

THE

Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter.

VOL. XXX.

JANUARY, 1892.

No. 1.

ORIGINAL.

SALUTATORY.

With this issue we commence a new volume. The last year was one of the most trying in the history of our church in this land. We endeavored to do our duty as God gave us light. The appearances indicate that our troubles are not over. Next Synod may be as stormy as was the last. The church needs to thoroughly understand the character of the issues at stake. We shall endeavor to present each month such phases of the questions before us and such facts as will be of use in enabling our readers to form right conclusions. We ask an interest in their prayers. Never before did our church need divine guidance more than it does to-day.

Friends have urged us at different times to convert our monthly into a weekly. After the most careful examination of the whole subject we have decided to issue as formerly. There is a place for a monthly that no weekly can fill. Those who have the back volumes of this magazine have in convenient form a full history of the church during those years, as well as other most valuable reading matter. Our brethren of the General Synod some time ago converted their pamphlet into a paper form, but, after a brief trial, returned to the old.

We ask our friends to help to put a copy of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN AND COVENANTER into every one of our homes. The opinions formed by members of the family will largely depend on the literature they read. If no church magazine or paper is taken there will necessarily be manifested but little knowledge of and interest in church work; if one of liberal proclivities is read the result is inevitable. A brother writing a short time ago in regard to a small congregation remarked there is not much hope for it, adding that a certain paper had been pushed into almost every family. The opinions of those who read that paper were largely formed by it, and as the result scarcely enough of members will

reported last Synod. The impression throughout the church no doubt is, that this decrease is due to the "liberal" movement which has prevailed; while the fact in the case is, we have lost three families consisting of seven members, also some individual members and parts of families amounting in all to eleven or twelve, outside of Mr. Johnson's family, that can be attributed to the above cause. The majority of the others had left the city previous to the meeting of Synod, for want of employment and quite a number had never communed *but once*, and could only be considered transient.

If every member now living in Topeka was counted, Liberal and Conservative, we could not muster over seventy to seventy-five in all. The congregation have voted to request the Central Board of Missions to appoint Rev. J. W. Dill as stated supply for the winter. Our little congregation is very harmonious, and all willing and anxious to do what we can for the support of the Covenanter principles in Topeka and throughout the church. Our regret is we are not financially able to do more.

F. L. McCLELLAND, *Clerk of Session.*

H O U L T O N .

Rev. J. M. Armour, sends to the Board a very encouraging report of his work at Houlton, Me. "The work there this season was attended with many marked tokens of divine favor and blessing beyond what had been experienced in former seasons. A few of these I will briefly indicate. The interest in all the services, Sabbath and week-day, not only continued unabated, but manifestly increased during the entire four months. This is more than I had hoped for. The regularity of the attendance of so many, and especially the deep interest shown under the plain and direct presentation of divine truth were not a little encouraging. On the last Sabbath of October, I was led to preach from the texts 'One thing thou lackest,' 'One thing is needful,' 'One thing have I desired,' in which I endeavored to make plain, man's lack of, his need of, and his duty to seek the great salvation. At the close of this service, instead of leaving the church, scores of the young people pressed their way in the crowd, expressing to me their deep interest and their desire that I should return to them the next season.

Week-day prayer meetings had not been attempted for many years past, owing to the fact that the members of the congregation were so far separated, and also that so few of them could be induced to take any active part in the services. This season a good beginning was made, About the middle of July they began to hold prayer-meetings in the church every Thursday evening. All these meetings were well attended, a number of persons whose voices had never been heard before in such meetings, taking some part.

The Sabbath school was conducted formerly without the usual helps in the way of lesson leaf, papers, library, etc. This season a beginning was made in the way of providing a library. Three young girls divided the congregation into three districts, each of them canvassing one of these with a subscription paper and each of the three handing me the subscription paper with the money raised, for the purchase of a library. They then chose a librarian. So I hope in a few days to send them a box of books, having already promise of books from the churches here to add to those I am to purchase; so that the children

will have what they so much need, some good reading for the winter months, during which they are much of the time 'snow-bound.'"

The improvement in the singing of our Psalms during the four months was truly remarkable. They ordered a number of copies of the "Psalter with music," and agreed to meet every Tuesday evening for practice. These meetings proved much more enjoyable and profitable than any one had anticipated. Young people of other churches joined in the singing, expressing their admiration of the music and the Psalms. The result was that the music on Sabbath was wonderfully changed. A group of the best singers in all that region occupying the middle pews of the church, sang the Psalms in a way that delighted and profoundly impressed the entire audience. It was to many a surprise to find how enjoyable and inspiring Psalm-singing could be made. The fame of the Psalm-singing spread through all that region.

During the three seasons now past, in which it was my privilege to labor in that field, there were added to the little congregation, seven members. I may say I had many fears lest some of these might fall away, being so long without the ordinances and exposed to many temptations on account of their former associations. With devout thankfulness I record the fact that they all stand "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

CHINESE MISSION.

Mr. Patton writes: "We expect to have communion on Sabbath. Two of our pupils return to China next week; one of them is a Christian and a very good man. He does not want to go, but his father has commanded him to go and get married. We have had an exciting time this week rescuing a Chinese maiden from the highbinders. Her stepfather offered to sell her to the highbinders to be used for immoral purposes. She was brought to a Chinese quarter next our mission. I sent for the police and had her rescued and sent to the joint for safe keeping till morning, when we sent her in charge of a policeman out to the home for Chinese girls in San Francisco. The highbinders have been on the warpath for some time."

SOUTHERN MISSION.

Mr. Speer reports as follows respecting the school at Selma: "School opened with an enrollment of 111 pupils on October 5th. Brothers Kingston and Pickens were present and gave us cheering words. I was disappointed with the numbers, but the teachers said it was rather encouraging under the circumstances. The number of scholars now is 142. The lower rooms are much fuller than the higher ones. This has led me to make two changes. First, I have given notice of two promotions this year instead of one. The first will occur in January. The pupils will not be put up higher, but the work in each room will come down a little. Second, those pupils in the highest class last year can easily be advanced another year without additional help in the higher department. The field is ripe, dead ripe, for the harvest. Pray God that he will send consecrated workers. Pray for us, brethren. Pray that we may be able to cultivate a spirit of loyalty to the Master in the pupils."