

one hundred and fifty persons attended, coming from various Presbyterian denominations in widely distant countries; from the principal Presbyterian Churches in the United States and the Dominion of Canada; from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; from Italy and Germany.* The utmost cordiality was shown at the meeting, and the following resolutions were adopted unanimously:

1. That whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, at their last meetings, passed resolutions in favor of an Ecumenical Council of Presbyterian Churches, we, providentially brought together at this time, and belonging to various branches of the Presbyterian family, cordially sympathize with these movements toward a General Council of the Presbyterian Churches in various lands.

2. That the following gentlemen be a Committee to correspond with individuals and with organized bodies, in order to ascertain the feeling of Presbyterians in regard to such Federal Council, and to take such measures as may in their judgment promote this object.

3. That this Committee be authorized to cooperate, as far as possible, with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and with the committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

The Committee thus appointed have a deep sense of the responsibility laid on them. While they believe that the cause is good, and that there is sufficient popular opinion in its behalf to secure, with the blessing of Almighty God, its ultimate success, they fear lest they should take any step that might injure so noble an undertaking. They therefore desire to begin and carry on all their measures under the guidance of the wisdom that is from above. All that they propose at present is to ask, as they now do, every Presbyterian organization in the world:

First, To express in a formal manner its approval of the object; and

Secondly, To appoint a committee to meet or correspond with committees from other Presbyterian denominations, for the purpose of arranging for a meeting or convention of representatives to be appointed by the denominations, which meeting may effect an organization, and determine its character and practical modes of action.

Meanwhile they solicit attention to the following benefits which, by the grace of God, may be expected to flow from the proposed union:

1. It would exhibit before the world the substantial unity, quite consistent with minor diversities, of the one great family of Presbyterian churches.

2. It would greatly tend to hold up and strengthen weak and struggling churches, by showing that they are members of a large body. The Protestant churches of the Continent of Europe, for example, feel the great need of sympathy and support from churches more favorably situated.

3. It would enable churches, which are not inclined to organic union, to manifest their belief in the unity of the Church, and to fraternize with those whom they love, while they still hold to their distinctive testimony.

4. Each Presbyterian church would become acquainted with the constitution and work of sister churches, and their interest in each other would be proportionally increased. Some might be led in this way to see in other Churches excellences which they would choose to adopt.

5. The Churches may thus be led to combine in behalf of the truth, and against prevalent errors; as, for instance, to defend the obligations of the Sabbath, to resist the insidious efforts of the Papacy, especially in the matter of education, and to withstand infidelity in its various forms.

6. Without interfering with the free action of the Churches this Council might distribute judiciously the evangelical work in the great field "which is the world"; allocating a sphere to each, discouraging the planting of two congregations where one might serve or the establishment of two missions at one place, while hundreds of other places have none. In this way the resources of the Church would be husbanded, and her energies concentrated on great enterprises.

7. It would demonstrate to the Christian world these great facts in the working of the Presbyterian system: That, by its reasonable polity, it consists with every form of civil government; that, by its simplicity of its usages, it is adapted to all the varying conditions of the Church upon the earth; and that, by its equal distance from license and arrogance, it is best prepared to recognize the kinship of all believers.

8. It would manifest the proportions and power of the Presbyterian churches, and thus offer effectual resistance to the exclusive pretensions of Prelacy and Ritualism in all their forms.

9. From such a Council, hallowed and quickened by the Redeemer's presence, there might proceed, as from a heart, new impulses of spiritual life, bringing every member of the Church into closer fellowship with his Divine Master, into deeper affection for his brethren for his Master's sake, and into more entire consecration of all his powers to the Master's work.

HOWARD CROSBY, D.D., LL.D., Chancellor
New York University, New York.

J. W. DAWSON, LL.D., Principal
of McGill College, Montreal, Canada.

WILLIAM S. FLEMING, D.D.,
Theological Seminary, Columbia, S. C.

J. H. A. BOMBERGER, D.D.,
University College, Freeport, Pa.

WILLIAM PAXTON, D.D., New York,
Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

H. D. GANSE, New York,
Reformed Church in America.

HOWELL POWELL, New York,
Welsh Presbyterian Church.

H. L. GRANDLIENARD, New York,
French Evangelical Church.

JOHN HALL, D.D., New York,
Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

DAVID GREGG, New York,
Reformed Presbyterian Church.

WILLIAM ORMISTON, D.D., New York,
Reformed Church in America.

ISAAC MURRAY, D.D., Moderator
Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces
of British North America.

G. D. MATHEWS, New York,
United Presbyterian Church, Secretary.

JAMES MCCOSH, D.D., LL.D., President,
of the College of New Jersey, Princeton, N. J.,
Chairman.

New York, 1874.

The undersigned, a committee representing the Presbyterian ministers of Philadelphia, and appointed to aid in this movement, cordially concur in the sentiments expressed in the foregoing Circular, and unite, in the requests therein made to "every Presbyterian organization in the world."

GEORGE W. MUSGRAVE, D.D.,
Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., Chairman.

THOMAS E. SHEPHERD, D.D.,
Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

L. E. DALES, D.D.,
United Presbyterian Church.

T. W. WYLIE, D.D.,
General Synod Reformed Presbyterian Church.

A. G. WYLIE,
General Synod Reformed Presbyterian Church.

T. P. STEVENSON, D.D.,
Synod of Reformed Presbyterian Church.

E. H. NEVIN, D.D.,
Reformed Church in the U. S.

C. P. MASNEN,
Reformed Church in America.

J. M. CROWELL, D.D.,
Presbyterian Church U. S. A., Secretary.
Philadelphia, 1874.

*The French-speaking deputies to the Alliance were otherwise engaged that evening, but a separate meeting was afterwards held with them, when they approved most heartily of the action that had been taken.

†The names of the Committee so appointed are signed to this address.

PAN-PRESBYTERIANISM.

To the Churches of Christ, Organized on Presbyterian Principles, throughout the World.

Churches of the Presbyterian family are found, though under a variety of names, in Europe, in America, in Australia, and in the mission fields of Asia and Africa. If these could be regarded as one communion, they would constitute, perhaps, the largest Protestant Church in the world. But, at present, they are united by no visible bond, either of fellowship or of work. Of late, however, it has occurred simultaneously to a number of minds in different countries, that those who hold to the Presbyterian form of Church government may, in perfect consistency with their well known and general interest in all the branches of the Church Universal, inquire for some way of coming into formal communion with each other, and of promoting great causes by joint action.

It is not proposed to form an organic union of all the Presbyterian Churches throughout the world. It is evident that one General Assembly could not regulate, with advantage, the internal economy of Churches in such widely separated countries as Switzerland, Germany, France, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, the United States, and Canada. Great injury might arise from any attempt to interfere with these different Churches in the management of their own affairs; for all ecclesiastical history shows that serious dangers are to be apprehended from the establishment of any central power, which would be almost sure to interfere with the liberty of local Churches and of individuals. Some denominations, moreover, have grand historical recollections which they wish to cherish; and some regard it as their duty to bear a testimony in behalf of truths which others seem to them to overlook. In these circumstances, the Churches will not be asked to merge their separate existence in one large organization, but, retaining their self-government, to meet with the other members of the Presbyterian family to consult for the good of the Church at large, and for the glory of God.

In order that a Church be entitled to join this union, it should hold to the Presbyterian form of government, and have a Creed in accordance with the *Consensus of the Reformed Churches*. No new creed or formulary of any kind is contemplated.

Several formal steps have been taken with the view of effecting this Presbyterian union. The subject was specially brought before the great meeting held in Philadelphia in 1872, to celebrate the Tercentenary of the Scottish Reformation. The General Assembly of 1873 of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, unanimously adopted resolutions in favor of an Ecumenical Council of Presbyterian Churches, and appointed a committee to have its resolutions carried into effect. In the same year the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland passed a series of like resolutions; and it is ready to join with other Churches in seeking the same great end.

Having respect to this concurrent expression of feeling, the Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, availed themselves of the presence of so many Presbyterian ministers and elders at the Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in New York in 1873, to hold a meeting for a comparison of views on this subject. The meeting was held on October 6th. About