these men suspected they were departing from attainments already reached, but rather imagined that they were bringing the church up to a position of greater efficiency and usefulness. Among the three courses that lay before them—either to reconsider what had been done, and rescind the prohibitory acts; or to leave the church and go into some other communion; or to attempt, covertly and by indirection, to change the relation of the church to the nation—they chose the last, reckoning on their ability, by influence and argument, to take the body of the people with them.

That no injustice is done to the persons referred to in the above remarks, will appear from the following extracts from a review of Dr. McMaster's letters, in the *American Christian Expositor*, vol. 2, published in 1832, presumed to be by Dr. Wylie:

"It is believed when the subjects of the author's third letter are carefully examined in the strong and unambiguous light his statements, distinctions and reasonings have cast on them-the objections and doubts of good, and in many respects, intelligent men, entertained against the lawfulness of swearing an oath of allegiance to the United States government, lest they should be found countenancing, justifying and supporting the immorality of slavery, admitted to be intervoven in the constitutions of some of the States-will be obviated and resolved into a clear conviction of the consistency of such allegiance, with the obligations of the most intelligent, faithful, pious and conscientious Christian to the claims of the Redeemer's supremacy over the conscience. In short, there is no immorality in the federal government so flagrant as to prohibit conscientious communion with it. p. 147. \* \* \* If, as the writer hopes, he has proved, members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church are justified in view of the moral principle, provided their own consciences are satisfied, to infuse their agency as completely as any other class of the community into the political institutions of this country-to take vigorous hold of the machinery of government and employ it for the promotion of the interests of society, civil and religious, why should any one wish to oppose an obstacle to the exercise of such an agency? Why should one member desire to throw an impediment in the way of his brother's promotion to place and influence? Under the government those can be acquired and used for beneficial objects without a violation of any principle of righteousness, or giving any sanction to immorality." p. 149.

We find in the minutes of the Synod of 1828 the following action: "The Synod agreed that a committee be appointed to report at the next meeting of Synod, concerning the propriety of making application to the several civil authorities of our common country, respecting the existing relations of this community to the commonwealth. Dr. Willson and Rev. Mr. Chrystie are that committee."

There is nothing in the record to indicate the origin and reason of this action. But when, as we have seen, there were some in the church that were laboring to change her relation to the government, and allow her members to exercise all the rights of citizenship, the inference is irresistible that this was a part of the policy to accomplish that object. There was no necessity arising out of the condition of the country, as there seemed to be in 1812, and during the late rebellion, for such an application. The country was at peace, and except in the State of New York, and perhaps some other States where unnaturalized foreigners could not obtain license to engage in some kinds of business, Covenanters enjoyed all the liberties of citizens. We are not informed who was the mover of the action, but we are fully satisfied that the composition of the committee was not what the friends of the measure desired.

At the next meeting of Synod at Pittsburgh, in 1830, the report of the committee was presented. We give a full transcript of the action of Synod on the report:

"Dr. Willson, chairman of the special committee appointed to report on our relations to the Federal and State governments, presented a report. This report was made the order of the day for Monday next.

"Monday.—The order of the day was hearing the report of the committee on our civil relations to the Federal and State governments. Dr. Willson read the report, on which some discussion took place. "4 o'clock. The consideration of the report was resumed. After a good deal of discussion, it was moved and seconded, that the report be referred to the next meeting of Synod. Moved as an amendment, that in the meantime it be printed. This amendment was lost. It was again moved as an amendment, that it be committed to a committee consisting of Drs. McLeod, Wylie, McMaster and Black, critically to examine it, and if they see meet, to publish it as an overture before the next meeting of Synod. Carried, with this amendment."

What took place at that meeting of Synod came under the writer's own observation. He was present, a student of theology, and deeply interested in the proceedings of Synod. The report was a lengthy, able and earnest presentation of the position of the church as dissenting from the government. In the discussions, there was no objection made to the truth of its statements, the correctness of its positions, or the soundness of its arguments. The fault found with it was, that some of the expressions were too strong; that it was not sufficiently courteous to the authorities of the nation, and would therefore fail to accomplish the proposed end. The design of the writer of the report was to show that there could be no change in the existing relations of the church to the nation in consistency with her Testimony as witnessing for the authority of Christ as King of nations. This was the farthest conceivable from what was expected and wished by those who moved the appointment of the committee.

The appointment of another committee to which this reportwas referred, was a piece of ecclesiastical *finesse*. The committee consisted of the ablest men belonging to the church, but at the same time, it was known that a majority of them were inclined to a change in the relation of the church to the state. It was intended to smother the report. This was charged at the time, and not denied. It was a point gained, by skilful management on the one side and concession on the other.

On the next day the following action was taken: "On motion, it was agreed that the committee on civil relations, &c., be added to the committee to which was committed the report of that committee."

This was a counterplot. The friends of the measures advocated in the report determined, if possible, to prevent the object of sending it to another committee. Management on one side, when partyism is at work in the church, will lead to management on the other. It was hoped that the adding of the original committee to the one to which the report was referred, would be successful in saving at least the valuable part of the report, and its adoption at the next meeting of Synod would arrest the progress of defection, that it was now plain had begun; a hope that, as we shall see, was doomed to disappointment.

The action of Synod at its next meeting, which was held in Philadelphia in 1831, is as follows:

"The committee to whom was referred a report on the civil relations, &c., presented the following report, which was adopted :

"The object of appointing a committee on the civil relations, is to inquire into the propriety of making application to the civil authorities respecting the relations in which the members of this church stand to them. The said committee accordingly submit to Synod a resolution in these words:

"That an application be made to the Congress of the United States, when it shall have been ascertained from influential statesmen that such application shall probably prove successful, for a grant of the rights of citizenship to the members of this church, not otherwise recognized as citizens, on other terms than swearing an oath of allegiance to the existing civil institutions of the land.

"Your committee are of opinion that influential statesmen have not, as yet, opened the door for a successful application to Congress, and therefore deem it most prudent to recommend to Synod a postponement of the subject."

By this action there was an adroit evasion of the main point in the

report committed. That report was stifled, and another substituted for it that proposed to do something, but that really did nothing in accomplishing the original design of appointing the committee. One thing, however, which it did, probably not intended by its authors, was to stamp the authority of Synod on the righteousness of the church's position in forbidding her members to swear allegiance to the government; for why should "a grant of the rights of citizenship" be asked of Congress for alien members, on other terms than "swearing the oath of allegiance to the existing institutions of the land," if that oath was consistent with the Testimony of the church?

At the same meeting, "It was resolved, that this Synod recommend that the points of difference on the application of our principles to the civil institutions of the United States be discussed through the medium of the *American Christian Expositor*, under the head of *Free Discussions*, and that every member of Synod have full liberty to avail himself of this vehicle."

This resolution was prepared and adopted with a view to an object that was not avowed. Whatever were the differences in the application of principles that it was proposed to discuss, they must have referred to points on which already discordant views had been expresed. But on the relation of the church to the government as dissenting from it, no one had taken a stand in opposition. All acquiesced in the statement in the report, that members not citizens could not swear the oath of allegiance. As on this point there had been no declared difference of opinion, it could not be the subject of discussion in the magazine. And besides, to have argued against the law of Synod unrepealed and still in force, would have been an outrage on order, and a trampling on the authority of the church. For this emer-gency the resolution was artfully framed. It was designed to be a virtual repeal of all the acts of Synod that prohibited incorporating with the government. This was avowed after it was passed, and was acted on in the subsequent discussions of the subject. The friends of the Testimony were off their guard, and allowed a resolution to be adopted apparently harmless, yet of such elastic texture that it was stretched to cover the whole ground of constructive repeal of all preceding action on the subject of civil relations.\*

The result was, that in the pulpit and through the press, the relation of the church to the government was discussed, and arguments presented to show that it was entirely consistent with Reformation principles to exercise all the rights of citizens. When the position of the church established by her acts was referred to, the act of free discussion was declared to be a virtual repeal of these acts. They were held as of no binding force. The whole ground must be gone over again, and either the testimony of the church be given up, or the righteousness of the position already taken be reaffirmed.

The whole church was thrown into a state of excitement. The truths to which intelligent Covenanters had pledged themselves were too dear to be yielded without a struggle. Resistance to the progress of defection was determined on. In many instances those who accepted the new views acted on them, swearing allegiance to the government, voting and sitting on

<sup>\*&</sup>quot;The 'free discussion' resolution was part of the cut and dry measures of 1831, brought into Synod by a party and carried by a kind of stolen march. For sure the Covenanters good and true of that Synod, and we hope it will yet be seen that they were a majority of that court, never dreamed that when they assented to the proposal of 'free discussion,' they were admitting that the question of civil relations was unsettled, or that by it they were making any new enactment on the subject." Note in Rev. David Scott's Exposure of Dr. McMaster's "Brief Inquiry," page 24, 1833.

juries when the opportunity offered. Where the sessions were faithful, those so offending were called to account and subjected to discipline. The means of Christ's appointment for the promotion of truth and purity in the church were employed, and the hope was entertained that at the next meeting of Synod the disturbing question would be permanently and righteously settled.

The first fruit of the free discussion resolution, was a publication by Rev. Gilbert McMaster, D. D., entitled "The Moral Character of Civil Government, considered with reference to the political institutions of the United States; in four letters." This was soon after followed by another from the same author, entitled "A Brief Inquiry into the Civil Relations of Reformed Presbyterians in the United States, according to their judicial acts."

These publications contemplated the same object, to show that Covenanters can, in consistency with their principles, and their position as settled by judicial acts, incorporate with the government, and enjoy all the privileges of citizenship. In the first, the process by which it was hoped to reach this conclusion, was to show that the government, as constituted, although in some things defective, is nevertheless possessed of the essentials of a Christian government. The main point of the argument is, that what is wanting in the Federal constitution is made up in the State constitutions; that it requires both to be taken together to exemplify a complete system of government. That we do not misrepresent the author, will appear from the following extracts:

"The constitution is a compact of sovereign States. The government is federal, originating in the compact, and is the creation of the parties to the compact, for the accomplishment of its definite and specific end. It is a government within its own sphere, which is a limited one, and acts with governmental power, because the power delegated from the principals to the league is governmental, and to be employed for governmental ends, and would be so employed by each of the parties to the contract if not lodged in the hand of the federal agent. The Federal government is not a party to the contract."\* page 40.

"Should you ask me—Is the Federal government a full exemplification of God's ordinance of civil rule? my reply, at once, would be, No. The Federal union presents but few features of God's ordinance of civil magistracy, and it is defective in provisions of the first necessity. \* The whole mystery of this is explained by bringing the Federal government into union with each of the State governments. Then you have a complete system. The State supplies what the Federal lacks, and the Federal makes up the deficiencies of the government of the State. \* \* The confederation is destitute of many moral attributes which belong to a well constituted government. Go to the State, and you will find them, in a good measure, supplied. Being thrown together as a whole, and you have before you the system of government to which the citizen is pledged." page 41. \* \*

"And even in reference to this portion of delegated authority they, as States, retained, and still retain a controlling power over it to modify or recall it at their pleasure. Yet no one State may withdraw from the Union except on revolutionary principles and for causes justifying revolution." † page 45.

\* The italics are the author's. This statement contains the germ of the right of secession claimed by the Southern States. If the Federal government is not a party to the compact, where did it obtain the right to coerce the seceding States into subjection?

 $\dagger$  It is not the business of the historian to refute what he may account errors in any work from which he quotes. But the writer connot forbear in a note to point out the marked inconsistency between the two sentences in the last quotation. The first, which the author has italicised to call attention to it, asserts the identical ground on which the Southern States based the right of secession. We presume the explanation will be, that all the States might recall their delegated authority, but no one of them can do this separately. But how this could be done by *all* in any other way than by each one acting separately, is a mystery we are unable to solve.

.

The other pamphlet, as its title indicates, was intended to show the position that the church, according to her judicial declarations, sustained to the government of this country. The various acts of 1806, 1812, 1821, 1823, 1825 and 1831 are examined, and the conclusion is, that there was nothing in the decisions of the church that stood in the way of Covenanters exercising all the rights of citizenship. The last, the act of "free discussion," was the potent decision that removed all hindrances.

To both these works able answers were presented by Rev. David Scott, in two consecutive publications. The effect of these discussions was, in general, to strengthen the minds of readers on both sides in the convictions already received. One thing, however, was the fact that the efforts of the friends of the established order of the church to stay the progress of the new views, were in part successful. Thinking people began to see how much was at stake, and prepared themselves for the struggle that it was seen now was unavoidable. This was fairly begun in the meeting of the Eastern S. Synod in April, 1832.

CORRECTION.—In our last article the title "Brief Inquiry" should be in the place of "Calm Examination," page 337, given to Dr. McMaster's work reviewed in the *Albany Quarterly*. On the next page at the end of the quotation, page 37 should be page 33.

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

#### CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING AND FASTING.

It is not a time of special judgments on the land, though there are premonitions of such divine visitation here and there. But the sad feature of our day is the abounding of crime and wickedness, in the church and nation, until society seems a sepulchre of all uncleanness. Your committee, looking at this prevailing symptom, call upon the church to consider the following

#### CAUSES OF FASTING.

We have personal sins. Each of us, searching his own heart and life, must say, "Which of thy commandments have I not broken?" Our duties have been neglected or performed without heart; our privileges are not prized, but counted a weariness and unprofitable. We have multiplied vain thoughts, words without grace, foolish actions, unholy relations and associations, and even open and flagrant violations of God's law. If God were to set our iniquities before him, and our secret sins in the light of his countenance, shame would cover us, and we could not answer him one of a thousand.

Our families have sinned. As husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, we are under law to Christ. These relations are not carefully and solemnly "formed in the Lord," nor are their obligations felt and performed in his fear. The spiritual welfare of hired servants is little regarded, and they in turn render an eye service. For want of parental faith and training, many children are like Samuel's, who "walked not in his ways;" and of few households can it be said, "All their children are taught of the Lord." Wordliness love of pleasure, and pursuit of earthly things, seem to control our domestic life. Few "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Let us mourn every family apart; let us look on him whom we have pierced, and mourn for him as one mourneth for an only son, and be in bitterness as for a first born.

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THE

Reformed Presbykerian

DECEMBER,

COMBINED SERIES.

1876.

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- - VOL. XIV. No. 12.

# J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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turned ; otherwise, on tab. In the Foreign Mission receipts in the October number, Sept. 18, Mrs. Sarah Johnston, &c., Selma, O., should be North Jackson, O.

A CONGREGATION was organized in Bellefontaine, Ohio, October 11th, consisting of twenty-six members. D. Boyd and J. M. Forsythe, ruling elders, and William Funk, P. H. WYLIE, Clerk. deacon.

DIFD. in the city of New York, Oct. 25, 1876, after a long illness, ROSE WITHER-SPOCN, wife of Andrew Bowden, in the 81st year of her age. The full notice will appear hereafter.

THE name on page 311 of this volume is correct as in Minutes of Committee-Maxwell, and not Mansell.

APPOINTMENTS IN OHIO PRESBYTERY .- North Salem, Dec., 4th and 5th Sabbaths, J. R. Wylie. Londonderry, Jan., 1st Sab., J. R. Wylie. Tomika, Dec., 4th Sab., Shanks; Jan., 1st Sab., McKinney. Muskingum, Dec., 4th Sab., McKinney; Dec., 5th Sab., Shanks. Jonathan's Creek, Dec., 5th Sab, McKinney; Jan., 1st Sab., Shanks.

THE latest news from the Selma Mission is very encouraging. There are now a hundred and forty-eight scholars in the mission school. Mr. Elliott conducts the Sabbath services. The demands of the work are now greater than ever. The church is not to falter.

WE have the promise of Dr. Sproull that he will extend his Historical Sketches through another volume of the magazine. Continued down to the present time, they will be of great value to the future historian. The want of something of this kind is deeply felt by those who have an interest in the doing and suffering of the church in the past. Traditionary accounts are very uncertain, and in many instances leave out of sight matters of the most importance. By these and similar sketches the need we feel so pressing on us will be supplied to those who come after.

We hope also to be able to give our readers some interesting facts relating to the church in the days of Mr. Cuthbertson, only lately brought to light. By the end of the year, we shall not be surprised if by these documents, and others that may yet be brought to light, a history of our church in America from its beginning can be prepared.

WORD has reached us of the death of Rev. W. Milroy, of Northwood, O.

COMMUNION .- Princeton, Oct. 5th Sab., Rev. R. M. C. Thompson, assisting.

THERE are now twenty students in the Seminary, the number last year.

MESSER. EDITORS—Please let your readers know through the columns of the Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter, that Covenanters in search of homes in the South can find cheap land, mild and healthy climate, together with many other advantages, in this part of Virginia. The winters are short and remarkably mild compared with the same seasons in the North and West. Land can be bought at from ten to thirty dollars an acre, according to improvements. Persons desiring further information in regard to this place may address me, at Centreview, Charlotte county, Yours truly, J. C. SLOAN, M. D. Virginia.

#### THE

# Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XIV.

# DECEMBER, 1876.

No. 12.

### ORIGINAL.

#### PROCEEDINGS OF THE IRISH SYNOD.

THE doings of the supreme judicatories of our church in Europe cannot fail to be of interest to us on this side of the Atlantic. Constituting the one witnessing church, they and we are under obligation to cheer on and strengthen one another in maintaining the testimony of Jesus Christ. Every attainment made by one in the struggle with the common foe results to the advantage of all. Like in an army a successful attack made by one division on the lines of the enemy sends a thrill of joy throughout the ranks, and excites all to push on and secure the fruits of the victory auspiciously begun.

It is with such hopes and expectations that we read the doings of the sister courts as they come to us in their magazines. We remember with what interest we watched the progress of the contest in the church in Ireland that ended in the disruption of 1840, and how it cheered and encouraged us, not long out of a similar contest, when we saw that the majority of that church were true to their principles and their sworn covenant obligations. And at a later date, when a majority of the Synod of Scotland proved faithless to their vows, we rejoiced that there were some, though but a few, to hold up the banner and abide by the standards under which battles had been fought and victories won. We hoped that they and we, taught by these trials, the evil and danger of defection, would be more vigilant than ever in guarding against the entrance of anything that would tend towards such an undesirable result.

The perusal of the part of the proceedings of the Irish Synod at its late meeting, published in the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN AND COVENANTER, has given rise in our bosom to painful feelings. We had read a report of the doings of Synod in a Belfast newspaper that some friend had sent us shortly after the meeting, but as the report was meagre, we were fain to believe that some mistake was made by the reporter, and suspended our opinion until the minutes should appear in the magazine. The reading of these has disappointed and surprised us, and as a member of the Covenanting Church deeply interested in the covenanted cause, we propose to state, freely and plainly, yet with all kindness, our views on certain parts of the doings of Synod.

We learn from the minutes that on the subject of sitting on juries, Synod, in 1853, "gave it as their deliverance that they see no reason to depart

# THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHUROH IN AMERICA.

### SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY, No. X.

#### BY REV. THOMAS SPROULL, D. D.

THE Eastern Sub-Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church was, pursuant to the direction of the General Synod, organized in the city of New York, April 24th, 1832. Rev. William Gibson, the senior minister, constituted the court by prayer and was chosen to be moderator. There were present thirteen ministers and twelve ruling elders. The Synod included within its boundaries four presbyteries—Philadelphia, Northern, Southern and Western Presbyteries.

On the day following, on motion of Dr. Wylie, a committee was appointed to draft a pastoral address to the people under the charge of Syzod and to report during the present session. Dr. Wylie was appointed the chairman of the committee. The address was reported on the day following and earnestly discussed. A part of the report was stricken out by a majority of one. The remaining part was adopted, and ordered to be sent down as a pastoral letter to the congregations under the care of Synod.

At the close of the meeting of Synod, the chairman of the committee that reported the address requested all who were opposed to the action of Synod striking out the paragraphs, to hold a meeting for the purpose of taking measures to have the whole document as reported published. The action of that meeting is as follows, we quote from the introductory part of the document, as published: "By a unanimous resolution of the minority, subsequently passed, the entire address as originally reported was ordered to be published, with such notes and illustrations as might be required; and it now appears on their own responsibility as expressive of their sentiments on the momentous subjects to which it alludes, and as indicating the true course of policy to be pursued by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States."

Appended to the document are about fifteen pages of notes. This pamphlet was circulated thoughout the church. It received a highly laudatory notice in the American Christian Expositor, a monthly magazine originated by Synod.

We have been thus particular to give the facts concerning this publication from authentic sources, because it gave the occasion for that course of ecclesiastical action that resulted in the disruption of 1833. The writer has a distinct recollection of the effects produced by it in the church. He was then a licentiate, and took a deep interest in the movements of her courts and ministers. The facts that he shall record were branded into his memory, and stand out as distinctly before his mind as when they were of a recent date.

The issue was now fairly joined in the Eastern Synod. Party spirit was rampant and sides were taken. Parties who were in favor of the views advocated in the rejected parts of the report, made the defence of them the staple of pulpit exhibition. Equally zealous and active were the parties on the other side, in endeavoring to strengthen their people in maintaining the position which the church had held so long. Prayer meetings composed of both classes became places of angry contention. The popularity of the measure outside of the church gained for it many who, not well established in their principles, were willing to follow those whom they accounted leaders, in the direction that promised them greater liberty. Converts to the new views were multiplying, and there seemed to be danger that the entire church would be loosened from her moorings, and drop away from her position, as the witnessing church.

The "four letters" of Dr. McMaster, and his "Brief Inquiry," referred to in our last paper, were diligently and widely circulated. The prestige of their author's name as a man of ability gave influence to his writings, and furnished apologies to those were ready to embrace the measures which they advocated. And now, when a large minority, nearly one-half of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, in the pamphlet above referred to, not only endorsed the new views of the relation of the church to the government, but in opposition to the authority of Synod, sent them throughout the church, backed up by statements and arguments in the appended notes, it became a grave question; What should be done to avert this movement and preserve her witnessing character?

Until the publication of this address and notes, the church within the bounds of the Western Subordinate Synod was in a great measure free from the strife that was producing such distraction in the East. The hope was entertained that the authority of Synod would be regarded, and that the views contained in the rejected parts of the address would be no longer advocated, and peace would be again enjoyed. In the meantime, those who were in favor of abiding by the position hitherto occupied were not idle. They felt that the truth to which they were pledged was exposed to danger, and they were called on to rally for its defence.

The Western Subordinate Synod was constituted according to the direction of General Synod, at Massies Creek church, near Xenia, Ohio, October 15th, 1832. Among the papers presented was "A memorial from certain members of the Greensburg congregation, declaring their adherence to the principles and practices of the Reformed Church, in opposition to all defection therefrom." This was referred to a committee, of which Rev. Hugh. McMillau was chairman. On the next day the committee brought in the following report, which was adopted :

"The committee on the Greensburg memorial report that they have had the same under consideration, and that they highly approve the zeal and the spirit of faithfulness manifested by the memorialists. But as the memorial does not present to Synod any definite object of attention, nor call for any particular deed on the part of Synod, and as your committee are not aware that any member of the church under the care of Synod has departed or is disposed to depart from the principles or the practices of the church, your committee judge that no more is necessary to be done, with regard to the memorialists than to approve of the spirit of faithfulness manifested in the memorial, and to express a confidence that a similar spirit actuates all departments of the church under our care. Your committee, however, cannot refrain from the observation, that in case any individual or department of the church should appear to depart from the principles or practices of our fathers, it is the indispensable duty of those who would plead 'for the faith once delivered unto the saints,' to use a language dictated by charity and decorum, ever saying to their 'brethren, Ammi, and to their sisters, Kehamah.'

Irrespective of the memorialists, and with regard to the good of the sections of the church under our care, and to the cause of Reformation in general, your committee would with deference recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

I. That whereas the General Synod of this church has allowed room in the American Christian Expositor for the free discussion of our relations to the civil institutions of this country, and as considerable excitement is produced by such discussion; the Synod resolve to adhere to the principles and practices of the Reformed Church hitherto.

II. That whereas, the testimony of this church in North America was emitted in her infancy under circumstances of great difficulty; and whereas, the civil institutions of this country were then in their infancy; and whereas, important changes may since have occurred in the state and general governments; and whereas, the subject of our civil relations has been before the supreme judicatory of our church for some time; therefore, this Synod recommend to the General Synod to give this subject as early and as definite consideration as possible."

The memorial to which this action referred was prepared by elders of Greensburg congregation, then under the pastorate of Rev. John Cannon. It contained a plain statement of the position of the church in regard to the government, and earnestly urged Synod to hold firmly that position. This was but a sample of the feeling generally throughout the bounds of the Synod. Covenanters felt that if these new views of the application of the principles of their testimony to the civil institutions of the country should prevail, all that was accomplished by the fathers would be undone.

This state of things made it necessary for the members of the Eastern Synod, who adhered to their principles, to take steps to avert the movement that had received a new impulse by the publication of the address and notes. The Synod had adjourned to meet the next April. The question arose, should the action of the minority in publishing what was rejected by Synod be allowed to pass unnoticed for another year? As the offence was against the Synod, it was not competent for a lower court to call to account for it. Assuming that the majority were right in the action of Synod, fidelity to their engagements as officers in the Lord's house demanded that the proper steps be taken to maintain the principles to which they were pledged, and to call to account those who impugned them. Sentiments were promulgated at variance with the established position of the church ; and this, too, in disregard of the authority of Synod. The part of the paper rejected by Synod contained the following statements : " The morality or the immorality of the character of these institutions, the recognition or the rejection of their authority, therefore could never have been any legitimate term of communion in our church." p. 9. "It is susceptible of demonstration, that since the commencement of Christianity no government on earth has had a fairer claim to recognition as the ordinance of God than that of the United States." p. 10. These statements are in direct contradiction to the following from the act of Presbytery in 1806, on the subject of sitting on juries: "There are moral evils essential to the constitution of the United States which render it necessary to refuse allegiance to the whole system. Since the adoption of the constitution in the year 1789, the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church have maintained a constant testimony against those evils. They have refused to serve in any office which implies an approbation of the coustitution, or which is placed under the direction of an immoral law. They have abstained from giving their votes at elections for legislators or officers who must be qualified to act by an oath of allegiance to this immoral system."

The publication of the address and notes by the minority, furnished in the judgment of the majority ground for charges against its authors. In three aspects it was deemed libellous: First. As an act of insubordination to the Synod, that by striking out the objectionable paragraphs, decided that they contained matter which should not be published to the church. Second. As containing statements at variance with the acts and testimony of the church. Third. As tending to produce a division in the church, by leading members away from her established position, or her relation to the government. While we have no doubt that the view taken by the majority was correct in regard to this matter, we do not present this as necessary to the argument for the legality of the pro re nata meeting of Synod which they called. Neither do we express any opinion in regard to the wisdom or expediency of that course. The question of the truth or relevancy of

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the charges has nothing to do with the legality of the call. It is enough that those who request the call to be made believe that matters exist that require the court to take notice of them. The necessity for the meeting is to be determined by the court after it has been constituted.

We extract from the "Judicatory Practice of the Established Church of Scotland," the following in regard to pro re nata meetings of presbyteries, which applies equally to Synods:

"A pro re nata meeting of presbytery is called by the moderator, either on his own motion, when anything has occurred which appears to him to require the assembling of the brethren before the time of the ordinary meeting, or on application made to him by some of the members of presbytery, with a statement of the ground on which the application is made. He may refuse to grant it; but the responsibility of doing so rests upon him, and at the first ordinary meeting the whole of the circumstances will be brought before the presbytery. When a pro re nata is called letters of instruction both of the day of meeting, and of the subject to be discussed, are written to every member. The notice must be sent to them a sufficient time before the meeting. The moderator states at the meeting the circumstances which led him to call it; and the presbytery in the first place pronounces its judgment upon his conduct for doing so. No other business but that for which the meeting was called can be transacted at it."

The following circular issued by the moderator calling a pro re nata meeting of the Eastern Sub-Synod was addressed to each member :

"NEWBURGH, 2d Nov., 1832.

"SIR: At the request of two Presbyteries, I hereby call a meeting of the Eastern Sub-Synod to assemble in New York in the Sixth Street church, on the 21st inst., at 10 o'clock, A. M., at which you are directed to appear with a ruling elder from your session, to take order in a case of *fama clamosa* existing against certain members of said court, for publishing the erroneous and condemned part of a pastoral address, submitted to Synod at its last session, together with notes appended thereto. As also in a case of *fama clamosa* existing against Dr. Samuel B. Wylie for voting at a certain late election in the city of Philadelphia, and such other business as may come before the court. WM. GIBSON, *Moderator*."

At the time appointed in the call the court met, and was constituted by the moderator. Before the members were ascertained papers were laid on the table signed by the ministers who had published the address, protesting against the meeting, and declining to attend it. The following is a copy of one of those papers signed by six ministers :

" To the Rev. Moderator of the Eastern Sub-Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church :

We, the undersigned, members of the Eastern Reformed Synod, have duly received your letters calling a pro re nata meeting of that body, for certain reasons specified. Acting as we do in concert, we beg leave respectfully to state that it is our deliberate

Acting as we do in concert, we beg leave respectfully to state that it is our deliberate persuasion that the call of Synod by the moderator, at the instance of two Presbyteries, is an unwarranted assumption of power, as unpresbyterial as it is oppressive; that the reasons specified (were the form of the call entirely unexceptionable) are altogether insufficient, and that we, therefore, do hereby protest against the whole procedure, and decline attendance on the proposed meeting."

The usual course, and that prescribed in books of order in the case of a *pro re nata* meeting, when the members are ascertained, is to put the question after the moderator has stated his reasons for the call: Shall the moderator be sustained? If decided in the affirmative, the court proceeds with its business; if not, proceedings are at once arrested. It is the court as such that is to judge of the necessity for the call, not the members individually. Their conviction that there was no need for the call, was not a sufficient reason why they should decline to attend. In this case, no doubt the publishers of the address thought they had done a wise and righteous thing. Others thought it was unwise and wrong. The determination of this point belonged to the court when constituted.

The two objections to the call specified in the protest, were that it was called "at the instance of two presbyteries, and was, therefore, an unwarranted assumption of power, unpresbyterial and oppressive;" and that "the reasons specified were altogether insufficient." Now, when it is considered as laid down in the judicatory practice of the Church of Scotland, as may be seen in a quotation on a preceding page, that the moderator may call the meeting "on his own motion," or "on application made to him by some members of the court," it would be strange if the fact that the request comes from two presbyteries should vitiate the call and render it irregular. And as it regards the second reason, the point of the sufficiency of the reasons is not to be decided by the private opinion of the members, but by the court at the proper time. If members governed by their private opinions refuse to attend, and if they protest against the call, its legality is not affected. The opposite view would give a single member of a court, if he was disposed to be troublesome, the power to prevent it from meeting *pro re nata*. The smallest minority might defeat the design of the largest majority.

The meeting of the Synod was orderly and legal, and those brethren made a grave and damaging mistake in refusing to attend it. And here was the entering of the wedge that at last produced a division in the church. The Synod constituted of the ministers and elders that responded to the call, behooved to go on with the business for which they had assembled. The call of the moderator was sustained. The court was now to all intents and purposes the Eastern Sub-Synod. Those who protested against the call were insubordinate. They had already taken a step that led in the direction of a schism. They might hope to have a majority on their side at the next stated meeting, which would sustain them and condemn the brethren who composed the pro re nata Synod. But the legality of a meeting pro re nata, if sustained at the time. does not depend on the vote of a subsequent meeting. Such a course would be another step in the departure begun in the individual protests against the call. The rejection of the interim meeting would be the rejection of the Synod, and any assemblage based on that rejection could not be the Synod. This result which we have stated hypothetically, was what, as we shall see, actually took place.

The clerk of the Synod being one of the protesters against the call, consistently enough, refused to act as clerk. For this, and for declining to give up the papers of Synod to the clerk chosen in his place, he was after the usual number of citations suspended from the exercise of the ministerial office. Libels were prepared against the others included in the *fama* clamosa to be tried at the next stated meeting.

The disposition of those libels and attending circumstances will be presented in the next paper.

#### SELECTED.

# THE SABBATH QUESTION.

BY BEN ADHEM.

THE question raised by one of your correspondents respecting Sunday work on daily newspapers is an important point in what is becoming more and more a national question. A good answer to all interested in this matter is the fact that one of the most successful commercial dailies in the United States is one that, for more than a quarter of a century, has been a COMBINED SERIES,

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AND

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On account of the use of an old list, a number of credits was wrongly given. This will account for the sending of Lills in some cases where the amount called for had already been paid.

SYNODICAL fast day, Thursday, Jan. 11th. For causes see November number.

Collection for Church Extension, first Sabbath of January.

WE find when too late to make a change, that, much to our regret, Editorial Notice of death of Rev. W Milroy, Obitnaries of Mrs. Bowden and others, and Home Circle, have been crowded out. Ens.

ALL moneys received as late as Dec. 26 are acknowledged this month. Subscribers will please examine dates and see if proper credit has been given. Those still in arrears will oblige us, and at the same time pay an honest debt, by forwarding amount due promptly.

\$37 Any one sending a new subscriber with advance payment of \$1 00, and 8 cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition either of the Tzermony or of the Book or Discripting, as he may elect, and the new subscriber a copy of the Reformed Presulterian and Covennater for a year.

CORRESPONDENTS will oblige us by giving name of Post Office when sending money, and of both offices the one where the magazine has formerly gone, and the one to which they wish it sent-when requesting a change. To secure by mail acknowledgment of moneys sent, a stamp or card should be enclosed.

To insure insertion of notices of communions timeously, pastors should send them as soon as arrangements have been made.

REV. R. J. SHARP will preach at Suffolk, Va., on the 1st and 2d Sabbaths of January by appointment of Philadelphia Presbytery.

REPORTS presented to the Central Board have been on hands for some months, but on account of press of matter we have not been able to find room for them.

WE have a number of articles and notices on hand, which will appear at earliest practicable date.

THE address of Rev. J. R. Hill has been changed from Birmingham, Mich., to Watrousville, Tuscola co.,. Mich.

THE address of Rev. Jos. Beattie is 619 Union St., (West) Philadelphia, Pa.

Wz again call the attention of our readers to "Littell's Living Age," published every Saturday by Littell & Gay, Boston, Mass. \$8.00 per annum. Single numbers 18 cents. No other publication occupies the same field, or can supply its place.

New YORE WEEKLY WITNESS is a large eight-page, fifty-six column paper, with less than seven columns of advertisements. It is full of choice reading matter. It takes the Ohristian side on political and other questions, advocating Total Abstinence, Prohibition, Equal Human Rights, Sabbath Observance, Missions, and every good cause. Subscription rates, postage paid, 81.60 a yasr; 75 cents six minths; 40 cents fibree months. Sample covy sent free on application by postal card. Address, John Dugsil, 4 Spruce street, New York. THE

# Reformed Presbykerian

AND

# COVENANTER.

# J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON, EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. 3: 16. "Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was one delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

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#### THE

# Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XV.

# JANUARY, 1877.

No. 1.

# ORIGINAL.

# NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

BEFORE this number of the magazine has been received by all of our subscribers, 1876 will be numbered with the years of the past. Its record will be made up and sealed. Whatever of joy or sorrow has been experienced, whatever of good or evil has been done, cannot now be increased or diminished. However great may be our satisfaction that we have been enabled to accomplish something, or many our regrets and sincere our sorrow that duties have been neglected, solemn obligations unfulfilled, sinful acts committed, the facts cannot now be altered. All efforts to effect a change would be entirely unavailing. Another page in the book of God's remembrance has been written, and its record will stand as it is to the end. The thought that while we forget, the High and Holy One remembers, that the effects of neglect and wrong doing can never by us be entirely neutralized, should cause us, humbled for past failures, and grateful that notwithstanding all our shortcomings our Heavenly Father has watched over and preserved us, to begin the new year with the firm resolution to love him more and serve him better; and the consciousness of our own weakness should make us constantly look to the Source of all strength for the needed ability to perform our vows and incite to the exercise of increased vigilance.

It may be that, to some of our readers, the year 1876 has been one of uninterrupted enjoyment. Neither death, nor sickness, nor want has entered their homes. All providences have been favorable providences. Their circumstances have combined to fill their hearts with gratitude, and make their mouths praise with joyful lips. While this may be true of some, no doubt, in the case of the majority, the year has been one of trials, and to not a few of great hardship compromise any of her distinctive principles. Never in the history of our church in America has our course been more completely vindicated than in the past twelve months. Never has there been a louder call to steadfastness and faithfulness than that which comes from the distracted condition of this land to-day. Recognizing the call, we shall maintain in the future as we have in the past, the distinctive principles of our Testimony. Believing that obsta principies is the only safe rule, we shall oppose any effort to compromise and resist any tendency practically to ignore them. Our readers may rest assured that, realizing the responsibility that rests upon the editors of a magazine that makes a monthly visit into nearly all the families of the church, and whose influence is so generally admitted, we shall endeavor to make it not only attractive and valuable, but also safe. We ask, in return, a continuance of the hearty good will and generous support heretofore so freely given.

# THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN OHUROH IN AMERICA. SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY. No. XI.

BY REV. THOS. SPROULL, D. D.

THE Eastern Sub-Synod appointed its first adjourned meeting to be held in Chambers street church, New York, April 9, 1833, at 7 o'clock, P. M. To this meeting Covenanters both in the East and in the West looked forward with the hope that something might be done that would restore peace to the church so sadly disturbed. The condition of things was such as to excite the most painful apprehensions. The clerk of Synod had been suspended at its meeting *pro re nata* for contumacy. Libels were presented against the signers of "the Address and Notes," and matters were in a state of preparation for trying the persons charged, at the next stated meeting.

In the meantime new complications arose within the bounds of the Southern Presbytery\* that increased the difficulty. Rev. J. N. McLeod had been released from his pastoral charge in Galway, and was aiding his father in supplying his pulpit in New York. After his suspension by the pro re nata meeting of Synod, a number of members of that congregation, including three elders, considered that it would be disorderly to wait on his ministry. On the following Sabbath he, introduced by his father into the pulpit, proceeded to conduct the public services. A number of the members of the congregation, believing him incompetent on account of his suspension, to exercise the ministerial office, arose and left the church. For this the three elders and those who joined with them were, without trial, suspended from the enjoyment of sealing ordinances. They applied for relief to the Southern Presbytery, and a pro re nata meeting of that court was, at the request of two ministers, called by the moderator to meet in New York on the 16th of January, 1833. When the time arrived and the members convened, it was found that the pastor and the congregation had

\*This Presbytery included New York, and the congregations north as far as Albany. It was called Southern, with reference to its position in the E. S. Synod. transferred themselves to the jurisdiction of the Philadelphia Presbytery, and that by this Presbytery the son of the pastor, whom the parties aggrieved had refused to hear, was installed assistant pastor of the congregation. The Presbytery reversed the acts of suspension, and declared that "no superior court having disjoined Dr. McLeod and his congregation from this Presbytery, they are still under its jurisdiction and subject to its authority."

In a number of cases in the bounds of the E.S. Synod, and in one instance in the bounds of the W.S. Synod, members who had voted or accepted office under the government were called before their respective sessions, and dealt with as violators of the law of the church. These persons almost invariably refused to submit to the decisions of the sessions, and appealed to the presbyteries under whose jurisdiction they were.

The condition of affairs was now such as to excite the gravest apprehen-Already there was a schism in its incipient stage in the church, sions. which, if not healed, it was seen must result in a division. This was on all sides deprecated, and how to avoid it was the difficult problem to be solved. To those who were determined to maintain the position which the church had held from the beginning, the obvious way was to let matters take their regular course, and by discipline endeavor to promote the peace and purity of the church. With those on the other side there was no disposition to retrace the steps that had been taken. They had committed themselves to the doctrines of the rejected paragraphs of the Address and Notes, and maintained the right of Covenanters to exercise all the privileges of citizenship under the government. A barrier was thus placed between the two parties that could be removed only by concession on the one side or the other. It was not to be expected that those who had in the pro re nata meeting of Synod instituted processes against the signers of the Address and Notes, would at this stage retract what they had done, in the face especially of the defiant position of those who denounced the meeting as irregular. Believing that what they had done was in accordance with the law and order of the church, they considered the course of the others factious. They were perfectly willing to await and abide by the decision of Synod before which the libels were to be tried, confident that a majority of that court would sustain them in their action.

At the time appointed for the meeting of the Synod all the constituent members were present. In the meantime Dr. McLeod was removed by death. He had joined in opposing the pro re nata meeting. Two licentiates were ordained to the ministry-Samuel W. Gailey by the Philadelphia Presbytery, and Algernon S. McMaster by the Western Presbytery. These were known to be on the same side. Leaving these out as not known to Synod until formally introduced, the number stood, relatively, eleven in favor of the action of the pro re nata meeting, and eight opposed to it. The elders were in about the same relative proportion. The clerk of the Synod being suspended, was disqualified from taking his seat. Of the remaining seven, all but two were under libel and could have no vote in the disposing of their cases. It was therefore clear that if the regularity of the pro re nata meeting be sustained, the decision of these cases and of the questions of doctrine and practice that were involved, would be by the votes of those who originated the libel. The signers of the Address saw that by accepting the situation and allowing discipline to have its course, the entire movement to change the relation of the church to the government of the country would be condemned.

The Synod met at the time appointed, April 9, 1833, in the Chambers

srreet church, and was opened with a sermon by the moderator, Rev. Wm. Gibson. It was constituted with prayer, and adjourned to meet in the same place the next morning at 10 o'clock. Synod met accordingly, and after being constituted with prayer, the question was at once raised with regard to the admissibility of the clerk, who had been suspended by the pro re nata meeting, to occupy the position of clerk of this meeting. Those who held that the suspension was legal considered him now disqualified for the duties of that office. Those on the other hand who had protested against the call of the meeting, held that its proceedings were illegal and void.

This difficulty might, in our judgment, have been removed by a spirit of accommodation on the one side or the other. It is not necessary that a clerk should be a member of the body whose proceedings he records. He is not in legislative assemblies. It is true that in our ecclesiastical usage the clerk is chosen from among the members of the court. But we know of no law making this imperative. Had either side yielded this point, the Synod could have been organized. And on the ground of expediency it would have been prudent to have raised no objection to the calling of the roll by the clerk. On the other side it would have conceded nothing to affect the questions that were to be decided, to have yielded for a time the claims of the incumbent of the clerkship. But there was no disposition to make concessions by either party.

We give here two accounts from two sources, representing the two parties, of what took place at this stage of proceedings.

From the Albany Quarterly: "It was proposed by Dr. Willson and acceded to by two of those who advocated the exercise of the office by Mr. McLeod, that some minister of the court should be named by the moderator to call the roll, that no member might be committed at this stage of the business. Against this procedure Mr. McLeod and several' others of his party intimated the most determined opposition. This discussion respecting the right of Mr. McLeod on the one hand, and the impropriety of Synod recognizing his officiating in his present situation on the other, proceeded, until at length the Rev. Dr. McMaster, arrogantly exercising a power belonging to the moderator, called upon and ordered Mr. McLeod to proceed as clerk in calling the roll and ascertaining the majority of the court, some denying the call, and others hearing their names in silence. Soon after which he did not possess, a motion was made in writing and seconded, and pronounced from the chair by Rev. W. Gibson, the moderator, that Mr. Chrystie should be appointed clear protem. This motion was carried by a large majority, only Dr. McMaster and a few others voting in the negative. The tunult and disturbance made by Mr. McLeod and his party in loudly proceeding in their business, while the moderator was thus pronouncing the resolution and its passage, induced a church officer not a member of the court to caution them to consider the impropriety of their disorderly disturbance of its business in this house; on which they proceeded immediately and tunultuously to withdraw, some of them rudely and falsely crying aloud that they were turned out of the house. Mr. Chrystie demanded, as clerk, in the presence of competent witnesses, of Mr. McLeod the minutes and papers of Synod, which he refused. The whole party then withdrew in a tumult. Rev. Dr. McMaster returned in a few minutes, and while the remanet members were quietly and orderly proceeding in the business of regularly ascertaining the members of the court, loudly exclaimed that he protested aga

From the American Christian Expositor: "Various proposals were suggested, but to none would either side of the question accede, which might seem to compromise their judgment in the case. It was, then, proposed by Rev. Dr. McMaster to appoint from each side of the house two or three well known members as a committee; and then adjourn for the day, to give said committee time to meet, and carefully and prayerfully consider the matter at issue, and on to-morrow report a plan that might be mutually satisfactory; or if a difference should still be found to exist, that appeared insurmountable to Synod, let the way be prepared for a mutual and peaceful reference of the litigated points to the supreme judicatory of the church. This reasonable and pacific proposition was scouted by the pro re nata members. The moderator had decided that Mr. Chrystie, as pro re nata clerk, could not serve. The stated clerk, Mr. McLeod, was in his place, and in the possession of the minutes and of the table. It was urged upon the moderator by the pro re nata men that he should remove the clerk from his place and appoint another by his own authority, repeatedly declaring that he must risk something, and they would sustain him.

edly declaring that he must risk something, and they would sustain him. On the other side it was plead that the clerk was not the officer of the moderater, but of Synod, that the rule defined his rower and duties, and was imperious, and that neither the moderator nor Synod had power, without previously suspending the rule under which they now acted, to remove the clerk until the members should be ascertained.

At this point several of the members had asserted that the clerk ought to proceed in his duty as required by the rule. And one member, Rev. Dr. McMaster, addressing the chair, said: 'Let the clerk do his duty.' The clerk then proceeded to call the roll and ascertain the members of the present meeting. \* \* \* The Synod then retired immediately to the 2d Reformed Presbyterian church in Waverley Place (formerly Sixth street), and as already constituted resumed their business."

This was the second step in the course of schism and defection. The protest against the call of the pro re nata meeting of Synod, and the contumacious refusal to attend it, placed the protestors in a position of insubordination to the Synod at the adjourned meeting. The Synod existed in its officers and members all the time between its organization and the time to which it adjourned. It was called to exercise its power in the meantime in a way prescribed by the law of the church. That interim meeting was an integral part of the Synod, and the rejection of it was the rejection of Synod. Hence the only way left for those brethren to fulfil their obligations as members of the court was to accept at the adjourned meeting all that had been done at the interim meeting, answering to the charges as well as they could, and if not satisfied with the result, appeal to the General Synod. This, however, they determined not to do.

It follows by an irresistible conclusion that the body that was constituted of those ministers and elders who withdrew from the church in Chambers street and organized in the church in Waverley Place, was a new body. In the united protests of its members against the call of the *pro re nata* meeting it had a germinal existence, under which the presbyterial boundary between the New York and Philadelphia Presbyteries was changed, and those of both presbyteries who had joined in the protest were merged into one. But the organic existence of the body that took the name of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church began with this movement and at this time, and reached its full development the following August in Philadelphia.

In coming to this conclusion we lay no stress on the fact that they left the church to which Synod had adjourned. They claimed that they went out under the constitution by the moderator, and organized in the church to which they removed. But they went out a part of the Synod, leaving behind them those who, according to ecclesiastical law and usage, retained the organization. The question of the right of the clerk to act in calling the roll and ascertaining the members, they made a test question, and finding that another minister was called to this service, they were forced for the sake of consistency to withdraw and organize elsewhere. Had they been required by the majority to do something that was a violation of the law and order of the church, their withdrawing from the house and organizing in another place would have been certainly justifiable, and they would have been the Synod, and the party left behind a schismatic faction. By the course they pursued they put it beyond the power of the Synod to decide the questions of difference between them and their brethren, and thus employ the means that Christ has appointed to promote the peace and preserve the purity of the church. In responding to the charges that were brought against them, they would have had a fair opportunity, before the proper tribunal, either to admit their error, or to defend their views on the questions involved in the charges, and to make it appear. if this could be done, that their views of the relation of the church to the civil institutions of the land were in accordance with the Word of God and the subordinate standards of the church. Failing to do this, the alternative left to the Synod was to proceed and issue the libels that were before it for trial.

This was done by the Synod after those citations. The counts in the libel were: "I. Following divisive courses. II. Contempt of the authority of Synod. III. Error in doctrine. VI. Abandonment of the testimony of the church. V. Slandering Synod and its members." Having been found guilty of these charges, and refusing to appear in answer to citations, they were "suspended from the exercise of the office of the holy ministry, and from the privileges of the church."

The meeting of General Synod that was to take place in the following August was looked forward to with deep interest. As this was a representative body, made up of delegates from presbyteries, the choice of these was a matter of no little importance. It is reasonable to suppose that the majorities in the presbyteries would choose delegates that would maintain their views in the superior court. And such was the fact. The Western Sub-Synod, at its meeting in the fall of 1832, recommended the Presbyteries of Pittsburgh and of Ohio to ordain two of the licentiates as missionaries. In pursuance of this three were ordained, one by the Ohio Presbytery, and two by that of Pittsburgh. These all held the same views on the points in controversy as the majority of the Eastern Sub-Synod. And with but one exception those courts sent to the General Synod delegates whose principles were known to be in accordance with the established position of the church.

An account of the meeting of General Synod, with its results, is left over for the next paper.

### THE COMING OF CHRIST IN THE MILLENNIUM.

BY S. A. STERRETT, M. D.

It is the belief of most Millennarians, that the Lord Jesus Christ will soon appear upon our earth in his humanity, and take to himself his great mediatorial power and reign over this entire world, in order to subdue it to himself; and also, that all the righteous dead will be raised up to reign with him a thousand years—hence the name, millennium. For proof of this, they especially refer us to the 20th chapter of Revelation, where it is foretold that Satan, that old serpent, which is the devil, shall be bound and cast into the bottomless pit, and sealed there, that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years should be fulfilled.

That God does many things above man's comprehension and reason we fully believe and grant, and that he has done and will do all things necessary for man's well-being, both for this life and the life to come; but that the Omniscient should do, or be capable of doing anything *contrary* to reason, or anything unnecessary, we do not believe. He says to us, "Come let us reason together." When Christ first appeared on earth it was in his humanity. This was necessary that he should so come, in order that he might sufferr and die for us, for in his divine nature he could not suffer; hence the necessity of assuming our nature, that he might suffer and die LES, - - - Vol. XV, No. 2.

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# J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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Mr. Samuel R. Mitchell, whose obituary is in this number, left a thousand dollars to the Cincinnati congregation, of which he was a member.

Age Any one sending a new subscriber with advance payment of \$1.00, and 8 cents for postage, will get a copy of the new edition either of the TESTIMONY or of the BOON or DISCPLINE, as he may elect, and the new subscriber a copy of the Reformed Presulterian and Covenanter for a year.

CORRESPONDENTS will oblige us by giving name of Post Office when sending money, and of both offices-the one where the magazine has formerly gone, and the one to which they wish it sent-when requesting a change. To secure by mail acknowledgement of moneys sent, a stamp or card should be enclosed.

To insure insertion of notices of communions timeously, pastors should send them as soon as arrangements have been made.

Mg. JOHN CALDWELL, No. 3617 Spring Garden street, Philadelphia, has on hand some copies of the new edition of the Scot's Worthies and the Cloud of Witnesses; also neat editions of the Bible, the last from \$4 to \$10.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF OUR MISSIONARIES.—A few copies remain unsold. When these are disposed of it is not at all probable that persons wishing the photographs can obtain them at all. They are offered at the fol-lowing prices: in sets suitable for album 15 cents a piece, or \$2.00 per set. In a handsome map ready for framing \$2.50. A very fine and life-like cabinent photograph of Rev. Jos Beattie is offered to our readers at 50 cents. We have never seen a finer photograph than this. The proceeds from the sale of the pictures go to the support of the Syrian Mission. Address, With the part Bookstein P. Y

Union Park, Rochester, N. Y.

W. MCKINNEY, licentiate, left Allegheny on the 15th of January for Camden, Alabama. He will have charge of a week day school, as our present force in Selma have, and will also conduct a Sabbath school and public worship on the Sabbath. He is accompanied by his wife and child. He will have

ARBANGEMENTS have also been made by which the stations at Lake Reno and Round Prairie will receive the care and oversight of a missionary this winter.

THE propriety of recommending the ordination of G. M. Elliott was before the Board at its last meeting, there being no ordained minister in the Selma Mission. The whole question was referred to Synod.

ALL communications intended for the Central Board of Missions should be sent to the Secretary so as to reach him not later than the morning of the 3d Monday of each month, as at 10 A. M. of that day the Board holds its regular monthly meeting.

J. W. DILL has signified to the commission appointed by Pittsburgh Presbytery his declination of the call from Springfield, &c., congregation. The state of Mr. Dill's health is such that he does not feel justified in taking charge at present of a congregation. For the same reason he is unable to comply with the very, argent request of the Lake Reno and Rond Prairie congregations to return to them this winter.

#### THE

# Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XV.

# FEBRUARY, 1877.

No. 2.

### ORIGINAL.

### THE ANCIENT OF DAYS.

THIS divine title occurs three times in the Bible, in the 9th, 13th and 22d verses of the seventh chapter of Daniel. The person to whom it belongs occupies a central position in the vision contained in that chapter. It is important, in order to understand the interpretation of the vision and to show its historical fulfilment, to determine which of the divine persons is indicated by the designation "Ancient of Days," and in what relation to the other persons and to the church, he is revealed by it.

The common interpretation of the title is, that it is the Father that is here meant, and that it exhibits him in his essential relation to the Son and the Holy Spirit. To this there is a doctrinal objection arising out of the title itself. The idea conveyed by the words is, remoteness of age; antiquity. This is the meaning of the word here rendered "ancient," in 1 Chron. 4:22, "There are ancient things." The application of this term as a distinctive designation of the Father would imply a priority of existence to the other persons, and even a succession of duration in his own existence; both of which thoughts are irreconcilable with the co-eternity of the persons in the Godhead.

It is designed in this article to show that the Son of God as Mediator is meant, and to present the proof on which this conviction rests.

I. There is a remarkable likeness between the description of the Ancient of days by Daniel, and that of Jesus Christ, by John in the Revelation. Daniel 7: 9, 10—"The Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool : his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him : the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

Revelation 1: 13-16—" In the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." Chapter 19: 12, 13—" His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name

# THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA. SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY. No. XII. BY REV. THOS. SPROULL, D. D.

DURING the intermediate time betweeen the meeting of the Eastern Sub-Synod and that of the General Synod, the church was in a state of painful disquiet. As might be expected, strenuous efforts were made on both sides for the struggle that it was foreseen would take place in the supreme judicatory. The object aimed at was to secure a majority that would decide the question and restore peace to the church. As it was not at all likely that either side would submit to a decision adverse to the views which they respectively maintained, the ulterior object was, by having a majority, to retain the right to be the Reformed Presbyterian Church. On the part of those who held by her established position, a division in their favor was desirable, as a means of strengthening many persons who were wavering through the example and influence of those who had diverged from that position. The true question was, which of these opposing parties occupied the ground that the church had held from its first organic existence in regard to the government of the country.

Unfortunately this question was in a great measure left out of view in the distracted condition of affairs in the eastern part of the church. The issue raised by those who had taken the first step of departure, was the legality of the pro re nata meeting of the Eastern Sub-Synod. The point which they were diligent in keeping before the minds of the people was not that their brethren had left the original ground on which the church stood in this country, but that in endeavoring to apply the discipline of the church, they had violated ecclesiastical forms and law. The epithet pro re nata men, that there was a persistent effort to fasten on them as a distinctive designation, was artfully suited to impress the public mind that the whole difference between the parties was the legality of that interim meeting of the Eastern Sub-Synod.

On the other side, the names "New-Light" and "Old-Light" came into use as expressive designations of the parties respectively, and pointing to the true cause of difference. The Old-Lights adhered to the position that the church had from the beginning occupied; the New-Lights, abandoning that position, put a new construction on the acts by which the church had defined her relation to the government, as dissenting from and witnessing against its immoralities, and against the unfaithfulness of the churches that permitted their members to incorporate with it.

The General Synod was to meet in Philadelphia on the first Wednesday of August, 1833. As the time of the meeting drew near, the interest throughout the church became more and more intensified in the questions at issue, and their settlement by Synod. A full meeting was expected. All the delegates who were appointed were determined to be there. The writer, in company with the late Rev. John Cannon, set out from Blairsville. forty miles east of Pittsburgh, on Monday morning next preceding the time of meeting. Travelling by the stage-coach on the Northern turnpike, it was not until about ten o'clock on Wednesday evening that we arrived in Philadelphia. The hour that Synod had appointed to meet was 7 P. M. When we alighted from the coach in Philadelphia we were met by Mr. Robert Brown, father-in-law of Mr. Cannon, one of the delegates of Pittsburgh Presbytery. With a countenance and tone that evinced deep emction, he said to us, "Our beloved church is torn asunder." We went with him to his lodging at Mr. Henry Sterling's house, his son-in-law and elder of Dr. Wylie, where we obtained further particulars of the separation. On the next morning we had the opportunity of hearing both sides, and so conflicting were the statements that it seemed difficult to know what was our duty. The writer had a private interview with Dr. John Black, under whom he had studied theology, and for whom he had a high regard. The doctor employed all his influence and all his power of reasoning to induce him to join with the party that embraced the new views. The scene of the preceding evening was presented as one of great disorder and violence on the part of those whom he designated pro re natu men. To all this the reply in substance was: "I know the principles of the church; I was trained in them from my childhood, and under your teaching my convictions of their truth were deepened and settled. With the body that holds these principles it is my purpose to unite." This reply brought the interview to a close.

Strenuous endeavors had been employed on both sides to prevent a rupture. Both parties desired to preserve the integrity of the church. In this they agreed. But on the mode of accomplishing this result, they widely differed. On the one side it was held to be essential to any arrangement, that the position of the church as dissenting from the government so long as it contained in its constitution no recognition of the supreme authority of Jesus Christ, and of the obligations of the divine law, should be maintained. Had a guarantee of this been given by the other side without an exception, the members from the presbyteries in the Western Sub-Synod would have agreed in General Synod to have reviewed the acts of suspension passed by the Eastern Sub-Synod, and rescind them. And we are sure that the members of that Synod would have acquiesced in the agreement, inasmuch as what they were endeavoring to accomplish by discipline would now be secured by an amicable and wise adjustment. And we doubt not, had an assurance of this been given in good faith to the Eastern Sub-Synod, that court would have repealed the acts of suspension, and thus removed the great difficulty that stood in the way of the organization of the supreme court. One of those suspended was the moderator of General Synod, and was, in the judgment of those who held that his suspension was valid, disabled from constituting Synod. By those on the other side there was no disposition to give this assurance, and besides, terms were presented that would not be accepted. A paper entitled "A proposed plan of harmony," was prepared, and is published in the Appendix of the Minutes of their Synod. It is preceded by the subjoined statement : "The following plan of harmony was prepared by various individuals, whom the pro re nata party had injured. It was hoped that through the medium of their western brethren, to as many as access could be had to, it was submitted before the meeting of Synod, it would have availed in effecting the proposed end." We give the several particulars of the plan, omitting the statements and reasons by which it was enforced.

"I. Let the New York pro re nata of Nov. 21, 1832, be declared null and void. II. Separate incidental questions from what is of general interest. III. That we may distinctly understand what this point of general interest is—what the matter of discipline or inquiry respecting it amounts to, and how it may be accommodated; let us occupy the same ground on which we stood in August, 1831. IV. Give time for reflection. V. Should diversity of opinion appear on any general principle, or in its application to any given case, before employing violent measures, let us consult our brethren abroad, as well as give time for reflection at home. VI. In the meantime recommend forbearance in the doing or enjoying of what is lawful, if offensive to others, and forbid all violent and unauthorized actings, by inferior courts, in reference to what is sub judice, until decided by the superior judicatory. VII. Consider with candor what advantages are likely to flow from a violent division of the church, and examine with care the certain evils that must follow such a measure. VIII. After a fair trial has been made of the above, and such other well advised means as wisdom and experience, under the good providence of God, may suggest, should harmony not be restored, and grounds of difference be found insurmountable, let us amicably part, and let each section of the divided church act separately; observing the honorable courtesy of brethren who cannot comfortably walk together in their profession."

It is evident that this plan of harmony was wholly onesided. The first demand was a begging of the whole question. However much, on the ground of prudence and policy, we of the West might regret the calling of the pro re nata, and the suspensions that followed, we could not trample on the fundamental principles of Presbyterianism by attempting extra-judicially to nullify a court of Christ's house regularly called, and declare its acts of no validity, This would have been a practical condemnation of those who were honestly endeavoring to preserve the testimony of the church, and an approval of those who were attempting to break it down. And consistently with this first condition is the import of all the rest; to allow members of the church to act as they think proper in regard to taking part in political affairs. To have acceded to those terms would have been to yield the whole matter in controversy.

It might be thought that the third specification in the plan of harmony was a basis of agreement on which all could unite : "Let us occupy the same ground on which we stood in August, 1831." And so it would have been, had there been agreement as to what that ground was. It was by the Synod that met at that time that the act of free discussion was passed, and on the meaning of that act there was a wide difference. On the one side, it was held that this act assumed a diversity of views on the question whether Covenanters could incorporate with the government and enjoy all the privileges of citizenship, and that this was an unsettled question which it was proposed to discuss; on the other side, it was believed that this question had long before been decided, and that the points to be discussed were minor matters relating to what might be done in consistency with a declared dissent. It is evident that an attempt to harmonize on that basis would be a failure.

The Eastern Sub-Synod, at the close of its meeting in New York in April, adjourned to meet in Philadelphia at the call of the moderator, about the time of the meeting of General Synod. Accordingly it was convened by the moderator, August 3d, in the Reformed Presbyterian church in Cherry street. This was a house of worship that a number of members of Philadelphia congregation had purchased, who declined to receive the ministrations of the pastor after his suspension by the Eastern Sub-Synod. At this meeting the subject of allowing the moderator under suspension to open the General Synod was considered, and it was agreed that this could not be done. We give, from the *Albany Quarterly*, an account of what took place, written we presume by its editor, Rev. J. R. Willson, D. D.:

"The stated clerk, Rev. James Chrystie, was instructed to announce to Dr. Black, clerk of General Synod, that the moderator of the session of 1831 had been suspended from the office of the holy ministry, and authorized him to make it known to the delegates from beyond the mountains. It was also resolved to spend the seventh as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer. After the adjournment, Rev. Mr. Kell, of Indiana, in company with other western delegates, requested a conference with the brethren of the Atlantic States, which was appointed to be held at 10 A. M. on the morning of the seventh. The Rev. Mr. Wallace preached a sermon on the Kingly Office. On the seventh the delegates met, and Rev. James Milligan, who had been appointed chairman of the committee of arrangements, called on Rev. Dr. Willson, as the oldest minister present, to open the fellowship by a short prayer, singing a psalm, reading the 9th chapter of Nehemiah, and prayer.

When the hour of conference with the western brethren arrived, the prayer meeting was adjourned, and Rev. Robert Wallace, of Ohio, was called to the chair. It was resolved that the delegates should repair to Eleventh Street church, at the hour of seven, where General Synod was to convene, and provided the moderator should attempt to force his services on Synod, that the stated clerk of the Eastern Sub Synod should announce to all present that he is suspended from office, and that Rev. M. Roney, his alternate, should announce to all the delegates, that it became their duty to repair to Cherry Street church, where Synod would be constituted.

All this was done in an orderly manner, and most of the delogates with the people repaired to Cherry Street church, where a large congregation assembled, and Synod was opened by Mr. Roney with an able and faithful sermon on the evils of associating with corrupt companions."

We give the statement of those on the other side, taken from the report of a committee to frame a minute, &c.:

"The evening of the constitution of Synod presented a spectacle of a novel character in the history of ecclesiastical assemblies. When the moderator, Rev. S. W. Crawford, commenced the public worship according to the appointment of last Synod, he was interrupted by a Mr. Chrystie rising and amouncing himself as the clerk of the Eastern Sub-Synod, and intimating, as far as could be gathered, that Mr. Crawford was disqualified for opening the Synod by some act of the Eastern Sub-Synod, and Mr. Roney rose and declared that he was the moderator of the General Synod, and the proper person to open the Synod, and called on the members of Synod and all the faithful to follow him to the church. By various sources it is learned that a pro re nata had been called in the Eastern Sub-Synod; that Mr. Crawford and others had been libelled, and afterwards that a vote of suspension had passed on them by these pro re nata men, claiming to be the Eastern Sub Synod, to which neither Mr. Crawford nor any of the others submitted.

Of all this the Synod could know nothing, nor could it act at all in the premises, without prejudging, until it was constituted and in session. Besides, Mr. Crawford was regulary certified by his presbytery, and known to be in good standing. Yet because the Synod would not act on the deed of this body, claiming to be the Eastern Sub-Synod before it had judged it, these men made a secession from the court."

The General Synod met on the morning of Aug. 8, according to adjournment the preceding evening, and organized. There were present delegates from all the presbyteries but two-the Western Presbytery of the Western Sub-Synod, and Philadelphia Presbytery ; in all, thirty-six members. The other Synod organized on the evening of meeting. Their minutes show a list of thirty-five members. Of these six were not at the meeting; and four who were there, were without appointment. They came from the bounds of Pittsburgh Presbytery, all of whose delegates, with two exceptions, were members of the other Synod. This left them twenty-five members at their organization. From this statement of the relative numbers of the two bedies, it is clear that those who constituted the Synod in Cherry Street church left the other body solely on the ground of principle. Had they remained, with ten of a majority on the disturbing question, they could have come to a decision, and expressed it in terms that could not be misunderstood. The minority must then submit, or otherwise withdraw and lose all claim to the name of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. This would have secured to all the congregations adhering to the Synod, under the rulings of courts, the right to all their church property.

On two subjects both Synods took action, which it is due to historical accuracy that it be recorded. 1. On the subject of civil relations, the Synod adhering to the church's original position, *Resolved*, "That as it has always been in the proceedings and history of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, both in the land of our forefathers and in this land, a great and leading object to bear an explicit and practical testimony to the truth respecting civil government as the ordinance of God, and the subjection of the nations to Messiah; so it is utterly inconsistent with our doctrinal standards and judicial acts for any member of this church to sit on juries, to hold offices, or swear allegiance to the constitution of the United States."

The other Synod, in a "report on civil relations," adopted by it, declares "That this church has never as such had leisure to examine the civil institutions of this land so fully as to obtain such evidence on the subject as to justify in a definitive judgment of their character; and hence much in this, as in most other relations and pursuits of life, has by the supreme judicatory been left to an enlightened and conscientious discretion, guided by the Word of God, and the well known principles of the standards of our church, with the understanding and confident expectation that our courts and members would be free from all vexatious presecutions in matters upon which the supreme judicatory has not passed."

The following is the action of the first mentioned Synod in regard to those members who had separated from it : "That the members of our subordinate and inferior judicatories, and all our people, be and hereby are warned not to recognize the authority, or admit the interference of such ministers as have been suspended for the maintaining of principles opposed to the standards of our church on the subject of civil government; as likewise of all such ministers and others who may be confederated with them in corrupting the doctrine, contemning the authority, and violating the order of the church; inasmuch as these last, as well as the first, are, and hereby are declared to be, from the nature of the opinions they maintain, and the divisive course they pursue, prohibited from holding a seat in our courts, or exercising authority, or any way interfering in the judicatories or congregations of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, while maintaining such principles and pursuing such practices."

The following, reported by a committee, was adopted by the other Synod: "Whereas, the Rev. James Chrystie, Moses Roney, and their associates, did, on the evening of the first meeting of this Synod, without allowing opportunity to this court to ascertain in any regular manner the reason of their so doing, and in contravention of the appointment of this court, in a disorderly manner, interrupt the services of the sanctuary; and did secede from us when assembled to constitute this court at the hour, in the place, and in the manner prescribed at its adjournment in August, 1831. And whereas, such unreasonable and violent separation is schismatical and factious, and contrary to the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, enjoined by the Word of God; therefore, *Resolved*, That the aforesaid brethren, and those who joined with them in their unchristian and disorderly course, are hereby declared to have gone out from us, and to be by their own act of schism no longer members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church."

We have now the data from which to state what is the difference between these two bodies, and what is the position of each in regard to the government of the United States under its present constitution.

In general it may be said that both profess to hold to the Westminster formulas as standards of doctrine, and also to the Act, Declaration and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States, and both claim to identify with the church of the Second Reformation, and with the remnant who refused to accept of the establishment after the Revolution in Britain in 1688, and who afterwards constituted the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland. The points of disagreement had reference to the application to the government of this country, of the principles in which the church had declared her belief, and the binding force of the enactments of her courts, in which she declared her position to the government as dissenting from it.

From the statement on a preceding page of the declarations of these two bodies respectively on this subject, it will be seen that the one that met in Eleventh street, Philadelphia, ignoring the obligation of the acts of former courts, left to the consciences of the members of the church the question of the enjoyment of civil privileges, making provision at the same time that in the exercise of these privileges they are not to be interfered with by the courts of the church. The fact that there is no recognition in the constitution of the supreme authority of Jesus Christ as "King of nations," of the obligation of his law on rulers and on subjects, and of the claims of his church to protection and support, was not considered a sufficient reason why the judicatories of the church should prohibit incorporation with the nation. And moreover, that slavery then existing under the constitution, and upheld by it, was no bar to members of the church swearing allegiance to it.

The position of the other Synod was and is, that the acts of the courts prohibiting incorporating with the government were founded on moral principles, and that those acts were still binding, not simply by virtue of the authority of the church, but especially because they are the expression of the requirements of the divine law, making it the imperative duty of the followers of Christ to be separate from all civil institutions, that by refusing to own him as their King, are in a state of constructive rebellion against him.

# SELECTED.

### A SERMON BY REV. WILLIAM GUTHRIE.

THE following is from "The Church's Ruin and Remedy," a series of sermons on Hosea 13: 9, by Rev. William Guthrie, minister of the gospel at Fenwick, in the time of Scotland's purest Reformation; author of The Christian's Great Interest. They were taken from his mouth by some of his hearers, and published after his decease. "The imperfections thereof are not to be imputed to the worthy author." We republish this discourse by request.

THOUGH Israel's name speak out his glorious advancement and privilege beyond all other parties in the world, yet Israel may come to be in a very low condition, even to be destroyed to all appearance, and cut off, as to their parts. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." It is true, the Lord hath a sovereign hand in the low condition of his people, and it is true, also, that Israel's enemies have a great hand in their low condition, for which they will get no thanks from God; but it is as true that Israel hath a principal hand in this his low condition, he himself procuring his own overthrow. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." "Tis the iniquity of his people that separates betwixt him and them. Isa. 59: 2-" Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquity hath separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not And though many in Israel are now and then taking with this, hear." that they by their sinning have a principal hand in their own overthrow and destruction, yet a through, real and right conviction of this is not soon fastened on Israel. The Lord many times in this prophecy hath told them that their destruction was of themselves, and he hath used seveTHE

Rekormed Presbykerian

Cohenanter.

MARCH,

COMBINED SERIES.

1877.

VOL. XV. No. 3.

# J. W. SPROULL, D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—Phil. 3: 16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."-Jude 3.

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LAKES PRESBYTERY meets in 1st Miami church, Northwood, on Tuesday, April 3d, at 7 P. M.

THE collection for the Library Fund of the Theological Seminary was fixed for the 1st Sabbath of February. Aged Ministers' Fund, March, 1st Sabbath. Remit amount to W. Wills, 110 Market street, Pittsburgh. Pa.

Jan. 18th, 1877.

DEAR EDITORS --- Will you allow me to acknowledge the receipt of ten dollars from Mr. W. P. Clark, of Mansfield, O., to assist the Brownsville congregation in re-roofing their house of worship. Many thanks to Mr. Clark for this. If any others wish to follow his noble example, please forward direct to John Barber, Jolly, Monroe county, O., and all will be thankfully receipted. Yours, &c., H. P. MCCLURKIN.

THE current session of the Theological Seminary will close Tuesday, March 27th, The Board of Superintendeuts will meet 4 P. M. same day in the Seminary building. S. O. WYLIE, Chairman. D. MCALISTER, Secretary.

APPOINTMENTS, PITTSBURGH PRESEXTERY—Allegheny—Feb., 4th Sab., Rev. J. J. McCiurkin; March, 1st Sab., W. M. Shanks; March, 2d Sab., J. L. Pinkerton; March, 3d Sab., Rev. J. J. McClurkin; April, 2d Sab., Rev. J. Crozier.

N. M. JOHNSTON, Chairman Committee of Supplies.

### THE

# Reformed Presbyterian and Cobenanter.

VOL. XV.

# MARCH, 1877.

No. 3.

# ORIGINAL.

# A QUESTION OF FACT.

In the October number of the Covenanter (Ireland) a correspondent writing under the nom de plume "A Cameronian" asserted that " the American prohibitory jury act is a dead letter." Knowing, as we did, that the assertion was wholly groundless, and if allowed to pass uncontroverted would do harm in this country, and convey a wrong impression to our brethren abroad respecting our practice here, we felt it a duty, although reluctant to refer to the matter at all, to make such a statement as would present in its true light our position. Dr. Wylie, in a communication published in the Covenanter for December, and republished in our January issue, replied more at length to the article, and emphatically denied the correctness of the assertion. Certainly it was not too much to expect that so far as the matter of fact was concerned, about which in this country we surely have better opportunities for judging than have our brethren across the Atlantic, unless the very best proof for making the assertion could be furnished, this would be enough, and the correspondent, however much he might disapprove of our course, would be prepared to admit he was mistaken. Not so, however. In the January number of the Covenanter the assertion is reaffirmed, although not one word of proof is furnished. The writer thinks he is warranted to make the statement in all its positiveness, that the "American prohibitory jury act is a dead letter." Notwithstanding the fact that the church in this land has reaffirmed her former position, and in a most pointed manner condemned those who dare to call its correctness into question, and the fact that a direct denial has been given to his statement, this anonymous correspondent, whose publication finds a place in the organ of our sister Synod in Ireland, without any proof, and in an offensive manner, reaffirms what before he had written. . It is true he says that he has the,"" testimony of an informant whom I believe to be more trustworthy than he (Dr. Wylie) is." "A Cameronian" owes it to himself and to the

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sciences of men. Few among gospel hearers are crying out: "What must I do to be saved ?" And the experience of godly pastors testifies to the meagre experience and inadequate views of the evil of sin, and their need of the great atonement exhibited by applicants for church privileges; while the practice of many professors, measuring as it truly does their creed, makes manifest how very few doctrines of divine revelation have been received as the truth of God, and the infallible rule of practice.

Reader, how do you-expect to be saved? How do you expect to obtain pardon of sin, peace with God, a title to eternal life, and that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord?" Will you take so much interest in this, to you all important matter, as to write out an answer to this great question: "What must I do to be saved?" Set before your eyes in your own language the plan by which you expect to gain a victory over all your spiritual foes, have communion with a three-one God in Christ here, and the full enjoying of him to all eternity. If you answer the question right, your practice will glorify God and bless men; your religion will give you direction and support in the duties of life, comfort amid its trials, triumph in death, and "an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." S.

# THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

# SKETCHES OF HER ORGANIC HISTORY. No. XIII.

#### BY REV. THOS. SPROULL, D. D.

THE meeting of the Synod in 1833 was an era in the history of the church. Freed from internal strife that had for a number of years diverted her attention from her special work as the witnessing church, she was prepared to move forward in carrying out the plan marked out by the fathers who were engaged in her organization in this land. Like a vessel in the ocean escaped from counter winds and currents that had impeded her progress, bounds forward with increased speed to regain the time that had been lost, the witnessing church set herself with renewed energy to fulfil her high mission.

As it was reasonable to expect, those parts of the church's Testimony that had been exposed to the severest test required and received special attention. An examination of the records of this meeting of Synod will make it manifest that there was in the minds of the members a determination to establish the position of the church in regard to the civil institutions of the country on a basis so clear as to leave no room for a renewal of the controversy in regard to it. They did not fail to improve the lessons which they had been taught in the school of experience.

As we stated in a former paper, Synod in 1828 appointed a committee to report on the subject of the relations of the church to the civil institutions of the country. This report was presented at the next meeting and referred to a committee, to examine it, and if they

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saw meet, to publish it in overture. This was not done, and at the next meeting of Synod the whole subject was passed over and the report laid up among the papers of Synod. At the meeting in 1833 the subject was brought before Synod by the committee on unfinished business, and the committee was revived and directed to report during the present session of Synod.

The necessity for this report was superseded by the report of the committee of discipline, on some papers referred to it that required action on this subject. In our last sketch we published a resolution prepared by the committee and adopted by Synod. It presents in clear and strong language the position of the church as a witnessing church against the irreligion of the government of this country.

The committee on unfinished business also brought to the notice of Synod the subject of covenanting. All the members of the former committee on that subject being absent, a new committee was appointed, and it was the design of Synod to go forward with this part of her work with all convenient speed. It was considered that now, after the severe trial through which the church had been made to pass, the duty of covenanting was specially seasonable. And to the neglect of this duty might in part be ascribed the chastening that she had received from her Head. Unquestionably, had a bond been prepared and sworn before the first steps of defection were taken, in which the obligations of her acts were brought home to the consciences of her ministers and members by covenanting, there would not have been a disposition to treat them lightly, and to evade them in either their letter or spirit. With such a clause as the following, by which we have bound ourselves in our late covenant, all attempts to find out excellencies in the government in order to prepare the way for uniting with it, would have been neutralized : "We will pray and labor for the peace and welfare of our country, and for its reformation by a constitutional recognition of God as the source of all power, of Jesus Christ as the Ruler of nations, of the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule, and of the true Christian religion; and we will continue to refuse to incorporate by any act with the political body until this blessed reformation has been secured."

The committee to whom this subject was referred presented the following report, which was adopted :

"That upon mature consideration of the events which have lately transpired within the bounds of our church, of the deepest interest; and likewise upon careful examination of the subject referred to, they apprehend there are principles in this Draft of a Covenant requiring further reflection; or that it may be in some important respects defective, and not calculated to answer the ends originally contemplated. But as it appears that this document has passed in review before our sister judicatories in Scotland and Ireland, we forbear any expression of opinion of its merits until we have obtained from our much respected and beloved brethren in foreign churches a further judgment on this important subject. We therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolution: *Resolved*, That the committee on correspondence be directed to prepare and submit to this court a letter to be transmitted to the sister judicatories of Scotland and Ireland, together with a copy of our minutes." A Book of Discipline, that it appears from the minutes of former meetings was in a state of *quasi* overture, was ordered at this meeting to be published as an overture in the *Albany Quarterly*. It was also intended by Synod to prepare a Form of Church Government and Directory, adapted to the condition and for the use of the church in America.

The preparation of the argumentative part of the Testimony also received the attention of Synod at this time. It is necessary here to refer to the Preface to Reformation Principles, in order to see what was the original design of the church in this part of the work which she assigned to herself. We quote from the preface:

"The argumentative part is the particular application of the principles of the Testimony. It specifies the people who maintain error, and exposes the error which they maintain. The confidence which persons may place in this part of the system will partly rest on human testimony, unless every one who reads it shall have also read and known every work to which it refers. It is not, therefore, recommended as an article of faith, but as a means of instruction in opposing error, and gaining over others to the knowledge of the truth.

Every human help which can be obtained is to be used in subserviency to the interests of religion. But divine truth is alone the foundation of our hope. Authentic history and sound argument are always to be highly valued, and have always been beneficial to the church; but they should not be incorporated with the confession of the church's faith. The argumentative part is a work of much care, and labor, and time. The Presbytery have not purposed to complete it at present. It shall hereafter be published in distinct and separate dissertations, under such forms and in such order as circumstances may appear to demand."

At the Synod of 1817 a committee appointed on this subject reported :

"That it would be desirable to have this part of the plan long since proposed carried into execution. They recommend the appointment, with all convenient speed, of several writers to the several subjects which this work contemplates, and that their writings be so extended, as collectively to make sufficient copy for three or four hundred pages 12mo., and that the following subjects be embraced: Infidelity, Socinianism, Universalism, Arminianism, Hopkinsianism, Prelacy and Popery, Methodism and Independency, the Anabaptist Controversy, Lutheranism, German Calvinists, Reformed Dutch Church, General Assembly, and the Socinian Controversy.

The Synod adopt this report, and resolve that the appointing of the several subjects, and the writers unto whom they are to be appointed, shall be referred to next meeting of Synod."

We find no notice in the minutes of the next meeting of this distribution, but in subsequent meetings there is mention in several instances of members reading portions of the work that they had prepared. The delicacy and difficulty of the task seems, however, to have induced the Synod to allow the matter to be overlooked.

A committee appointed by the Synod of 1833 presented the following report on this subject, which was adopted : "Whereas, the people under our care are in need of instruction on the great points of our Testimony; and whereas, by petitions and otherwise we have learned that our people are desirous to be supplied with aid from this court in guarding them from temptation, and in defence of those glorious covenanted gospel truths, to which all are pledged by the most solemn vows; and whereas, this court when 'Reformation Principles' was published gave to the church a promise to carry forward the argumentative part of the Testimony; and whereas, this Synod passed a resolution, at its sessions in Coldenham, 1817, to distribute among some of its members the work of writing out arguments on the distinctive doctrines of the church; therefore,

Resolved, That writing the defence of the jury act be committed to Rev. David Scott; that the refutation of the Hopkinsian errors be referred to Rev. C. B. McKee, and that the enforcement of the doctrine of the church relative to the civil magistrate's power *circa sacra* be assigned to Rev. William Sloane, with instructions to have their documents prepared to lay before Synod at its next meeting."

Two of these arguments—that on the jury act, and that on the power of the civil magistrate about religion, were presented to Synod at its next meeting. Synod directed them to be published in overture. Arguments on other parts of the Testimony were prepared afterwards at the direction of Synod by other members, and were disposed of in the same way.

It is questionable whether the proper plan was adopted by Synod. It would seem from the fact that these arguments were published in overture with a view to adoption, that it was designed to make them a part of the standards of the church. This was not the original design. What seemed to be intended was to publish occasional warnings against prevalent and dangerous errors, pointing out their evil tendency, and guarding against being ensnared by them. The appearance of error in any new form from without, or the relaxation of discipline within the church in regard to any part of her Testimony, would be a call on Synod to utter a warning, and thus to guard the church against innovations that often creep in imperceptibly to disturb her peace and endanger her purity.

From 1825, the time that the Synod was constituted by delegates from presbyteries, its meetings were held biennially. At its adjournment in 1833, owing to the important business that required attention, it appointed its next meeting to be in the following year. At this meeting the reports from the several presbyteries gave an encouraging view of the condition of the church. Her position in regard to the nation was clearly understood, and there was evinced a determination to maintain the Testimony that had been lately endangered steadfastly against all opposition. Steps were taken towards the reorganization of the Seminary, and until this should be accomplished, provision was made for the training by presbyteries of candidates for the ministry.

The delegate form of the General Synod with two subordinate synods was found to be unnecessary, and steps were taken for its dissolution, and to return to the original form, consisting of all the ministers and delegates from the session. This took place in 1840.