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CHURCH MEMORIAL:

CONTAINING

IMPORTANT HISTORICAL FACTS AND REMINISCENCES CONNECTED WITH THE
ASSOCIATE AND ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCHES

PREVIOUS TO THEIR UNION AS THE

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OF

NORTH AMERICA.

BY ✓

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“ Thus saith the Lord God : Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in my hand.”—EZEK. xxxvii : 19.

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general, that it is not likely to be dropped, but to be one of the first subjects which will engage the attention of the United Church.

III.—A SKETCH OF THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.

The Associate Reformed Church had its origin in a union, which was agreed upon at Pequa, Pennsylvania, June 13, 1782, between the Associate and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches; and took its title from a union of the names of the two bodies thus originally composing it—THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.

The Associate was the oldest of these Churches, in this country, and at that time comprised the two Presbyteries of Pennsylvania and New York,—both under the jurisdiction of the Associate Synod of Scotland. As early as the year 1736, that Synod had received urgent applications for the word and ordinances of grace from persons residing in Londonderry, Chester county, Pennsylvania, and others who had removed from different parts of Great Britain; but, though various steps were taken to comply with these applications, which were earnestly repeated from time to time, nothing effectual was done until the year 1753, when the Synod solemnly set apart Alexander Gellatly and Andrew Arnot for this work, and sent them forth, more particularly to the province of Pennsylvania, with power to organize congregations, and constitute themselves into a Presbytery. They did not, however, reach their field until the following year, when they set themselves, with great diligence and zeal, to their mission, and in November of that year formed themselves into a Presbytery under the name of the Presbytery of Pennsylvania.

From this small beginning the work gradually spread. A

wide and needy field called for cultivation. More ministers were anxiously asked for, and promptly sent out from Scotland and the north of Ireland. New congregations were organized; and at length the field had so extended, and the number of ministers so increased, that a division of the Presbytery was called for. Accordingly, on the 20th of May, 1776, the Presbytery of New York was organized, and the two Presbyteries gave themselves to their great work with renewed energy and success.

Thus far, connection had been carefully kept up with the Synod in Scotland; and though it was scarcely possible for any to attend its meetings, yet the reports of the Presbyteries were regularly sent to the Synod for review, and all their acts were subject to its approbation or censure. When, however, the war of the Revolution broke out, this was entirely interrupted; and partaking largely of the spirit of independence of the mother country,* which at that time so generally prevailed, and deeply feeling, also, the desirableness and duty of greater oneness among those of like precious faith, in this country especially, the ministers and people early began to agitate the question of union between the different bodies of the Presbyterian family. First, the Burgher and Antiburgher portions of the Associated Church entered into a union, which, though not approved by the Synod at home, was well received throughout the colonies, and was followed with happy results. Not long before this, also, a union had been spoken of with the Presbyterian Synod of New York and Philadelphia. This body, which held its first united meeting in 1758, and has since grown into the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, had many prominent ministers and members in its ranks from Scotland and Ireland, and had not, at that time, very generally received any other than a Scripture Psalmody in the worship of God. Their Standards, also, were largely formed on the model of those of the Church of Scotland,

* Rev. R. Annan and others served as chaplains in the American army.

and thus the two bodies had many things, in faith and practice, in common. But after some consultation, and for reasons that do not fully appear at this lapse of time, the matter was dismissed, and each body girded itself for its own peculiar and proper work.

Still, the idea of union was a cherished one. Men of piety and worth, like the elder Dr. John Mason, of New York; Rev. James Proudfit, first of Pequa, Pennsylvania, and afterwards of Salem, New York; Rev. Robert Annan, and others of kindred spirit, were alive to the letter and spirit of the Great Intercessor's prayer, and fervently prayed and labored to have God build up his Jerusalem in this western world, and gather the dispersed of his Israel into one. Accordingly, negotiations were early entered into with the brethren composing the Reformed (or Covenanter) Presbytery. This Presbytery was organized in 1770, and was composed of Rev. Messrs. Matthew Lind, Alexander Dobbin, and John Cuthbertson. With them, as with the Associate brethren, there were numerous vacancies and missionary stations scattered over a vast extent of country, and the inability to give them any adequate supply was painfully seen and felt. In the hope of being better able to meet these necessities, and at the same time form a union, in which the truth and order of God's house might be maintained, and greater good done, these two bodies entered into serious and prayerful negotiations for a union. Some twenty conventions or meetings were held in reference to it; and at length the Reformed Presbytery, the Associate Presbytery of New York, and nearly all the members of the Presbytery of Pennsylvania, came together into one organic body, and thus gave rise to the Associate Reformed Church. The act was agreed to, at Pequa, in June, 1782, and the Synod was formally constituted, in Philadelphia, on the 30th of the following October.

The platform or basis of this union was very brief and simple, and was as follows:

1. That Jesus Christ died for the elect.
2. That there is an appropriation in the nature of faith.
3. That the gospel is addressed, indiscriminately, to sinners of mankind.
4. That the righteousness of Christ is the alone condition of the covenant of grace.
5. That civil government originates with God the Creator, and not with Christ the Mediator.
6. That the administration of the kingdom of Providence is given into the hands of Jesus Christ the Mediator: and magistracy, the ordinance appointed by the Moral Governor of the world to be the prop of civil order among men, as well as other things, is rendered subservient, by the Mediator, to the welfare of his spiritual kingdom, the Church, and has the sanctified use of it and of every common benefit, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.
7. That the law of nature, and the moral law revealed in the Scriptures, are substantially the same, although the latter expresses the will of God more evidently and clearly than the former; and, therefore, magistrates, among Christians, ought to be regulated by the general directory of the Word, as to the execution of their office.
8. That the qualifications of justice, veracity, etc., required in the law of nature for the being of a magistrate, are also more explicitly revealed as necessary, in the Holy Scriptures. But a religious test, any further than an oath of fidelity, can never be essentially necessary for the being of a magistrate, except where the people make it a condition of government.
9. That both parties, when united, shall adhere to the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, the Directory for Worship, and Propositions concerning Church Government.
10. That they shall claim the full exercise of church discipline, without dependence upon foreign judicatories.

The body thus formed, was made up of three Presbyteries and fourteen ministers, and immediately set itself to the great work to which it felt called in the providence and by the grace of God. After much labor, and with great care, the Synod, at its meeting in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, May 31, 1799, issued its formal Standards. This work was the result of many meetings and of much prayerful deliberation. It retained the West-

minster Confession of Faith, and the Catechisms, larger and shorter, unchanged, except in the matter of the civil magistrate's power in relation to religious things; and in this the XXI, the XXII, and the XXXI Chapters, were altered so as to express on this subject the present faith of the Church, without any additional testimony or explanation. Under the things forbidden in the second Commandment, also, the word *tolerating* was changed to *authorizing*. In all other things these venerable formularies of truth were left unaltered. The Westminster Directory for Worship, and the Propositions of Church Government, were not changed; and the Rules of Discipline, and the Forms of Process, were merely systematized, for greater convenience in the administration of Church authority. The book, as thus prepared, and as it has continued in force ever since, was styled "The Constitution and Standards of the Associate Reformed Church in North America."

As thus constituted, the Associate Reformed Church went forward and prospered. Its increase was rapid and large. Its Churches were soon found scattered over the country extending from the Canadas to the Carolinas, and south-west as far as Kentucky; and a promising and useful future seemed opening up. In this state of things, and for the purpose of promoting (as was thought) local interests better, it was early proposed to have the Synod divided into subordinate Synods, and that delegates should be chosen by each Presbytery to attend an annual assembly, which should be called a General Synod. This proposition carried, at the meeting in New York, October 21, 1802, and the four following Synods were constituted, viz: New York, Pennsylvania, Scioto, and the Carolinas. These Synods held their appointed meetings; and on the 30th of May, 1804, the first General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church met in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. John M. Mason, from Titus i: 9, "Holding fast the faithful word." The eight Presbyteries of Synod, viz: Wash-

ington, New York, Philadelphia, Big Spring, Kentucky, Monongahela, and First and Second Carolinas, were represented. Rev. Alexander Dobbin was chosen moderator, and Rev. James Gray clerk.

The General Synod, as now constituted, was declared in the Standards of the Church to be, "in every respect, to the particular Synods, what the latter are to the Presbyteries within their bounds." Its province was also declared to be "to decide questions respecting doctrine and discipline; to bear testimony against errors and immoralities; to correspond with other Churches; and, in general, to preside over the religious interests of the Church at large." It was in reality, however, little more than any one of the subordinate Synods; and as it had the power of transacting their business, it generally superseded them, or made their meetings of little consequence or interest, until at length they were generally given up. In being, however, a delegated body from the different Presbyteries, the Churches being widely scattered, and the means of intercommunication being slow, difficult, and expensive, it began, ere long, to be felt that there was an unfortunate centralizing of power; that distant Presbyteries could be only feebly represented, and often not represented at all; and that there were tendencies, in the centres of influence, to courses, especially on the subjects of communion, psalmody, and the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, which the extremities could neither approve nor check or control. From these and other causes, unhappy feelings were excited, and in 1820 the entire Synod of Scioto withdrew from all connection with the General Synod; and in the following year, the Synod of the Carolinas asked to be constituted an independent Synod. This request was granted; and thus the General Synod had only the Synods of Pennsylvania and New York left, to make up its general body. About the same time, propositions which had been made for a union with the Reformed Dutch Church, and considered at length, were laid aside. In

the year 1821, at the meeting of Synod in Philadelphia, overtures were received from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church for an organic union, and committees were appointed by both bodies to conduct the negotiations to a proper issue. These committees, in joint action, reported a plan which proposed, as the basis of union, that "the different Presbyteries of the Associate Reformed Church should either retain their separate organization, or be amalgamated with those of the General Assembly, at their own choice"; that the Theological Seminary of the General Assembly, and the Theological Seminary of the Associate Reformed Church, should be consolidated; and that the theological library and funds belonging to the Associate Reformed Church should be transferred to the Seminary at Princeton. This singular plan was sent in overture to the Presbyteries for final action,—thirteen members of Synod voting for that course, and three against—(these three being George Barber, an elder from the Presbytery of Washington, Rev. D. C. McLaren, D.D., moderator of the late General Synod, and Rev. James Chrystee, D.D., now Professor of Theology in the Reformed Presbyterian Church.) This overture, though not taken into the consideration of the Presbyteries of the General Assembly, so far as is known, was before the Presbyteries of the Associate Reformed Church; and at the meeting of General Synod in Philadelphia, May 15, 1822, these Presbyteries reported their decision,—a decision which, in all just ecclesiastical authority, ought to have been final and absolute, as settling the question. All of them were friendly, as the Associate Reformed Church has ever been, to union, on proper grounds and terms; but of the five Presbyteries, three—viz: Washington, Saratoga, and Big Spring,—reported unanimously, and with solemn remonstrance, against the proposed union; and two—viz: New York and Philadelphia—a qualified approval of it. After all this, however, the Synod, at this meeting,—a meeting at which comparatively few members were present, and one Presbytery

was not represented at all,—took up the matter, discussed it at length, and pressed it to a vote, when it appeared that *seven* members (one of whom, Dr. Lawrie, was the moderator of Synod, and six of whom were from one Presbytery,) voted for the union, *five* against it, and *four* were silent. The vote was declared to be in favor of the union; the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church was declared to be dissolved,—its members were invited to seats in a General Assembly to which they had never been chosen; and the valuable library of the Associate Reformed Theological Seminary, in New York, was removed at once to the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey.

Thus terminated the General Synod, but in no sense was the existence of the Church itself affected. Various circumstances had, indeed, combined to give individuals and sections of the Church an ability to do what had thus been accomplished; but the great mass of the ministry and membership were true to her principles and devoted to her interests, and each of the different portions of the Church set themselves immediately to the work of perpetuating the body on true and proper grounds.

First. The western portions, comprising more especially the Presbyteries of Monongahela and Ohio—(this Presbytery having been formed from the Presbytery of Kentucky, and held its first meeting in Xenia, Ohio, in April, 1817,)—in the Synod of Scioto, had early conferences, and at length, after prayerful deliberation, it was, on the motion of Rev. Joseph McElroy, (then of the First Associate Reformed Church, Pittsburgh, and now of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, New York,) resolved to organize a Synod independent of the General Synod, and to be known as THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF THE WEST. This step was carried out. The first meeting was held at Rush Creek Church, Ohio, April 27, 1820, and the Synod was constituted with prayer by the Rev. John Riddell, the senior minister present. Rev. John Steele was appointed stated clerk.

Fourteen ministers and eight elders were in attendance, from the two Presbyteries that composed the Synod. But from this small beginning, on the clear and well defined principles of the Associate Reformed Church, as they had been understood and practised until about the year 1811, the Synod steadily and rapidly advanced. Numerous Churches were organized, new Presbyteries were formed, and at the meeting of Synod in Chillicothe, October 21, 1839, it was deemed advisable to form a new Synod, to be styled **THE SECOND ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF THE WEST**. This second Synod held its first meeting at Hamilton, Ohio, in the following year, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. P. Monfort, from Psalms cxviii: 22. Rev. S. P. Magaw was chosen the first stated clerk.

On the 13th October, 1852, a third Synod was organized, to be called **THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF ILLINOIS**. Its first meeting was held at Oquawka, Illinois, and was opened with a sermon by Rev. D. Maedill, D.D., the oldest minister, from Col. iv: 17. Rev. William M. Graham was chosen the first moderator, and Rev. J. C. Porter clerk.

These several Synods were placed under the care of a General Synod, which was provided for in 1839. It was to be composed of delegates from the several Presbyteries; to be without any appellate power, except in cases of doctrine; and to have special charge of missions, home and foreign. Its first meeting was held in New Concord, Ohio, June 9, 1841, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. J. Claybaugh, from 2d Cor. ii: 14. It was called **THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH OF THE WEST**; and through the divine blessing upon its efforts, it has grown until now there are three Synods in its bounds, containing twenty-two Presbyteries, viz: twelve in the first Synod, six in the second, and four in the Synod of Illinois; 360 churches and congregations; 23,916 communicants; two theological seminaries; several colleges and

higher schools and academies; and three foreign missionary fields.

Second. The southern portion, composing the Synod of the Carolinas, was, early after its withdrawal from the General Synod, in 1821, formed into a Synod to be called THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF THE SOUTH. This Synod, while it has held the views of the South, generally, on the subject of slavery, has always had a strict adherence, in profession and practice, to the principles of the Associate Reformed Church, in her best days; and now embraces in its bounds eight Presbyteries, sixty-five ministers, and has an efficient college* and theological seminary under its care, at Due West, Abbeville District, South Carolina.

Third. The Synod of New York having never withdrawn from the General Synod, and not having acceded in any way to the act of union with the General Assembly, in 1822, occupied the ground, and claimed the rights, of the General Synod. Accordingly, its three Presbyteries—viz: New York, Washington, and Saratoga,—met in Synod at Newburgh, New York, September 13, 1822, was opened with a sermon by the Rev. James Scrimgeour, from Col. i: 28, and was constituted by him with prayer. Ten pastors and nearly as many ruling elders were present. Rev. James Mairs was chosen moderator, and Rev. R. Proudfit stated clerk. The Synod resolved, with entire unanimity, to hold on its course; took steps to secure the restoration of the library and funds that had been removed by the General Synod's act of union; and giving itself to its appropriate work, has continued its labors, until it now numbers six Presbyteries, forty-seven Churches, 7,368 communicants, a theological seminary, and an efficient band of missionary laborers in the foreign field.

These different Synods,—the General Synod of the West,

* Erskine College.

the Synod of the South, and the Synod of New York,—though thus thrown into an independent position by a variety of providential circumstances, have, nevertheless, adhered to the same standards; and while distance and other causes have made it be deemed expedient for the Synod of the South to continue in its separate condition, yet a union of those Synods that were more nearly together, was often an object of earnest and prayerful desire. At length, after a series of friendly communications, such a union was effected between the Synod of New York and the General Synod of the West, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, May 17, 1855, under the title of **THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH**. The basis of this union was also concise and simple, and is as follows :

1. The Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, together with the Government and Discipline of the Church, and the Directions for Public and Private Worship, as judicially ratified by the Associate Reformed Synod at Greencastle, May 31, 1799, shall be the constitution and standard of the United Church in all matters relating to doctrine, government, discipline and worship, with this exception, that the appellate powers of the General Synod shall be confined simply to doctrine.

2. That the institutions and property, real and personal, now or hereafter to be under the control of the respective Synods, whether the legal title is vested in them, or trustees, or individuals, shall so forever continue without any interference in any manner, by the General Synod or any other particular Synod.

In proposing these two items for the basis, the Synod of New York also said through Dr. McCarrell, the chairman of the committee on Organic Union : “ In order that our sister Synods of the West may understand our position on the subject of psalmody and communion, we hereby declare : 1. That this Synod does adhere to the doctrine and constitution on the singing of Psalms, and that the received version is exclusively used in all our Churches, and that our ministers, when preaching in Churches of other denominations, are not authorized to use anything but a version of a portion of the Book of Psalms; and

2. That Sessions determine when communion with other Churches, or members of other Churches, would be proper, and are not authorized to admit to the Lord's table any but such as would be received to full communion should they apply."

This united body entered upon its work under unusually favorable auspices. Its field of labor was large and inviting. Its Churches were in a peaceful and flourishing condition. Its system of operations, both in the home and foreign field, was well arranged, and every call for help to carry out its plans was liberally responded to by the body at large. And at the time of the consummation of the union with the Associate Church, in May last, it presented the pleasing spectacle of a harmonious and active Church, containing 4 Synods, 28 Presbyteries, 253 preachers of the everlasting gospel, 367 congregations, 14,787 families, 31,284 communicants, 3 theological seminaries, and 6 missionaries of the cross in the foreign field.

Such was the Associate Reformed Church. Her beginning was small, but her latter end greatly increased. Precious fruits has she borne—precious is and will her memory be. And joyful indeed as all hearts may now be in the mingling of her clear and fruitful stream with a sister one, from a common fountain head, to help swell together the river that makes glad the city of our God, yet it is and will be well to cherish fond recollections of a pleasing past, and happy anticipations of an honored and useful future under the divine blessing, and with the new name that God hath given them—THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

It is proper to notice, in this historical sketch, that the Associate Reformed Church has ever very deeply felt the importance of a thoroughly educated and well qualified ministry. For some time the Churches in this country were entirely dependent on the mother country for laborers in the Lord's vineyard, and even at the time of the formation of the Associate

Reformed Church, it is not known that a single minister of the uniting Churches had been educated out of Scotland or Ireland. But such a supply as could be obtained from thence, must of necessity always be inadequate and uncertain, and therefore the attention of good men was early directed to the good work of raising up from among themselves young men to preach the everlasting gospel. The means of doing this, however, were very varied and limited. Sometimes a young man whose heart was set upon entering the ministry, pursued a course of reading and study for it under the care of his own pastor. Sometimes the Presbytery or Synod appointed one of their own number to have charge of such in their bounds as desired theological instruction, and who would resort to him at his own house. And sometimes a minister would of his own accord open a school where all the various parts of study were pursued, until a young man would be prepared for licensure. Thus the early Presbyterian Church in this country had many of its young men prepared for the ministry by the Rev. William Tennent in a log building twenty feet square, which he himself erected for this purpose shortly after his settlement in Neshominy, Pennsylvania, in 1726, and which was long familiarly known as the "Log College." Thus, too, the Reformed Dutch Church had an able course of theological instruction given by the Rev. John H. Livingston, D.D., as early as almost the close of the Revolutionary war; and the Associate Church, also, from the year 1793, by that eminently able and faithful man, Dr. John Anderson, at Service Creek, Pennsylvania. In all these cases, however, the intention was simply to furnish an opportunity to the young men of their own Church to study. The course of study was very much such as the teacher himself thought best to prescribe—and his relation to the Church at large in this work was often rather that of a recognized, than of a formally appointed and inaugurated professor in the modern sense of the term.

Into the spirit of these things the Associate Reformed Church early entered, and at the meeting of Synod in 1796, an act was passed in reference to a Synodical Fund, one of whose objects, it was distinctly stated, was to "assist pious youth, who from poverty cannot comfortably and successfully pursue their studies, and the establishment of a professorship of theology for the instruction of such as design the holy ministry." Anxiously was the matter kept under consideration until the meeting in Philadelphia in 1801, when the whole subject was ably reported on by a committee consisting of Rev. Messrs. Alex. Dobbin, Robt. Kerr, and John Young, father of the late Rev. John C. Young, D.D., of Danville, Kentucky. This committee recommended the appointment of a minister to visit Great Britain as an agent of Synod, to secure ministerial help for the wide field calling for supply, and to seek all possible assistance in the work of erecting a theological seminary, and furnishing it with a suitable library. After the Synod's engaging in solemn prayer, the Rev. John M. Mason, D.D., was chosen by ballot for the purpose, and sailed accordingly for New York on the 29th of the following July. He was absent about fifteen months, raised £970 19s. 2d., or nearly \$5,000, the principal of which was expended in the purchase of books for the intended seminary library, and prevailed upon five young ministers of the gospel and one licentiate, to accompany him to the needy fields opened up for labor in his native land.

At the first General Synod, which was held in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, May 30, 1804, Dr. Mason was chosen Professor of Theology, and Rev. Messrs. R. Annan, J. McImsey, A. Proudfit, James Gray, and J. Laurie, the first Superintendents. New York was fixed upon as the proper place for the institution, and it was agreed it should be opened on the first Monday of November, 1805. Accordingly, on that day, this institution commenced its course, and during that first session, eight students attended, viz: John Lind, J. M. Matthews, George Stew-

art, George Buchanan, Wm. McMurray, James McChud, John H. Clarke, and Samuel Crothers—four from Pennsylvania, two from New York, and two from Kentucky. The course of study was to embrace four sessions of seven months each, and the Bible was to be the great text-book or subject of study.

Thus well organized, with systematic rules and all the facilities for a theological institution of a high public order, this seminary entered upon its course, and almost at once took a stand that gave promise of most important fruit to the Church and the world. Many of its first as well as later students became men of mark, and it was resorted to by young men of various evangelical Churches—while its eminently successful course incited largely to the establishment of the theological seminary at Andover, Massachusetts, in 1808, and the seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton, New Jersey, in 1812.

In 1809, Rev. Jas. M. Matthews, one of the first class of students, and the only one that survives still in a green old age, was elected Assistant Professor of Biblical Literature and Church History. This office he held until the year 1818, when he resigned. In 1821, also, Dr. Mason, after occupying the professor's chair with distinguished ability for sixteen years, and seeing himself greatly broken down with multiplied labors and unceasingly feeble health, was compelled to relinquish his place; and at length the institution which had been instrumental, in whole or in part, in sending ninety-six men into the holy ministry, was, from various causes, under a necessity of being suspended. It had done a great and good work, and many parts of the needy Church and field of the Lord Jesus Christ wept as its doors were closed.

The want of a suitable place to bring forward a ministry of its own training, was immediately and keenly felt in all portions of the Church; and therefore, in 1825, the Synod of the West resolved to establish a theological seminary in its own bounds. The city of Pittsburgh was fixed upon as its place, and the Rev.

Joseph Kerr, D.D., father of Prof. D. R. Kerr, D.D., and at the time pastor of the congregation of St. Clair, was chosen the first professor. Four years afterwards, and in the midst of great usefulness, this devoted servant of God departed this life. Somewhat informally, then, the Rev. Mungo Dick supplied the place for the two following years, and at the meeting of the Synod in Pittsburgh, Oct. 19, 1831, the Rev. John T. Pressly, D.D., of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, was chosen to the office of senior professor. That office he has filled with great acceptability and success till the present time, and the fruits of his labors are scattered widely over the length and breadth of his own and foreign lands, doing good service in the cause of Christ and of his truth. Associated with him in the charge of the institution, are the Rev. A. D. Clarke, D.D., who was elected to the Professorship of Biblical Literature and Criticism in 1847, and Rev. D. R. Kerr, D.D., who was called to the chair of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in 1851. This seminary has a good building, a library of about 1500 volumes of carefully selected and valuable books, 33 students in attendance during the last session, and an alumni list of about 275, most of whom are engaged in faithfully preaching the gospel of the grace of God.

Not less earnest have the other portions of the Associate Reformed Church been in instituting and sustaining the means of a sound theological training. At its meeting in Argyle, New York, in 1829, the Synod of New York resolved, after much prayerful deliberation, to revive the seminary that had been suspended in New York in 1821. Accordingly, Rev. Messrs. Joseph McCarrell, D.D., of Newburgh, New York, was chosen the first professor, Rev. Messrs. John McImsey, D.D., Alex. Proudfit, D.D., Robt. Forrest, and D. C. McLaren, Superintendents, and its Sessions were opened in Newburgh on the first Monday of the following October. It began its course under promising auspices—has done much to supply the Church of

God with an able and faithful ministry, and has devoted men from its midst laboring for Christ, not only in this country, but also in Syria, Egypt, and Northern India. In 1839, a new and noble edifice was completed for the occupancy of this institution, and in 1852, Rev. John Forsyth, D.D., was called from the College of New Jersey to the Professorship of Biblical Criticisms, Ecclesiastical History and Church Government. The seminary has also come into possession of the valuable library which Dr. Mason procured in Europe, and which had been removed to Princeton, and now numbers nearly 4,000 volumes.

After much deliberation, and with a view of more efficiently cultivating the wide field entrusted to its care, the Synod of the West resolved at its meeting in Chillicothe, Ohio, October 19, 1839, to form a second Synod of the West, and establish a theological seminary in its bounds. Rev. Joseph Claybaugh, D.D., of Chillicothe, was chosen Professor of Theology, and Rev. S. W. McCracken, Professor of Hebrew; and Oxford, Ohio, was fixed upon as its location. Shortly afterwards its sessions opened with ten students, and from that time this seminary has steadily and usefully pursued its course. Dr. Claybaugh proved himself an able teacher, but in the midst of his labors, and full of promise, he died September 9, 1855. The institution, however, was not given up for a moment. Different brethren were called in to fill a temporary place, and at length, with very great unanimity, Rev. Alexander Young, of St. Clairsville, Ohio, was elected professor in place of the lamented Claybaugh. He entered at once upon its duties, and is discharging them well. In the autumn of 1857, negotiations were set on foot between the Synod of Illinois and the second Synod of the West, in reference to a removal of the seminary from Oxford to Monmouth, Illinois, and after much deliberation the arrangement was made. The next session, therefore, will open in that new and enterprising place, on or about the first Monday of September, and much good may be hoped from its future course.

The Associate Reformed Synod of the South also has a very efficient theological seminary at Due West, South Carolina. It has already furnished a large number of the Churches in the bounds of the Synod with pastors, and gives promise of steadily increasing the number. It is well located, has a good corps of professors, and enjoys the confidence of the Church at large.

ACTS OF THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.

While the Associate Reformed Church was formed on strictly union principles, and has ever aimed at securing and preserving the visible unity of the body of Christ, yet as a Church, she has not been silent on the great practical questions of the day. On the contrary, so far as these questions have been in any way peculiar to her profession, her Synods have given forth Acts and Testimonies which have been positive, distinct and clear. This historical sketch would be imperfect, if we did not notice the fact.

1. On the subject of **PSALMODY**, it was declared in the Standards issued at Greencastle in 1799, to be "the will of God, that the sacred songs contained in the Book of Psalms be sung in his worship, both public and private, to the end of the world; and the rich variety and perfect purity of their matter, the blessing of God upon them in every age, and the edification of the Church thence arising, set the propriety of singing them in a convincing light; nor shall any composures merely human, be sung in any of the Associate Reformed Churches." Such was the original law of the Church; and, though under the pressure of peculiar circumstances, a resolution was passed by the General Synod, at its meeting in New York in 1816, allowing congregations to use the Psalms prepared by the Reformed Dutch Church, yet this was against the sentiment and practice of the great body of the Church in all its parts, and the law of the Standards was never repealed. Very few, and that only for a

very short time, availed themselves of the privilege allowed, and after mature deliberation and discussion on the whole subject, running over several years, the Synod of New York, at its meeting in Argyle, New York, June 20, 1842, unanimously adopted the following paper, moved by Rev. Messrs. H. Connelly and R. H. Wallace :

WHEREAS, The subject of Psalmody has been under the consideration of this Synod for several years past. and whereas, fears have been entertained in some parts of the Church, that the Synod had in contemplation to lay aside a Scripture Psalmody, in singing the praises of God in his worship, the Synod consider it their duty to declare that it neither has been, nor is it now, their wish or intention to lay aside the version now in use in singing the praise of God in his worship ; therefore,

Resolved, That the version of the Book of Psalms now in use amongst us, be exclusively used in singing the praise of God, in his public and private worship, in all the congregations under the care of Synod.

Resolved, That when our ministers preach in other Churches, they be, and are hereby directed, to adhere closely to the principle of a Scripture Psalmody, and in no case whatever to sing composures merely human.

Resolved, That for the full understanding of the preceding resolution, we hereby adopt the following minute passed by the Associate Reformed Synod, in 1802 : “ Composures merely human, in article 2, section 3, chapter 3, of Public Worship, cannot possibly refer, as is manifest from the nature of the subject, to any production which contains only the doctrines of men. Under that expression are included all those religious poems, however pious and sound in themselves, of which, though the subject be Scriptural, yet the structure and management are the work of human genius, and which aim at anything more than adapting the Psalms given in the Bible by the in-piration of God. to the Christian worship, by a version as close as the laws of versification will admit. The same distinction is observed in this case which obtains between a *prose translation* of the Scripture and *exposition* or *discourses* upon them ; the latter are by all allowed to be human composures, while they account the former the Word of God ; and by this principle must the clause be interpreted in the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church.”

This act is understood to express the sentiments of the great body of the Church, and became, so far as Psalmody was con-

cerned, the basis of the union between the Synod of New York and the General Synod of the West, in May, 1855.

On this subject the Associate Reformed Church has ever felt a deep interest, not only because the Book of Psalms is clearly God's gift for his Church's use in divine praise, but also because such a Psalmody is in every sense unsectarian, and tends to the visible and real unity of the Church of God. From an earnest desire also to make this part of her service more acceptable for its purpose, the Church has always been in favor of an improved version of the Book of Psalms. As early as the year 1810, an able committee was appointed to prepare a new version, and this work has been in progress, with various degrees of success, down to the present day.

2. The subject of COMMUNION has also been distinctly under the consideration of this Church, and action has been taken from time to time, as circumstances seemed to demand. Bringing into its organization the principle and practice on this subject that had characterized the bodies from which it sprung, the Associate Reformed Church had no particular occasion to direct attention to it during all its earlier history. In the year 1810, however, one portion of the Church having, from peculiar circumstances in which it was placed, departed from the practice that universally prevailed, by allowing, on certain occasions, intercommunion with another body, inquiry began to be made after the law and the testimony on the whole question. And after considerable discussion, the General Synod, at its meeting in Philadelphia, May 15, 1811, passed nearly unanimously, the following, which had been moved by Rev. E. Dickey, of the Synod of Pennsylvania, and Rev. Alex. Porter, of the Synod of the Carolinas, and afterwards of the Synod of the West:

WHEREAS, A diversity of judgment and practice has been found to exist among the ministers and members of this Church, relative to the application of the doctrine of the Confession of Faith concerning the Communion of Saints; and whereas, the course of procedure in this matter

must depend in a great measure upon circumstances which cannot be provided for by any general rule ; therefore,

Resolved, That the judicatories, ministers and members of this Church, be, and they are hereby entreated and required, to exercise mutual forbearance in the premises, and the use of their discretion to observe mutual tenderness and brotherly love, studying to avoid whatever may be contrary thereto ; and giving special heed to the preservation of sound and efficient discipline.

While, however, such were the generally received views of the body in theory on this subject, the course of particular individuals and Churches gave ground for serious apprehension and disquietude in many minds. Presbyteries sent to the Synod solemn remonstrances against any thing like promiscuous communion in sealing ordinances ; congregations, too, presented their complaints ; but such remonstrances and complaints, so far as they bore on particular individuals or sections of the Church, were resisted or evaded ; and these things, together with the publication of a work on Catholic Communion, by Dr. Mason, and the personal feelings that were excited by the agitation of years, did much to hasten on the dissolution of the General Synod, the disbanding of the theological seminary, and the throwing of the different Synods into separate and independent bodies.

These Synods, however, did not hesitate to take proper action. Almost immediately after their separate organization, the Synods of the South and West clearly defined their position, and after long continued and earnest deliberation, the Synod of New York, at its meeting in Salem, New York, August, 1838, adopted the following resolutions :

Resolved, That this Synod disapproves of the principle and practice of open communion, or that scheme of communion which would obligate or allow the ministers or members of the Associate Reformed Church to unite in sacramental communion with other Churches, and the ministers and members of other Churches to unite in communion with ours, on the ground merely of a general or partial agreement of opinion respecting

the doctrines set forth in our Confession of Faith; and the Synod hereby enjoins all the ministers to conform to the constitutional doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church.

Resolved, That occasional communion may be granted to members of other Churches only in extraordinary cases, on application made to the respective Sessions where such cases may occur, and on the same terms in which applicants are received into stated communion.

This action has never been repealed or changed, and among other things was accepted by the General Synod of the West as the basis of that union between the two Synods in 1855, by which the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church was reörganized. The Associate Reformed Church has thus, in its separate Synods and in its highest Judicatories, enacted or received the law which distinctly declares that a restricted communion is the law of the Church, and that the whole question of admission to the Lord's table is one to be determined by the office bearers of Christ's House, in subordination to the standards of the Church.

3. In its different sections, this Church has had its attention directed also to the subject of **SECRET ASSOCIATIONS**. These associations have been known to exist in the country at large in a great variety of forms and names, and under an apprehension of their being opposed to the simplicity and purity of the gospel, and of direct or incidental evils flowing from them, action has been taken in reference to them at different times. At its meeting in Galway, New York, September 5, 1828, the Synod of New York had a communication laid before it from one of the Presbyteries, asking advice as to the following questions, received from some of the Sessions under its care, viz: "Whether any of the principles, usages or ceremonies of Free Masonry, are contrary to the doctrine that is according to godliness as exhibited in the Standards of the Associate Reformed Church." This communication was referred to a committee, who shortly afterwards reported the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, As the judgment of this Synod, that the multiplication and the nature of the oaths administered in the Masonic Lodges are unwarranted in the Word of God, and demoralizing in their tendency; and that our Church members be and hereby are enjoined not to connect themselves with the said society, and any who may have been connected are affectionately recommended to withdraw from any further connection with the institution.

Resolved, That a committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Robert Proudfit, James Mairs and Joseph McCarrell, be appointed to prepare a report upon the subject of Masonry, to be presented to this Synod at its next meeting.

This report was adopted. The next year the committee was continued, and Rev. D. C. McLaren was added to it. At the following meeting in Newburgh, September 3, 1830, this committee presented an able report, concluding with the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted, and have been the law of the Synod since on this subject:

Resolved, That this Synod will and hereby do express their decided disapprobation of the principles and usages of Free Masonry, as far as known, and warn their people solemnly and affectionately against all connection with the institution.

Resolved, That it be and hereby is enjoined upon Church Sessions under the inspection of this Synod, to adopt the most prudent and effective measures to remove the contamination from our Churches.

At its meeting in Steubenville, Ohio, in October, 1829, the Synod of the West also declared its belief that the practice of Free Masonry is contrary to the Standards of the Associate Reformed Church, and ascertaining that the several ministers composing the Synod were in the practice of debarring from sealing ordinances those who take unlawful oaths, deemed no further action called for at that time. In 1846, however, the subject of secret societies in a more general form, came before the General Synod at its meeting in Pittsburgh, when the following action was taken:

1. WHEREAS, The society of Odd Fellows have been and still are making special efforts to revive and secure popular favor to the principle of

secret associations, and especially to give the appearance of morality and religion, by the names of ministers of the gospel; and whereas, we regard the principle itself as inconsistent with the character of true Christianity, and highly dangerous to our civil institutions; therefore,

Resolved, That this Synod do hereby express its disapprobation of said society, and warn our people that persistence in a connection with it must subject such as do so to the discipline of the Church.

2. WHEREAS, The Order of the Sons of Temperance, though having a more simple object, and free from oaths, is nevertheless organized on the principle of secret associations, thereby sanctioning it; therefore,

Resolved, That in the judgment of this Synod it is the duty of professing Christians to stand aloof from its entanglements, and not to give it their sanction or encouragement.

The Synod of the South, it is understood, has taken substantially the same action with the above Synods on this subject.

4. Nor has the Associate Reformed Church been silent on the subject of SLAVERY. At an early period in its history, anxious inquiry was made as to the course that should be pursued in regard to this system; and extending, as the body then did, into slaveholding territories, it was a practical question of grave moment. At different meetings of the General Synod the subject was discussed, and committees were appointed to prepare statements of the Synod's views, but from various causes, nothing was effectually done during the existence of that body.

At the meeting, however, of the Synod of the West at Chillicothe, Ohio, May, 1826, the subject came formally up in a memorial from the congregation of Hopewell, in the first Presbytery of Ohio, and a series of discussions and acts were entered upon which resulted in the adoption, at the meeting in Chillicothe again in 1830, of the following resolutions, which, with some modifications and explanations that we shall append in foot notes, contains the final action of that portion of the Church:

1. *Resolved*, That the religion of Jesus Christ requires that involuntary slavery should be removed from the Church as soon as an opportunity in

the providence of God is offered to slave-owners for the liberation of their slaves.

2. *Resolved*, That when there are no regulations of the State to prohibit it ; when provision can be made for the support of the freedmen ; when they can be placed in circumstances to support the rank, enjoy the rights, and discharge the duties of freemen, it shall be considered that such an opportunity is afforded in the providence of God.*

3. *Resolved*, That the Synod will, as it hereby does, recommend it to all its members to aid in placing the slaves which are within the jurisdiction of this Synod, in the possession of their rights as freemen ; and that it be recommended to them especially to take up annual collections to aid the funds of the American Society for colonizing the free people of color in the United States.†

4. *Resolved*, That the practice of buying or selling slaves for gain, by any member of this Church, be disapproved ; and that slave-owners under the jurisdiction of this Synod, be, as they hereby are, forbidden all aggravations of the evils of slavery, by violating the ties of nature, the separation of husband and wife, parents and children, or by cruel or unkind treatment ; and that they shall not only treat them well, but also instruct them in useful knowledge and the principles of the Christian religion, and in all respects treat them as enjoined upon masters towards their servants by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Two years afterwards, in 1832, the Synod issued a Letter of Warning, or an Occasional Testimony, in which these resolutions were quoted, and the following extracts will show in what sense they were intended and understood as the law of the

* At the meeting in 1838, the Synod passed the following in reference to this resolution :

Resolved, That an opportunity in the providence of God shall be considered as afforded when the master can emancipate his slave, and place him in circumstances where he shall not be liable to be immediately sold into bondage.

† In consequence of a memorial from Robinson Run congregation, the Synod, at its meeting in 1839, adopted the following in regard to this resolution :

As there are two conflicting Societies operating in the community—the Colonization and the Anti-Slavery Societies—and as this Synod has recommended the former to the patronage of the Churches under its care ; and as it is desirable the Synod should keep clear of this excitement, and as the Church should not be involved by the operation of bodies over which it has no control ; therefore,

Resolved, That this Synod withdraws the recommendation formerly given to the Colonization Society.

Church: "Now, brethren, it is expected that the foregoing resolutions will not be as a dead letter, but be respected and reduced to practice. It is expected that Sessions and Presbyteries will see them enforced. It is expected that slave-owners in the Church will make conscience of seeking and improving opportunities, and the very first which offer, of liberating their slaves. It is expected that in the meantime they will give satisfactory evidence to their respective Sessions that they do consider slavery a moral evil, that they do truly desire to get rid of it as soon as they can, and that it is their intention to embrace the first opportunity which God in his providence shall give them for so doing. And it is expected of Sessions that they will require this of slave-owning church members or applicants," etc.

These acts of the Synod of the West remain unchanged. They were carried into the General Synod of the West, were recognized in the union with the Synod of New York, and are strikingly similar to the Testimony on this subject in the basis of union with the Associate Church in May last.

The Synod of New York has often also had this subject under consideration. Its last action was at Broadalbin, New York, June 24, 1851, when a report by Rev. R. Proudfit, D.D., was adopted, concluding with a solemn protest against any insinuation that this Synod is a pro-slavery Synod.

5. On the subject of COVENANTING, the Associate Reformed Church has never said very much. Perhaps, however, about as much has been done in regard to it as in any of the sister Churches in this country. In the first constitution, which has never been formally repealed, "The ministers and elders met in Synod" declare "that they have an affectionate remembrance of the National Covenant of Scotland, and of the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England and Ireland, as well intended engagements to support the cause of civil and religious liberty,

and hold themselves bound by the divine authority to practice all the moral duties therein contained, according to their circumstances, and that public and explicit covenanting with God is a moral duty under the gospel dispensation, to which they are resolved to attend as He shall be pleased to direct."

Like those of their sister Churches in this country generally, the members of the Associate Reformed Church have never engaged in formal public covenanting, other than that of a personal devoting of themselves to God, and a taking of Him to be their God, in the ordinances of His house. But the rightfulness and the duty of the act when occasion calls for it, is a principle never denied in the Standards of the Associate Reformed Church.

IV.—HISTORY OF THE CONVENTIONS OF REFORMED CHURCHES.

For more than half a century there have existed, in these United States, three distinct ecclesiastical organizations—the Associate Reformed, the Associate, and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches. These Churches claimed as their common parent, the Church of Scotland, and have always been, substantially, one in doctrine, worship, and church government. The members composing these different Churches were intermingled all over the country, and in their divided condition their congregations were so small as to be unable, in many instances, to support a pastor; and the consequence has been, that, in many portions of our country, there has been experienced a comparative famine, not of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord.

To remedy this evil, and, if possible, to bring these Churches into a closer relation, a call for a Convention of the Reformed

Churches, to confer on the subject of union, was issued. In conformity with this call, a Convention assembled in the city of Pittsburgh on the 17th October, 1838, composed of delegates from the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, the Associate Reformed Synod of New York, (which then existed as separate, independent Synods,) and the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. The delegates in attendance on this occasion were, of the Associate Reformed Synod of the West: Rev. John T. Pressly, D.D., Rev. Joseph R. Kerr, and Rev. William Wallace. Of the Associate Reformed Synod of New York: Rev. John McJimpsey, D.D., Rev. Donald McLaren, and William McKee, Ruling Elder. Of the Reformed Presbyterian Church: Rev. John Black, D.D., Rev. William Wilson, and Daniel McMillen, Ruling Elder. The Convention was organized by appointing Rev. John T. Pressly President, and Wm. Wilson Secretary.

The principal subject which occupied the attention of the Convention, at its first session, was, "What course should be pursued by these Churches, while yet in a divided state, to promote a nearer approximation preparatory to organic union?" After due deliberation and a free interchange of views, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, As the judgment of this Convention, that the ministers of the Churches here represented may interchange pulpits; and it is recommended to both ministers and people to unite, as often as opportunity offers, in meetings for prayer and other religious exercises.

That there might be no misapprehension in the public mind in relation to the views and designs of the Convention, the following general rules were adopted for its government:

1. There shall be no abandonment, by this Convention, of any principle sanctioned by the word of God, and recognized in the scriptural attainments of the Reformation, whether in doctrine, worship, or order.
2. No principle shall be maintained that is not plainly founded upon, and in accordance with, the word of God.

3. Strict care shall be taken lest the measures adopted should furnish valid reasons for an increase of schisms and factions in the Church of God, instead of diminishing their number, or altogether destroying their existence, in their ultimate operation.

4. The investigations and discussions, whether conducted in an oral or written form, shall be pursued with candor and Christian courtesy, and in the fraternal spirit which should distinguish the followers of Christ.

5. The decisions which may be made shall all be submitted, in overture, before our respective Supreme Judicatories, and shall not be considered obligatory either upon them or their representatives in this Convention, until they are ratified by them.

After spending several days very pleasantly in fraternal conference, and in devotional exercises, and after preparing an address to the Christian public on the subject of the union of the Churches, and extending an invitation to all those Churches which are agreed in adhering to a Scripture Psalmody to meet in a future assembly, the Convention adjourned to meet in the city of Philadelphia in September of next year.

In the second Convention, which was held in the city of Philadelphia, 29th September, 1839, the same Churches were represented as in the first. On this occasion there was a full and free interchange of views on various subjects on which it had been supposed that there existed some diversity of opinion, which might present some difficulty in the way of union, such as Psalmody, Communion, Slavery, Testimony bearing and Covenanting; from which it appeared, to the agreeable surprise of some of the brethren, that there existed a remarkable degree of harmony.

The question which chiefly occupied the attention of the Convention at this time, was, "What are the precise principles which are at once indispensable and sufficient as the basis upon which the whole Church of God ought to maintain organical, visible unity?" Without giving any distinct deliverance on this subject, at this time, the Convention thought proper to extend another invitation to some sister Churches, which had not

hitherto met with us, in the hope that they might be induced to aid us in our efforts to heal the divisions of Zion.

But when the Convention assembled for the third time, in May, 1841, we were sorry to find that the invitation had not accomplished the desired end. However, we persevered, and to our gratification we found that when the fourth Convention assembled in the city of Philadelphia, in May, 1842, in addition to the Churches formerly represented, there were present delegates from the Associate Presbyterian Church. In consequence of this accession to our delegation, it became necessary, to some extent, to retrace the ground over which we had already passed. And for the purpose of ascertaining to what extent there existed an agreement in sentiment among the different Churches represented, sundry resolutions were introduced for the consideration of the Convention. And as the result, the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

Resolved, That having discussed the more prominent subjects upon which a diversity of sentiment was apprehended to exist, it appears there is such a degree of unanimity on these subjects that there is encouragement for the Convention to take further measures towards a visible ecclesiastical union.

Between the Churches represented, there had existed a practical difference in relation to two subjects, on which it seemed necessary that there should be a distinct understanding before any further progress could be made. In adopting the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Associate Reformed Church had so modified those portions which define the powers of the civil magistrate *circa sacra*, as to make them express clearly the doctrine which we hold in common. Our sister Churches retained the Confession unaltered, but explained in their Testimony the sense in which they received it.

The Associate Reformed Church received the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, Presbyterian form of Church Government, and Directory for Worship, as her *fixed Testimony*, and at the same time pledged herself to emit occasional Testimonies in

defense of the truth and in opposition to error, as circumstances might require. Our sister Churches received, in addition to the Confession of Faith, a Judicial Testimony. The difference which existed did not involve principle. With regard to the power of the civil magistrate *circa sacra*, the same doctrine was held in common. With regard to the obligation resting upon the Church, in her official capacity, to bear testimony in defense of the truth and in opposition to error, all were agreed. The point of difference had reference merely to the preferable mode of performing the duty. Where the surrender of no principle was demanded, but the yielding of a mere preference as to the mode of carrying out a principle, it became necessary that there should be a compromise. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Convention the following year, the subject of the form of a basis of union was taken into consideration. And as the result of a free interchange of views, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That in the judgment of this Convention, a union between the bodies here represented can be effected only by an alteration of the Westminster Confession of Faith, in the 20th, 23d and 31st chapters, and the adoption of a Judicial Testimony against prevailing and dangerous errors of the present time; and therefore that these matters be referred to the Supreme Judicatories of our respective denominations.

A committee was then appointed to prepare a basis of union formed in accordance with this resolution, to be submitted to the Convention at its next meeting.

On the 21st May, 1845, the Convention of Reformed Churches met in the city of Philadelphia for the seventh time, when the committee previously appointed presented their report. The result was the adoption of a Confession and Testimony by the Convention, as a basis of union. This basis comprehended the Westminster Confession of Faith, those chapters which define the powers of the civil magistrate being so altered as to express clearly the faith held in common by these Churches, together with a Testimony against prevailing errors. To each chapter of

the Confession was appended a numerous list of errors against which a Testimony was borne.

This basis, when first submitted to the Supreme Judicatories of the respective Churches, was received with a degree of favor. But after more mature consideration it seemed to meet with less favor than at first, and finally did not prove entirely acceptable to either of the parties. And when the Convention met for the eighth time, in the following year, discouragement seemed to prevail; no progress was made, and after adopting the following resolution, the Convention adjourned sine die:

Resolved, That this Convention finds nothing more that it can do at present in furtherance of the object of its appointment.

When the result of the deliberations of this Convention was made known, such was the effect upon the public mind, that a meeting of the people of the three Churches represented was called for prayer and conference, when the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That we will not relinquish our prayers and our efforts in behalf of the unity of the Church, hoping our beloved pastors will lead and encourage us in the work, and that the Chief Shepherd will approve and bless.

The people could not appreciate those metaphysical difficulties which lay in the way of accomplishing the desired end; their hearts yearned for union, and they could not think of abandoning the object of their prayers and of their fondly cherished hopes.

The General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church, which met immediately after the adjournment of the Convention, after hearing the report of her delegates, was unwilling to relinquish her efforts to accomplish the object for which she had long labored and prayed. Accordingly a resolution was adopted appointing delegates to attend a future Convention, should the sister Churches, or either of them, concur in the measure, and authorizing them to act in any emergency as the representa-

tives of the Synod in the prosecution of efforts with reference to a union of the Churches.

At this time the Reformed Presbyterian Church withdrew, and no longer coöperated in efforts to effect a union of the Churches. And though no Convention was called, the hope of union between the Associate Reformed and Associate Churches was never abandoned, nor were efforts with a view to its accomplishment entirely relinquished. Various communications passed between the Supreme Judicatories of these Churches, and at different times meetings were held for conference and for devotional exercises. The result was, the two bodies became better acquainted with each other, their hearts were drawn more closely together, and the desire for union, both among the ministry and the people, became stronger and stronger.

At length a basis, framed in accordance with the general principles which had been approved by our Supreme Judicatories respectively, was prepared by a committee, which being presented to our Synods, was by them transmitted in overture to the Presbyteries. After receiving the reports of the Presbyteries, at the annual meeting of our Supreme Judicatories, the basis was adopted by them both, with the understanding that the formal consummation of the union should take place at the time of our annual meeting in 1858.

As the time approached when the long desired union was to be consummated, the anxiety of those who had long labored and prayed for that consummation became more and more intense. It was not only our heart's desire to see the union effected, but to see it accomplished in such a way as to secure harmony and unanimity among brethren. Deeply impressed with the conviction that without the blessing and concurrence of heaven, all our efforts must be in vain, a Convention was called to assemble in the city of Xenia, Ohio, for the purpose of seeking by united prayer the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that the Churches might be prepared to come together in the bonds of

fraternal love. Here brethren met and united most pleasantly in prayer and supplication, in singing the songs of Zion, and in conferring together with reference to the revival of true godliness in our own souls. The effect of this Convention was most happy. God was manifestly present, and the hearts of brethren were drawn so closely together in the bonds of fraternal love, that from that time forth it was manifest that no human power could prevent the union.

The Convention, after spending a few days in most delightful Christian fellowship, adjourned to meet in the city of Allegheny, immediately previous to the time appointed for the assembling of our respective Synods. A large number of the brethren of both Churches accordingly met, and spent several days in conference and in devotional exercises. Under these circumstances the two Synods met, and after due deliberation the union was consummated in conformity with the arrangements of a joint committee of the respective Synods.

Thus, after anxious solicitude, and fervent prayers and earnest efforts persevered in for more than twenty years, the hearts of those who love the peace of Zion were made glad by seeing brethren who were substantially one in the faith, but who had long been ecclesiastically separated, brought together in the bonds of Christian love, under one banner, and dwelling together in unity. Then did we appropriately sing:

When Zion's bondage God turn'd back,
As men that dreamed were we;
Then filled with laughter was our mouth,
Our tongue with melody.
They, 'mong the heathen said, The Lord
Great things for them hath wrought.
The Lord hath done great things for us,
Whence joy to us is brought.

Sabbath Schools and congregations in this country. The congregation consists of fifteen persons, five being added to the eleven of whom it originally consisted, one of these five having since died. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, this mission has thus far enjoyed the smiles of the great Head of the Church, and presents very encouraging prospects of future usefulness.

XIV.—MISSIONS OF THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.

Though slow in engaging as a denomination in the work of Foreign Missions, the Associate Reformed Church has always felt a deep interest in this cause. As early as the year 1796, a large portion of this Church associated themselves with the Presbyterian, the Reformed Dutch Churches, and others, in organizing the New York Missionary Society, with special reference to the evangelization of the American Indians. And for the formation of the "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," in 1810, many of the members of this Church were liberal and active coöperators with it in spreading the gospel among the heathen.

It was not however till the year 1835, that any court of the Associate Reformed Church formally entered upon this work. In that year the Synod of New York resolved to commence missionary operations in northern India, and on the 16th of November the Rev. James McEwen, of the Presbytery of New York, set sail with his wife in the ship Charles Warren, from Philadelphia, for that field. In a few years, however, his health failed and the part which the Associate Reformed Church had in the work was given up. This was a trial, and was soon followed with petitions from various portions of the Synod for a renewal of the work.

In 1844, the General Synod of the West resolved, after much deliberation, to undertake a mission to Syria, a country endeared by many tender associations and containing a population of about 2,000,000 of people. In the autumn of that year accordingly Rev. James Banel, of the First Presbytery of Ohio, and Dr. J. G. Paulding, a physician, were sent out with discretionary power as to the choice of their particular station. They fixed upon Damascus, a city containing about 120,000 inhabitants, of whom from 5,000 to 10,000 were descendants of Abraham; and they began their work with reference "to the Jew first and the Gentile also." Of the founding of this mission, and the departure of these brethren to it, the *Jewish Chronicle* of that year says: "It is with no ordinary degree of satisfaction that we record this most interesting fact. To the Associate Reformed Church belongs the honor of being the first body of Christians in the United States—and as yet the only body—that has sent forth these messengers of love to the 'lost sheep of the house of Israel.' It is an honor of which any Church might well be—not proud, but thankful."

This mission increased in interest, and on the 12th of December, 1850, Rev. Gulion Lansing, of the Presbytery of New York, and Rev. James A. Frazer, of the Presbytery of Michigan, sailed with their wives, in the bark *Utah*, from Boston for the same field. Since that time the mission has been further reinforced by the additions of Miss Sarah B. Dales, who sailed from Philadelphia September 30, 1854, to engage in the work of teaching, with special reference to Jewish females, and by Rev. John Crawford, of the Presbytery of Washington, who embarked with his wife, at New York, October 16, 1857. Dr. Alexander Hattie also went out at the same time as a physician of the mission, Dr. Paulding having felt it his duty to return to this country with his family in 1856.

In 1853, the attention of the missionary brethren having

been specially directed to Egypt, the Rev. James Barnel was detached from the mission in Damascus to establish one in Cairo. This city is the capital of Egypt. Including the suburbs of Boolak and Old Cairo, it has a population estimated at 250,000, comprising about 125,000 Mohammedans, 60,000 Copts, 3,000 to 4,000 Jews, and numerous foreigners. In this important field, Mr. Barnel was joined by the Rev. Thomas McCague, of the Presbytery of Chillicothe, who together with his wife sailed from Philadelphia Sept. 30, 1854.

In the autumn of 1857, Rev. Mr. Lansing, who had been compelled by ill health to leave the Syrian field, entered upon missionary labors under encouraging auspices in Alexandria, Egypt. This city is the great emporium of Egypt, and is one of the most important stations on the overland route to India. It lies on the Mediterranean Sea, 112 miles north-west of Cairo, with which it is now connected by railroad. It contains a population of from 80,000 to 100,000, and from its position must always be a city of wide-spread influence.

In these several missions, part of the labor of which is carried on in connection with a noble band of men from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Associate Reformed Church has a well organized Church, and an efficient school for boys and one for girls, in Damascus, preaching and schools in Nebk and Deir A'tega, Syrian villages not far distant, and preaching and schools also in Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt. The language chiefly used is the Arabic, and is spoken by upwards of 6,000,000 of people. The Bible, the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and Brown's Catechism for Children, translated into Arabic, are used in the schools and freely circulated among the people. The annual expense of these missions is nearly \$6,000.

OREGON MISSION.

Very soon after the organization of Oregon Territory many families from the different Reformed Churches of the States sought homes in that new and promising land upon the shores of the Pacific. The fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, and the abundance of land at government prices, induced many to emigrate thither. They soon found, however, that there was one thing which they lacked, and for which all possible advantages of soil and climate could never compensate, namely, the preaching of the gospel. Petitions, therefore, were sent back to the Associate and the Associate Reformed Churches in the States, from which they had chiefly emigrated, praying for the word of life and the living ministry.

In answer to these earnest calls from the shepherdless flock in this distant land, the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church, in 1847, appointed Rev. Wilson Blain a missionary to that interesting field. Mr. Blain accepted the appointment, and has ever since been laboring with untiring zeal in the service of his Master.

In the year 1850, Rev. Stephen D. Gager was ordained by the Presbytery of Mansfield, and shortly after dismissed by certificate to join Rev. Wilson Blain as a missionary in Oregon. He still continues to labor in that field.

The same year the subject of a mission to Oregon was brought before the Associate Synod of North America. Rev. James P. Miller and Rev. Samuel G. Ironie were appointed as missionaries. These brethren sailed from New York in 1851, and having arrived safely, entered upon the work to which they had been called. Previous to this time Rev. T. Simpson Kendall had emigrated with a company from Illinois, and after spending some time in California, located permanently in Oregon, and engaged with renewed consecration in the great work of the gospel ministry.

In 1852, Rev. David Thompson, of the Associate Church, set out with his family, by the overland route, for the same country. After a long and sad journey, having buried his wife at the Platte River, he arrived with his children, and engaged in the work to which he had consecrated himself. Although Rev. Messrs. Kendall and Thompson were not sent out nor supported by the Synod, yet they reinforced the mission which had been established and proved important auxiliaries in that wide and destitute field.

In 1852, Rev. James Worth, of the Associate Reformed Church, removed with a portion of his congregation, to the same country. The mission was farther reinforced the same year by Rev. Jeremiah Dick, of the Associate Reformed Church.

These, so far as we can learn, are all the brethren that have gone out from the Reformed Churches to Oregon; and all these brethren, we believe, still survive and are actively engaged in the service of their Master, with the exception of Rev. James P. Miller, who perished in a steamboat explosion a few years after he entered the Territory. Truly God's way is often in the sea and his paths in the great waters.

In accordance with the recommendation of the General Synod, Messrs. Blain, Gager, Worth and Dick organized in 1852, the Presbytery of Oregon. About the same time a correspondence was opened between these brethren from sister Churches in the States with reference to organic union. Far from their former brethren, and surrounded upon all hands by the enemies of truth, they felt that it was impossible to maintain separate organizations. Interest, duty and affection all demanded that they should march forth under one banner. Accordingly, in 1852, these brethren came together under the title of the United Presbyterian Church of Oregon. This act was ratified by the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church in 1853.

With regard to the present condition of the Church in Oregon we can say nothing. Doubtless they have both lights and

shadows, as in the other portions of the Church. Few and far away, they should be remembered in our prayers. We hope ere long to hail them as brethren under our common banner.

XV.—THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT NEWBURGH.

The first step towards the founding of a Theological Seminary, was taken by the Associate Reformed Church in 1796. In this year, the Synod passed an act to establish a Synodical Fund, the object of which was to support a Professor of Theology, and to assist pious youth having the ministry in view. The plan is fully explained in a letter to the members of the Associate Reformed Church, which, though published anonymously, was written by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) J. M. Mason of New York. To show the vast importance of the scheme, the author of the letter observes :

“1. As teaching is not the talent of every man, so, directing the studies and forming the minds of youth for the duties of the pulpit, is not the talent of every minister. This requires a peculiar turn. Many excellent preachers want the qualification of a theological professor.

“2. To natural aptitude to teach, must be added a spirit of inquiry more accurate and various than belongs to the ordinary habits of ministerial life.

“Whoever expects to fulfill, in all its parts, the duty of a teacher of divinity, must be devoted to it.

“4. Most ministers do not possess the literary means indispensable to the office. A selection of books competent to the usual course of sermons, will not suffice a professor of theology.