

PRESBYTERIANS

*A POPULAR NARRATIVE OF THEIR ORIGIN, PROGRESS,
DOCTRINES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS*

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CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PRESBYTERIAN COMMUNION.

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the Presbyterian Alliance.

THE word communion is used ecclesiastically to express the idea of a widespread religious fellowship, including within the same bonds of faith and polity men of many nations and diverse races. There is a Roman communion, composed of all those who acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope; a Greek communion, including all who look to the Czar of Russia as ecclesiastical leader, and an Anglican communion, taking within its compass those who accept the faith and order of the Established Church of England. The Presbyterian communion includes all Christians who maintain what are called the great doctrines of grace, and are organized in accordance with the principles of representative government.

The number of Presbyterians throughout the world at present is about 21,000,000. They are found in well-nigh every nation, on all five continents, and are gathered into more than eighty denominations. See statistical table, p. 534. While holding with all Protestants the fundamental doctrines of evangelical Christianity, they emphasize what is sometimes called Pauline, sometimes the Augustinian, and ordinarily the Calvinistic system of doctrine. The essential characteristic of this system is that it makes the process of human sal-

vation from beginning to end, from election to glorification, dependent for efficiency solely upon the rich, free, full, unmerited and special grace toward sinners, provided of God in Jesus Christ. Salvation is "not of works lest any man should boast."

Further, Presbyterian Church Government, as well as the Calvinistic doctrine, is regarded as apostolic in origin. The principal elements of the Presbyterian polity are: The sole headship of Jesus Christ, involving submission to his law as contained in the Christian Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice; the parity or equality of the ministry; the equality of believers in power and privilege; the unity of the Church, involving the authoritative control of the Church, not by individuals but by representative courts, known as Church Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. Magnifying doctrinally the sovereignty of God, the Presbyterian System magnifies ecclesiastically the sovereignty of law.

The Presbyterian polity suffered decline during the Early and Middle Ages, owing to the influence of the prevailing civil governments, which were either monarchical or imperial. The Pauline doctrines of grace, however, were maintained from the Apostolic Age to the Reformation by a long and glorious line of Theologians, including Augustine (430), Alcuin (804), Anselm (1109), Bernard of Clairvaux (1153), Bradwardine, (1349), Wycliffe (1384), Huss (1415) Savonarola (1498), and Staupitz, the instructor of Luther. With the Reformation in 1517, came freedom both of thought and action, and a widespread revival of the Apostolic faith and polity. This revival found clearest expression in the Churches called interchangeably Re-

formed and Presbyterian, and the history of many of them is briefly sketched in this article.

EUROPE.

Switzerland.—The Presbyterian system found organization first at the time of the Reformation in the Reformed Church of the Canton of Geneva. The earliest of the Swiss Reformers was Ulric Zwingli, who began preaching in 1509 and who fell, in 1531, in the disastrous battle of Cappel. But while holding the Reformed doctrine, he cannot be regarded as the founder of the Reformed Churches. The Christian to whom this great privilege was given of God was John Calvin, a native of France, who, flying from persecution, took refuge, in 1536, at Geneva. The history of the Reformation in Switzerland from the time of Calvin is the history of conflict with the Papacy and with heresy. The struggles between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Cantons did not cease until the decisive battle of Vilmergen, in 1712. Again, the union of Church and state, as elsewhere, has been unfavorable to doctrinal purity, and the Calvinistic faith has been seriously weakened by Unitarianism and Rationalism. At present the nominal adherents of the Reformed Church in the country number 1,700,000. Three Independent churches exist, but they are comparatively weak in numbers.

France.—The French Reformed Church originated in the early part of the sixteenth century, many persons in France being in sympathy with the Reformation in Germany. Their struggle through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is sketched elsewhere. As a result of their various persecutions, fully 500,000 per-

sons escaped from the country and established themselves in various Protestant lands, many of them settling in the American colonies. Intolerance was the rule from 1685 to 1787, when a new Edict of Toleration was issued by Louis XVI. Napoleon Bonaparte, in 1802, gave complete liberty to the Reformed Church, except in administration; and it was not until 1872 that the National Synod, after an interval of more than two hundred years, again met by permission of the government. The orthodox party, being in the majority in this Synod, formulated a brief Confession of Faith, triumphing over a so-called liberal minority, and, as a result, on complaint by the minority, the government declined to authorize subsequent Synods. In these circumstances, the Reformed Church instituted a system of unofficial Synods which meet regularly, and now carry forward efficiently the work of administration. The latest statistics show the number of ministers to be 840, churches 567, and the total number of adherents 700,000. In addition to the Reformed Church, an organization exists called *The Union of the Free Evangelical Churches*, having about 3300 communicants. The National Church is supported by the state. In several European countries certain denominations are recognized by law as churches entitled to support by the civil authorities, though they are not state churches. Religious conditions in Europe, as affecting civil rights, are strange to an American. For instance, to secure civil standing, every person in Germany must be an adherent of some recognized Church. Again, in order to obtain admission to the state schools, a certificate of baptism is necessary, and also for marriage or burial. This certificate must be

signed by the pastor of some church. Further, all churches, both those established by law and those which are recognized as having a legal standing, are responsible to the state for all persons nominally connected with them, whatever their true spiritual condition. This state of affairs is one of the great obstacles to spiritual religion on the European Continent. Christianity does not flourish under the pressure of such compulsory relations and enactments.

Germany.—The Reformation in Germany was the work of Martin Luther. The Lutheran Church is his monument. The Reformed Church in Germany finds its source in the Reformation in Switzerland, originating in the labors of Zwingli, and afterward organized by Calvin. The chief differences between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches are two. Doctrinally the Lutheran Church holds to consubstantiation, as the true mode of the presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, while the Reformed Church holds solely to the spiritual presence. In matters of polity the Reformed Church insists upon the right of the Christian laity to a participation in the government through elders elected by the people, while the Lutheran Church governs by consistories, composed of ministers and laymen, appointed by the Emperor as the Supreme Bishop. The portions of the German Empire in which the Reformed faith was largely prevalent were Hesse, Baden, the Palatinate, Nassau and Prussia. Between 1817 and 1822 a union was formed between the Lutheran and the Reformed, and the united organization bears the name of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. There are yet in Germany several Reformed organizations declining union with the State Church, and

the total number of their adherents is estimated at 1,300,000.

Holland.—The Reformed Church of Holland traces its origin chiefly to Switzerland and France. In 1573 the patriotic party gained control of the seven northern provinces of the Netherlands, and in 1579 formed a union under the lead of William the Silent, Prince of Orange. The Church of Holland, like other Reformed Churches, had been from the first Calvinistic, but in 1600 the famous Arminian controversy began, by which it was divided and weakened. The Synod of Dort was called to decide the issues raised, and adopted in 1619 the famous Canons or Articles of the Synod of Dort, which, with the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism, are the existing doctrinal standards of the Church. The government is essentially Presbyterian, but here, as elsewhere, union with the state is the great enemy of spiritual religion. About 1830 a number of ministers and congregations separated from the Establishment in order to secure, in their opinion, greater purity of doctrine and polity, and formed a Church with the name, *The Christian Reformed Church of Holland*. This denomination has now about 320 ministers and congregations, and 70,000 communicants. The state Church has about 1700 ministers, 1500 congregations and 2,200,000 adherents.

Hungary.—The Reformed Church of Hungary originated in the dissemination of the Reformed doctrine in the Kingdom by University students and others from 1523 onward. It met first in Synod at Varad, August 18, 1559. Up to 1781, Hungarian Protestants were obliged time and again to maintain their rights by force of arms. In the latter year the Emperor Joseph II.

issued his famous Edict of Toleration. The Church is governed by Synods and Presbyteries, and the number of ministers is 1997, of congregations 2100, and of baptized adherents about 2,100,000. Being a Church recognized by the state, its ministers are maintained by appropriations from the revenues of the Crown. Each Synod is controlled by a Superintendent or Bishop, the word, however, being used in a non-prelatical sense. This arrangement is the result of the connection with the state, which holds the superintendent directly responsible for ministers and church members.

Italy.—The history of the evangelical Christians of Italy is written with their blood. The Reformation spread rapidly through the land during the earlier part of the sixteenth century, and many adhered to its principles, but in 1542 the Inquisition was established, and as a result the seventeenth century found Protestantism, except in the valleys of Piedmont, either extirpated or expatriated. In the fastnesses of the Alps the Waldenses maintained a pure faith despite the determined efforts of their enemies to destroy them.

In 1533 the Waldenses came into alliance with the Swiss Reformers, and their Churches were organized more fully after the Genevan or Presbyterian model. This connection with the Reformers brought only new afflictions, and the persecution of 1655 was so terrible in its character that Cromwell threatened that, if it did not cease, he would bombard the Pope in his Castle of St. Angelo. Full release from oppressive conditions was secured only at the revolution in 1848. Under the favoring environment of a free and reunited Italy, the Waldensian Church has increased rapidly in numbers and influence. There is also in Italy an organ-

ization called the Free Christian Church of Italy, founded in 1870. Both the Waldensian and the Free Churches are Presbyterian in faith and polity. The former has 18,000, the latter 1500 communicants.

In the other remaining European countries the Reformed Churches have experienced, as in Italy, great reverses. In Spain, Protestantism was utterly destroyed by Philip II. Persecution needs simply to be thorough to do its work. The present *Reformed Church of Spain* was organized in 1872, and has at this time about 1000 communicants. In Belgium, also, the Spanish monarchs practically extirpated the adherents of the Reformation. Two churches are now found in the country, *The Synod of the Union of Evangelical Churches* and *The Synod of the Missionary Christian Church*. In Poland, at the time of the Reformation, the Polish nobility accepted the Reformed faith, and Synods were held in 1550, and thereafter from time to time until 1655, the date of the Swedish invasion. From the date of that event, war and other causes operated to overthrow Protestantism. At present, there are two feeble Reformed Churches in Polish Russia, *The Evangelical Church of Poland*, with 2000, and *The Reformed Church of Lithuania*, with 5000 communicants. Both bodies are subjected to persecution by the Russian officials. Last, but not least of the Reformed Churches of Europe, are those located in the Austrian Empire. One of these, the Hungarian Church, has already been considered. Another of these is *The Reformed Church of Bohemia*, whose origin can be traced back to the earliest times and which revived its life under the influence of Wycliffe, in the fourteenth century, and of Huss, in the fifteenth century.

The Bohemians were the first European people to resist the Papacy. But though the Reformed portion of the population maintained desperately on the field of battle the rights of conscience, they were at last totally defeated, and the battle of the Weisberg, in 1620, ended a conflict which had lasted, with varying fortunes, for 200 years. From 1620 until 1781, the date of the Edict of Toleration, Protestantism was virtually extinct. At the present time not more than two per cent. of the population are of the Reformed faith. In addition to the Churches of Bohemia and of Hungaria, there are in the Austrian Empire two other bodies professing the Reformed faith, the Reformed Churches in the provinces of Austria and Moravia, having between them about 30,000 communicants. Even in this latter half of the nineteenth century, however, the hand of Rome is heavy against the Churches, which it recognizes as its most dreaded enemies, and while it cannot persecute, does yet annoy Austrian Presbyterians.

GREAT BRITAIN.

There are in Great Britain six strong Churches, bearing the Presbyterian name, the first of which, historically, is *The Church of Scotland*. The name Presbyterian is indissolubly united with the land of John Knox. The early Christian Church in Scotland, which originated probably in the second century, was not subject to the Papacy until the twelfth century. The teachings of Columba, and the influence of the Culdees were still potent in the sixteenth century among the Scotch peasantry. When the Reformation came, it swept away with a rush the Papal connection as an excrescence and a blot. Under the lead of Knox the

Scotch nation threw off at one and the same time Popery and Episcopacy, and established the Church as a Reformed Church August 1, 1560, by Act of Parliament. Through various struggles the Church has held its position till the Act of Security in 1707. Since then the Church of Scotland has been, and will possibly remain, the Church of the kingdom, unchangeably established by law, and entitled to support by the State. The peace of the Church has been disturbed at times by controversies, resulting in secessions, the principal of which, in the eighteenth century, were those of 1733 and 1761, and which resulted in the formation of the Associate and the Relief Churches. The great secession, however, was the movement which culminated in the establishment, in 1843, of the Free Church of Scotland. The number of ministers of the State Church by the last statistics, is 1450; of churches and parishes, 1650; of communicants, 581,568.

The Free Church of Scotland arose from popular opposition to what is called the Patronage Act. This Act was passed in 1712 by the British Parliament, and gave to certain landed proprietors in parishes the right to nominate pastors, and virtually to force their settlement over congregations in the face of opposition from the majority of the people. The Act frequently occasioned trouble from its first passage, but it was not until about May, 1830, that it began to be made the subject of general complaint. Certain cases arising under it were carried into the civil courts. The courts decided in favor of the proprietors or patrons and in opposition to the will of the people and the decisions of the General Assembly. This assertion of civil authority in the determination of ecclesiastical matters stirred Scotland

to its center, and led, under the influence of Thomas Chalmers and others in 1843, to the establishment of the Free Church. In that year 470 ministers left the Established Church, led by the Moderator of the General Assembly, and organized a new denomination. It is in all respects similar in organization to the Church of Scotland, except in the fact that it has no connection with the State. Statistics : ministers, 1249 ; congregations, 1030 ; communicants, 335,000.

The United Presbyterian Church of Scotland is the existing representative of the Associate and Relief secessions from the Established Church, effected in 1733 and 1761 respectively, and largely as a protest against state control of Church affairs. A union between these secessions was accomplished in May, 1847, at Edinburgh, and the latest statistics are as follows : ministers, 615 ; congregations, 567 ; communicants, 184,352. This denomination is a Psalm-singing Church, and it is noteworthy that its General Assembly passed, in 1879, a Declaratory Act explaining the Calvinistic portions of the Westminster Confession from the standpoint of the Divine love.

The Presbyterian Church of England.—The English Puritans were Calvinistic in doctrine, and largely Presbyterian in polity. The spread of Presbyterian doctrines and governmental views was rapid from 1572 onward, and finally resulted in the establishment of the Presbyterian Church as the state Church of England by Act of Parliament, June 29, 1647. It was at this time that the Westminster Assembly met and framed that general standard of Presbyterian doctrine, in English-speaking countries, which is known as the Westminster Confession. Presbyterianism, however,

though established by Act of Parliament, never became the recognized state Church outside of London and Lancashire, and even in these localities its influence and power were seriously impaired by the opposition of Oliver Cromwell, who suppressed its Synod meetings in 1655. At the Restoration in 1661, a sharp crisis occurred in the history of English Presbyterianism. Parliament passed an act of Uniformity requiring all rectors to conform to the newly established Episcopal Church. Many complied, but nearly 2000 ministers resigned their charges, or were ejected from them rather than conform to the state Church. Of these ministers, 1500 were Presbyterians. This Church has also suffered from internal strife. During the eighteenth century subscription to doctrinal standards was not regarded by the majority of its ministers as essential to good standing. A gradual departure from the faith of the fathers was the result, until at last in many portions of the country, Presbyterian and Unitarian had become synonymous terms. There are churches to-day in England known legally as Presbyterian churches but in whose pulpits Unitarian ministers officiate. In addition to the Presbyterian churches of English origin quite a number of congregations have existed, from an early date, which are of Scotch origin. In 1843 a Synod was organized in sympathy with the Free Church of Scotland, and, in 1876, this Synod formed a union with the English branch of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the new body taking the name of the Presbyterian Church of England. This Church is governed by a Synod, and in 1889 adopted a new Confession of Faith, containing twenty-five articles, not as a substitute for, but as supplementary to the Westminster

Confession. Statistics : Ministers, 300 ; Congregations, 288 ; Communicants, 65,000.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland.—Presbyterians entered Ireland from Scotland in 1608. Their numbers were largely increased, about 1641, by the suppression of the great Roman Catholic Rebellion of that year, and the settlement of Scotch soldiers in the country. This Church, like the Presbyterian Church of England, was greatly troubled by the Unitarian heresy. Internal conflicts, however, came to a close in 1827, when Arianism in Ireland was decisively overthrown under the leadership of the famous Henry Cooke, D. D., and the Irish Church was established upon a thoroughly evangelical basis. This victory was followed in 1840 by the union of the Synod of Ulster with the body called the Seceder Synod, the new organization taking the name of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Church is governed by a General Assembly and holds tenaciously to the Westminster Confession. It regards ministers as teaching elders, and emphasizes lay power. Statistics : Ministers, 626, congregations, 555, communicants, 102,678.

The Calvinistic Methodist Church of Wales.—Welsh Methodism is in origin independent of, and was organized prior to, English Methodism. Methodist Societies were organized in Wales as early as 1736, three years previous to the organization of English Societies by John Wesley. In 1740 the great division between Calvinists and Arminians took place in the Methodist body in England, but the Welsh Methodists were Calvinists from the beginning. The First General Association or Synod was held in 1742. Formal withdrawal from the Church of England did not take place until

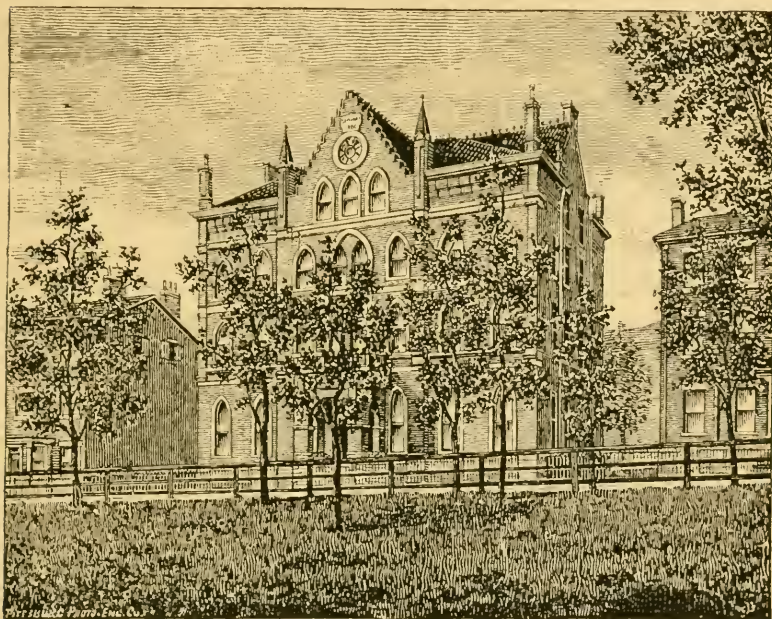
1811, when at the General Synod held at Bala, 21 persons were ordained to the office of the ministry, and a Church organization was established based avowedly upon the New Testament. It is well to bear in mind that the ministers and members of this Church had been brought up under the influence of Episcopacy, and yet, after due study of the Scriptures, rejected *in toto* that system of Church Government. In 1823 a Confession of Faith was adopted, and in 1864 the General Assembly was constituted. The word Methodist, in the name of this Church, is to be understood as defining not a system of doctrine, but methods of Christian life and work. In this Church every elder is a member of Presbytery, a feature of the polity which gives to the laity an overwhelming influence. Statistics: Ministers, 1012, churches, 1439, communicants, 142,051.

AMERICA.

The history of several of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States has been discussed at length in other portions of this volume. The limitations of space have forbidden the presentation in the work of complete accounts of the remaining denominational organizations found on the American Continent. It is hoped that the brief sketches which follow will be accepted as a slight though inadequate effort to recognize and appreciate honored and highly esteemed Churches of Christ.

The United States.—There are three Christian Churches at present existing in the United States which originated on the European Continent. The first of these is: *The Reformed Church in America.* This Church was founded in New Amsterdam as

a colonial Church by the Reformed Church of Holland. The first congregation was organized in 1628 with the Rev. Jonas Michaelius as pastor. In 1664 the colony was captured by the English and its name changed to New York, but the connection of the



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Reformed Dutch Church with Holland was maintained and continued until about 1770, when two bodies, one called the Coetus (1747), and the other the Conferentie (1755), united in forming a self-governing court. The formal and full organization as an American Church took place in 1792, when the first General Synod met. Emigration from Holland to the Atlantic region ended about 1750, and the Dutch language ceased, in New York and New Jersey, to be the vernac-

ular of many of the people during the first years of the eighteenth century. In 1867, the name by which the Church had been legally known for three-quarters of a century, "The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church," was changed to read "The Reformed Church in America." A liturgy is provided for use in public worship, but is not obligatory. The forms for baptism, communion, ordination, etc., are mandatory. The names of the judicatories differ from those in use in other Presbyterian Churches. The Session is called a Consistory, the Presbytery a Classis, and the higher bodies are Particular Synods, and the General Synod. Further, the Session is vested with power to administer the temporal affairs of the congregation, and the pastor is both Moderator of Session and Chairman of the trustees. The Church is one of the wealthiest and most influential in the country. Statistics: ministers 572, congregations 580, communicants, 94,323.

The second organization bearing the Reformed name is *The Christian Reformed Church*, which is a branch of the Church of the same name which was organized in Holland in 1835, as a protest against the then condition of the state Church. It is composed in large part of recent emigrants, and is strongest in the State of Michigan. It has about 75 ministers, 99 congregations and 12,470 communicants.

The largest of the Reformed Bodies in the United States is *The Reformed Church in the United States*. The first emigrants to the American colonies from the Reformed Churches of Germany settled in New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania, in 1684. The majority came from the Palatinate. The first minister of this Church was the Rev. John J. Ehle, who labored in

New York from 1710-1780. In 1746 the Palatinate Classis or Presbytery sent the Rev. Michael Schlatter over as Superintendent, who found in the country 54 congregations, 30,000 adherents, but only five ordained ministers. The growth of the Church was greatly hindered by this lack of ministers, and the lack was not supplied so long as dependence upon Germany was maintained. In 1747, a Coetus, or ecclesiastical convention having only advisory powers, was formed, which in 1792 became a Synod. In 1793 the Church became independent and adopted a Constitution. Its services until 1825 were everywhere conducted in the German language, then the change to English began which has since become quite general. In 1863 a General Synod was established, and in 1869 the word German was dropped from the title of the Church. The names given to Church judicatories are the same as in the Dutch Church, with the exception that the Particular Synod is called a District Synod. This Church is now considering the advisability of forming a Federal Union with the Reformed Church in America. Statistics : ministers 871, congregations 1573, communicants 208,990.

In addition to the Presbyterian Churches in the United States, whose history is thus recounted, there are also the following bodies. The Associate Reformed Synod of the South has eight Presbyteries, with 116 churches and 8501 members. The Associate Church of North America has four Presbyteries, 31 churches and 1053 members. The Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States and Canada has one church of 600 members. The Reformed Presbyterian Covenanted Church has four churches and 37

members. The statistics of these last four are quoted from the Census of 1890.

There is also in the United States a branch of the *Welsh Presbyterian Church*. Presbyterians of this nationality settled in the country as early as 1684, but the first congregation connected with the Welsh Church was established in 1826, at Remsen, N. Y. The services are conducted in the Welsh language, and the membership is recruited by emigration from the Principality. Statistics: ministers, 130; churches, 187; communicants, 12,275.

Canada.—The Presbyterian Church in Canada.—The first Presbyterian minister in the general territory now bearing the name of Canada was the Rev. James Lyon, who came from New Jersey, U. S. A., in 1764 to Nova Scotia. The people to whom he ministered were immigrants from Scotland and Ireland, and these two countries were the chief sources of the Presbyterian population in the Dominion. These immigrants naturally brought with them to their new homes the religious differences existing in the motherlands. The first Presbytery established was one in connection with the Associate Synod of Scotland in 1769, and, between that date and 1843, Presbyteries were established in connection with the various Presbyterian organizations in Scotland. In the latter year one-fourth of the ministers and churches in the Scotch connection organized the Free Church of Canada. The desire for Church unity, however, found expression repeatedly in the history of the Canadian Churches, and finally culminated in 1875 in the union of the then existing four Presbyterian denominations. In the Dominion of Canada to-day there is but one Church holding the Presbyterian doc-

trine and polity, and it is a living illustration of the value and power of unity in Christian faith and work. Statistics, 1891 : ministers, 1020 ; churches, 1769 ; missions, 698 ; communicants, 169,152.

OTHER AMERICAN CHURCHES.

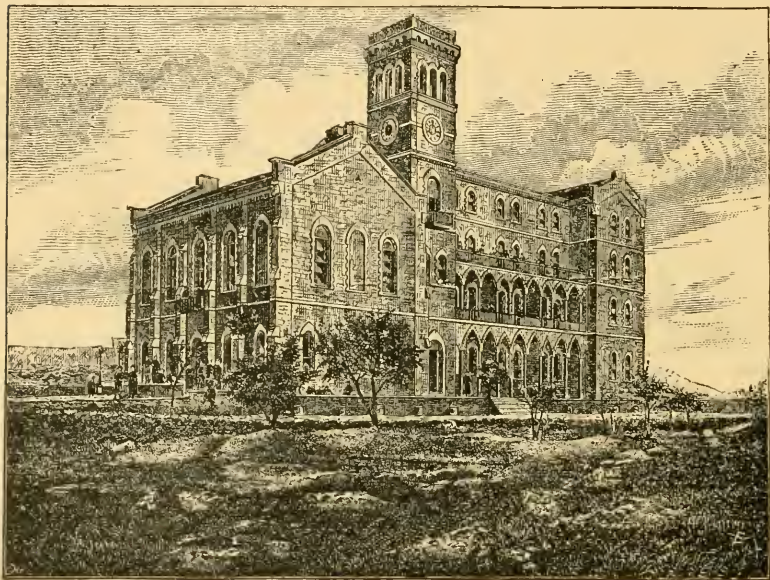
The principal Presbyterian Church in the West Indies is *The Presbyterian Church of Jamaica*. This Church originated in the work of missionaries sent out from Glasgow, Scotland, in 1820. Its highest judicatory, the Synod, was organized in 1848. Statistics : 30 ministers, 66 congregations and 9444 communicants.

In Mexico, Central America and Chili, important Presbyterian missions exist. In Patagonia Welsh Presbyterians are found, and *The Presbytery of Trinidad* and the *Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in Surinam* are independent bodies.

The principal South American Presbyterian Church is *The Presbyterian Church of Brazil*. The Calvinistic faith was first carried to Brazil by the Huguenots, in 1555, but only to be destroyed by persecution. The present Church organization originated in the labors of missionaries sent out by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the first of whom was the Rev. A. G. Simonton, who landed in Rio de Janeiro in August, 1859. Missionary work has been also carried on in Brazil by the Presbyterian Church in the United States (South). The missionaries of these two churches came together, in 1888, at Rio, and organized, with the full consent of the General Assemblies interested, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil. Statistics : 32 ministers, 67 churches and 3000 communicants.

ASIA.

In addition to the *Colonial Reformed Dutch Church*, with its 240,000 adherents, in the East Indies, and the numerous Presbyterian missions scattered from Syria to Korea, there are two native Churches in Asia, which



SYRIAN PROTESTANT COLLEGE, BEIRUT, SYRIA.

are the first fruits of foreign mission work on that continent.

The first to which attention is drawn is *The Evangelical Syriac Church of Persia*. This Church is the outgrowth of American missions among the Nestorians in that country, beginning in the year 1835. The first formal organization was accomplished in 1862, and in 1878 a Confession of Faith and a form of government were adopted. The system of polity is essentially Pres-

byterian, with one or two points of difference. Native ministers, for instance, insist upon the maintenance of the diaconate as a preaching order. The prospects of growth for the Church are encouraging. It has at present 50 ministers, 25 churches and 2290 communicants.

The second denomination is the *United Church of Christ in Japan*. This Church originated in missions established, in 1859, by the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the United States of America. Prominent among the original missionaries was Dr. J. C. Hepburn. In 1873 the Presbytery of Japan was constituted ; in 1877 a denominational organization was formed, and by 1886 all the Presbyterian missionaries, from whatever country, had entered into the movement. An effort to unite the Congregational with the Presbyterian ministers and Churches made in 1887 failed, owing to the opposition of Congregationalists in the United States. The Japanese Church is now thoroughly organized, and has adopted (1891) a brief creed, composed of the Apostles' Creed, with one or two additional statements of doctrine. Statistics: Native ministers, 40 ; congregations, 68 ; communicants, 8954.

AFRICA.

The Dark Continent is not altogether given over to the blackness of heathenism. Numerous Christian Missions are found in its every part, and in some sections there are fully organized Churches. In Algeria, there are three Presbyteries, in connection with the Reformed Church of France, and in South Africa there are six distinct denominations bearing the name of Reformed, the principal one of which is *The Dutch Re-*

formed Church of South Africa. The total of Presbyterian and Reformed members and adherents on the Continent is estimated at about 150,000.

AUSTRALASIA.

In the South Pacific, Presbyterian Churches or Missions are found in New Zealand, Tasmania, the New Hebrides and Australia. The first Presbyterian congregation established in this part of the world was organized at Portland Head, New South Wales, in 1809. As in Canada so in Australia, the divisions existing in Scotland at the time of the settlement were perpetuated in the Colonies. The tendency toward ecclesiastical union, however, soon manifested itself in Australia, so that, from 1859 onward, Church divisions gradually disappeared, until there is now one Presbyterian Church in each of the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, West Australia, East Australia, South Australia and Tasmania. The tendency to union reached its consummation in 1891, when the Federal Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches was formed, having jurisdiction in certain general matters over all the Churches. There are in the Australian Churches, 40 Presbyteries, 743 congregations, 384 ministers, and 33,157 communicants.

Presbyterian congregations were first organized in New Zealand about 1840, and the first Presbytery was established in Otago in 1854. The union of the several Presbyterian denominations on the islands was accomplished in 1862, so that there are at present in existence but two Churches of the Reformed Faith: *The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand*, occupying the northern islands, and *The Presbyterian Church of*

Otago, the southern. The first-named Church has 255 congregations and 6849 communicants; the second 223 congregations and 1175 communicants. The Churches of the New Hebrides are Mission Churches having 3500 communicants.

THE ALLIANCE OF THE REFORMED CHURCHES.

This concise historical sketch would be incomplete without reference to the movement originating about 1870, with the Rev. Dr. James McCosh, President of Princeton College, which has culminated in the organization known as "The Alliance of the Reformed Churches throughout the world holding the Presbyterian System." The motto of the organization "Co-operation without incorporation," indicates with sufficient clearness its general nature. The objects of the Alliance are chiefly the creation of a spirit of fraternity among brethren of like mind, and the advancement of the great cause of missions. It finds formal expression in quadrennial meetings called General Councils, having only advisory powers, and of which four have been already held, at Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1877, Philadelphia, U. S. A., in 1880, Belfast, Ireland, 1884, and London, England, in 1888. The Fifth General Council is to be held at Toronto, Canada, September 21-30, 1892. More than sixty Reformed and Presbyterian denominations are included in the Alliance.