

fourth term, which is the distinguishing and important one, they make no allusion whatever to Churches and Nations Covenanting; they have broken the link that bound them to the past; they do not acknowledge any peculiar connection with the Covenants of our fathers in Scotland; they have never Covenanted in America, and hence have repudiated the entire principles of the Reformation, and yet claim and demand the name *Covenanter!* In the fifth term, which is a strange conglomeration compared to the genuine one, they fail to give the true import of that term; they leave out all that relates to “contending against immoral Constitutions of civil government,” and yet claim and demand the name *Reformed Presbyterian!* They make no reference to the witnessing Church in Britain and Ireland, and, on the whole, this term is so indefinite that any Protestant could take it no matter what his views were about the martyrs of Scotland, or whether he knew that for which they so heroically contended. In the “Historical Part” of the Testimony it is a remarkable fact that they have left out that part which assigns a distinguished place to the Covenants. This omission is remarkable because the omitted paragraph is the only one which gives the organization of the first Reformed Presbytery, and refers to two occasions upon which the Church renewed the Covenants. That all may see the force of this important omission by the New School brethren, the paragraph will here be inserted:

“For more than a third of a century, Mr. McMillan maintained alone the banner of a Covenanted Reforma-

tion, until, by the accession of Mr. Nairn, the way was opened for the constitution of the REFORMED PRESBYTERY. This important event took place, August 1, 1743. In the meantime, however, the scattered remnant had met at Auchinsaugh, July 24, 1712, and there renewed the Covenants, National and Solemn League, with confession of sins, and an engagement to duties; as they also did, after the constitution of Presbytery, at Crawford-John, in the year 1745.”\*

We regard that paragraph as of great importance, both for the date of the constitution of our Church and for the fact that they then Covenanted. In the “Doctrinal Part” they have failed to bring up their Testimony to contend against evils of the present day, such as intemperance, secrecy, and others. No paragraph appears against slavery. Now we believe that while divine truth is unchangeable, the testimony of the Church is progressive, and should be brought up to apply to new aspects of evil as they arise. This is what the Testimony requires of the Church when it says:

“Every generation it to take care that the truth, as stated and defended by their predecessors, shall be maintained and faithfully transmitted together with the result of their own contendings to the succeeding generation.”

We have no quarrel with our New School brethren because they do not believe as we do, but we do insist that they have no claim upon our name. It has been clearly shown that they neither dissent from immoral

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\*Omitted from New School Testimony, page 111.

Constitutions nor hold or renew the ancient Covenants, and since these two positions constitute it a Reformed Presbyterian Covenanting Church, they have no just claim to such a name. After the setting up of an independent body in 1833, they flourished for awhile, but affiliating too freely with other bodies they lost their foreign mission; and not only did ministers leave them, but whole congregations and Presbyteries went into other denominations, and they have ceased to publish any statistics by which to determine their strength.\* The obvious reason for their marvelous declension is that they have no distinct ground upon which to stand.

The Synod of 1833, at Philadelphia, took the following action in regard to those who had separated from it.

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

At this same meeting, the Synod re-affirmed its attachment to the historic and true position of the Church in this country, by the following resolution:

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\*The minutes of the General Synod of 1887, reveal the fact that they have twenty-four ministers, fourteen of whom are settled pastors; and, by the accession of a native, they have one missionary in India.

That as it has always been in the proceedings and history of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, both in the land of our forefathers and in this land, a great and leading object to bear an explicit and practical testimony to the truth respecting civil government as the ordinance of God, and the subjection of the nations to Messiah; so it is utterly inconsistent with our doctrinal standards and judicial acts for any member of this church to sit on juries, to hold offices, or to swear allegiance to the Constitution of the United States.

From that day to this the Reformed Presbyterian Church has had little or no trouble in applying the principles of the Church, and the members feel that it is their duty to separate themselves from that civil institution which refuses to own Christ as its King, and His Word as its supreme law. If any pastors or sessions allow any members to violate the law of the Church in this respect, they deserve the same condemnation as those brethren who separated from us in 1833. If any such there be, the fact is unknown to the Church, and when discovered will be dealt with as an offence.

In the session of 1834, at Pittsburgh, the names of some ministers, who had identified themselves with the New School body, were stricken from the roll. Papers on important subjects were read and ordered published in overture. Measures were adopted for devising a plan by which young men could be prepared for the service of the ministry until the Theological Seminary was resuscitated. Arrangements were also made for the publication of another edition of the Testimony.

At the meeting of Synod in 1836, at Pittsburgh, it was apparent that the Church was in a flourishing condition, and many ministers had been settled in

pastoral charges. At this meeting strong ground was taken against the sin of slavery. The Synod disapproved of the plan of the Colonization Society considered as opposed to the manumission of slaves. It was on the supposition that this Society would be favorable to the abolition of human slavery that the Synod had previously given it countenance. The Synod continued to maintain the duty of the immediate and universal emancipation of the enslaved, and disapproved of their transportation to Africa. Parts were assigned to different ministers to write pieces for the argumentative part of the Testimony. Drafts of a "Book of Discipline" and also of "Church Government" were read and referred. The Theological Seminary was revived, located at New Alexandria, Pennsylvania, and Rev. Dr. J. R. Willson was chosen professor. It was also resolved, "That we recommend to our people, totally to abstain from traffic in ardent spirits." Ministers were instructed to preach on the sin and danger of Sabbath profanation. The "Book of Discipline and Church Government," as also the "Argument on the Arminian Controversy" were published in overture.

The Synod of 1838, met in New York. Rev. William Sommerville, missionary to Nova Scotia, was present and made an address on the cause of the Reformation in that country. For disorderly conduct and abusive language, a licentiate, and some persons associated with him, were suspended from ecclesiastical privileges. As there were some difficulties in the way of establishing one Theological Seminary, according to the resolution

of the previous meeting, the Synod now agreed to abandon the idea of locating it at New Alexandria, and rescinded their former action. It was then resolved to establish two Seminaries—one at Coldenham, New York, in which Rev. Dr. J. R. Willson was continued professor; and the other at Allegheny, Pennsylvania, in which Rev. Thomas Sproull was chosen professor. Boards of Superintendents were chosen, whose duty should be to arrange the course of study. The Church's relation to the Anti-Slavery society again came up for settlement, and the Synod declared its approbation and patronage of the *cause* of abolition, but warned its members against "voluntary associations" with men of erroneous principles and corrupt practices. If it was to become a political society, the Covenanters must withdraw. The Synod then passed the following resolution:

"That the Testimony of this Church is directed against, not only the practical evil of slavery, but also against the immoral principles in the Constitution of the United States, by which this wicked system is supported; we, therefore, declare to the Church and to the world, that from all associations which propose, by an act homologating the Constitution of the United States, to remove the evil of slavery, it is our duty and determination to stand aloof."

The Synod of 1840, met in the city of Allegheny. A letter from the Rev. Dr. John T. Pressly of the Associate Reformed Church in behalf of a "Convention of Reformed Churches" was received. The Committee appointed to examine the letter reported, in substance,

that “while this Synod laments schism in the Church, yet knowing that societies and individuals are more solicitous about the *removal* of evils than to ascertain their *causes* and *natures*; and because most of these schisms exist from the departure of some from Reformation attainments; and as there is no disposition on the part of those who have departed to retrace their steps, but desire to strike out of certain articles of agreement the doctrine of the power of the civil magistrate from the Confession; and, as this Synod will not do any act that would be construed as implying an abandonment of any part of her terms of communion, resolved that they could not comply with the invitation to attend such a Convention.” On motion Synod decreed the union of the Eastern and Western Theological Seminaries under the joint care of both the professors, and the Seminary was located in the city of Allegheny. The members of the Church were urged to a hearty support of this important institution. A resolution was again presented to prohibit the traffic in ardent spirits or intoxicating liquors by members of the Church.

The Synod of 1841, met at Utica, Ohio. A memorial from the Missionary Society of the Philadelphia congregation was received, urging the Synod to take steps for the immediate establishment of a Foreign Mission. Since the last meeting of Synod, two ministers of the Ohio Presbytery had followed divisive courses and left the communion of the Church for the alleged reason that the Synod had postponed its deliverance on “voluntary associations,” and they regarded the Synod as unfaithful to its duty. These

misguided men erected the “Reformed Presbytery,” and a few disciples gathered around them. The conduct of these schismatics brought the Synod to the fuller consideration of the question, and now adopted the following resolutions:

1. That our solemn covenant obligations demand our social as well as individual adherence to the whole law of God, in dependence on whose grace all our endeavors and engagements are to be made for the performance of every duty and the attainment of every lawful object.

2. That those confederated associations for declared moral purposes, which pay no express regard to a belief in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, nor to a dependence on His Spirit for guidance in all duty, and in the special duties of such associations in particular, but are based on principles of legalism, and admit promiscuously all classes of their members to perform religious as well as other duties, are not entered into in the true spirit of the solemn deeds of our covenant forefathers.

3. That our ministers and people be admonished to refuse uniting unnecessarily in associations with the erroneous and wicked, when a bond of confederation is required to be signed implying identity with such persons.

4. That in associations also of a merely civil nature, when in the prosecution of their respective charters they are known to have been guilty of immorality, such as turnpike companies, steamboats, &c., in the desecration of the holy Sabbath, Reformed Presbyterians should have no participation.

If those men who went out were grieved only because of Synod’s negligence to do as it now did, they would have returned to the Church of their fathers. This they never did. The one died in obscurity in 1845, and the other strenuously maintained his peculiar views alone until his death in 1887.

The subject of the traffic in intoxicating liquors had often been a matter of consideration by Synod,

and, against this sinful and nefarious business the Synod had taken only too mild measures. As the subject had been fully investigated, and the destructive employment fully exhibited by Committees previously appointed, the Synod was now prepared to adopt the following preamble and resolutions:

WHEREAS, The traffic in ardent spirits for *luxurious purposes and as a beverage* has been a fruitful source of scandal and crime; therefore resolved,

1. That members of this church be and hereby are prohibited from engaging in or continuing in this traffic; and

2. That wherever there are individuals employed in this traffic, sessions are hereby directed to deal with them immediately in such a way that this evil may be removed from the church in the best and speediest manner.

As the Church had always held as a term of communion that “the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the *only rule of faith and manners*,” this latter clause was directed to be inserted in its proper place in the first term of communion. A Committee was also appointed to continue the “Historical Part” of the Testimony with emendations of the same. A Committee was appointed to prepare a “draft of the National Covenant and of the Solemn League and Covenant, adapted to the present circumstances of the Church and of the world.” Mild complaints occasionally came before Synod in the matter of reading out the lines in public worship, but the court did not consider these difficulties of sufficient magnitude to justify the formation of a fixed law on the subject. Efforts were made for the permanent support of the Seminary.

The Synod of 1843, met in the city of Rochester, New York. The friendly correspondence with the Synod of Ireland, which had been disturbed by the gross misrepresentations of the Church by those who had abandoned her testimony in 1833, was now resumed, and a most affectionate letter from the brethren beyond the sea was received. Friendly relations and fraternal greetings have since been annually exchanged with the Covenanted brethren in both Scotland and Ireland. The reports from all the Presbyteries were of an encouraging character, and revealed the fact that the number of congregations and missionary stations, as well as ministers and licentiates, had greatly increased since the last meeting. The Committee previously appointed for the purpose, reported the draft of a Covenant, which was published in overture, and sent down to the inferior courts for them to report upon at the next meeting. Copies were also sent to the sister judicatories in Scotland and Ireland for the same purpose. Several cases of discipline of a local interest were adjudicated, but nothing of vital importance was transacted at this meeting.

The Synod of 1845, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Many new ministers appeared in this session. Reports revealed the fact that several new congregations had been organized in the West, and that missionary work was being done among the colored people who had fled to the North. The Church generally was in a healthy condition. There was manifest a general awakening on the subject of missions at home and abroad. The Committee previously

appointed to designate a field for missionary operations, and had selected the Island of St. Thomas, now were prepared to report that on account of the peculiar hindrances in the way in that field they were undecided as to the practicability of beginning operations in that Island. A special Committee on Covenanting was appointed, and the matter referred for the present. The subject of the “deacon” again came regularly before the Synod, and, after some amendments and discussion, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, The office of deacon is a divine institution, the functions of which are declared in the Form of Church Government to be “To take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor,” and of which it is said in Reformation Principles that he “has no power except about the temporalities of the Church,” and—

WHEREAS, Said office has fallen very extensively into neglect for many years; and—

WHEREAS, It is the desire of this court that uniformity in practice be maintained in all our congregations; and—

WHEREAS, Some misunderstanding seems to exist in relation to the ground of our Covenanted uniformity in practice in respect to the subject of deacons as settled at the Second Reformation; and—

WHEREAS, Faithfulness to the Church’s Head requires the re-assertion of this ground of practical uniformity as it then obtained: therefore—

*Resolved*, 1st, that our Covenanted uniformity does not recognize of divine right the congregational trustee, but the Scriptural deacon as stated in the Preamble.

*Resolved*, 2d, That said Covenanted uniformity does not recognize as of divine right a Consistory of ministers, elders and deacons, having authority to enact, govern and control the Church, either in her spiritual or temporal concerns, or as having any authority or power whatever, except for consultation and advice for the well ordering of the temporal affairs of the congregation.

A Board of Domestic Missions was appointed, consisting of six members, their duties being to receive and

disburse monies to needy stations, and to open up new fields of labor at home. A plan for completing the "Argumentative Part" of the Testimony was considered, and subjects and writers were assigned for the completion of this work. Some changes took place with reference to the Theological Seminary. Rev. Thomas Sproull resigned his professorate; the location was changed from the city of Allegheny to the city of Cincinnati, Ohio; the Board of Inspection resigned and a new one was appointed; and Rev. Dr. J. R. Willson continued to be the professor in the Seminary.

The Synod of 1847, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. By an appointment of the Board of Foreign Missions, the Rev. J. B. Johnston had made an exploring tour through the Island of Hayti, and the Board reported the selection of this Island as the field of operations, and the city of Port au Prince as the starting point and center of work. Several young men were chosen as missionaries, but declined, and finally the Rev. Joseph W. Morton and Mr. Robert J. Dodds accepted appointments. Mr. Morton entered upon the work in Hayti the same year, a history of which Mission will be found in another part of this volume. Several generous bequests were made to the Theological Seminary, and efforts were made for the establishing of a literary institution under the care of the Synod.

The Synod of 1849, met in the city of Philadelphia. The Lakes Presbytery reported that they had founded "Geneva Hall," at Northwood, Ohio, April, 1848, and that the institution was under the superintendence of

the Rev. J. B. Johnston. The Pittsburg Presbytery also reported the establishment of Westminster College and Female Seminary, at Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania, and that buildings were about to be erected. This enterprise was largely carried on by the generous donations of Mr. James Kelly. The missionary to Hayti having changed his beliefs in reference to the Christian Sabbath, appeared in court, and, having been libeled, was cited to appear and answer the charges. The following is the report of Synod on this case:

Order of the day, viz: the case of Mr. Morton called for, the libel was then read by the Clerk; when Mr. Morton having, in reply to the Moderator, answered that he was prepared for trial, the substance of the libel was again stated in his hearing. Mr. Morton was then called upon, according to the rule provided for such cases, either to confess the charge or put himself upon his trial. Mr. Morton in return acknowledged that he had denied the day commonly called the Christian Sabbath is so by Divine appointment, and then proceeded to plead the irrelevancy of the charge by endeavoring to prove the perpetuity of the law for the observance of the seventh day. While so doing he was arrested by the Moderator, who informed him that the charge contained in the libel was such that Mr. Morton could only prove its irrelevancy to censure by proving that the appropriation of the first day of the week, known as the Christian Sabbath, to secular employments, or teaching so to do, is not relevant to censure, which attempt the Moderator would consider disorderly, and would not allow.

From this decision a member appealed, when the Moderator's decision was unanimously sustained. Upon this, Mr. Morton declined the authority of the court.

*Resolved*, That Mr. Morton's appointment as missionary to Hayti be revoked.

*Resolved*, That inasmuch as Mr. Morton has now publicly declined the authority of this court, he be suspended from the exercise of the Christian ministry, and from the privileges of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. The Moderator then publicly pronounced the sentence of suspension on Mr. Morton, agreeably to the above resolution.

By this defection the Hayti Mission was abandoned, and Mr. Dodds was not sent out as was expected. Two ministers were admonished and warned that in the future they were not to teach doctrines contrary to the standards of the Church which are founded upon the Word of God. The Committee to which were referred certain memorials on the subject of slavery reported the following:

The petitioners, lamenting the prevalent ignorance of our testimony against this great evil, and countenance given to it by most Christian denominations in the United States, respectfully ask Synod, 1st, To reassert their position in regard to the exclusion of slave-holders from her fellowship, and her dissent from the United States Constitution, on this, with other grounds. 2d. They ask that, if practicable, some more efficient means may be employed for the diffusion of our doctrines and testimony on this subject, particularly that a remonstrance may be addressed to the principal slave-holding Churches.

In regard to the first of these petitions, we remark that the declarations contained in the Historical part of our testimony, published, of course, by the Presbytery itself, furnish ample testimony of the position occupied on slavery by this Church. We refer to the following statements, "The Presbytery resolved to purge the Church of this dreadful evil: they enacted that no slave-holders should be retained in their Communion." "The Presbytery required of their connexions a general emancipation." "No slave-holder is since admitted to their Communion." See Hist. Test. pp. 154, 155, Ed. 1835. Now, while it is true, as stated in one of the memorials, that we have not in our hands the original acts, excluding all slave-holders, we have the Presbytery itself as evidence that this was the purport and design of their actions. This, with the uniform practice of the Church—for in the language of the testimony, "No slave-holder is since (1800) admitted to their Communion"—in the judgment of your committee as completely defines the position of this Church in regard to ecclesiastical fellowship with slave-holders as it is possible to do. A sight of the original acts might gratify curiosity, but could not shed any additional light upon that which is already as clear as the noon-day. *No slave-*

holder *can* have privileges in the Reformed Presbyterian Church. We say the same of our position as a Church in relation to the civil institutions of the country. The Historical Testimony, pp.‡ 152, 153, 154, and the frequent incidental actings since are sufficiently explicit on this point. Covenanters have not sworn, and do not swear oaths to the institutions of the country, among other reasons, because the Constitution of the United States contains compromises with slave-holding interests, and guarantees for the institution itself protection so long as it exist in the slave-holding States. We have no further action to recommend on either of these points.

2d. In regard to a remonstrance to be addressed to slave-holding Churches, we agree with the petitioners that it is important that this Church take some measures to bring her testimony more directly before the Churches, and would recommend that a Committee of three be appointed to prepare a remonstrance of the kind contemplated, embodying the views and position of this Church on the whole question, said Committee to publish the remonstrance on their own responsibility, as to the arguments and expressions which they may see fit to employ.

The Theological Seminary was removed from Cincinnati to Northwood, Ohio, and it and the Literary Institution were taken under the care of Synod. Students now pursued their literary and theological courses at the same time. Rev. Dr. J. R. Willson was continued professor, and received the assistance of the professors of Geneva Hall in some departments of study.

The Synod of 1851, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Quite a number of ministers had been ordained and installed over pastoral charges, and took their seats in the court. Several important cases of discipline came up for adjudication, and were judiciously disposed of. Some of these related to the organization of congregations without deacons. Events arising out of conflicting interests and personal feelings, the Synod

deemed it proper to suspend the Theological Seminary for the present, and the students were directed to prosecute their studies under the care of their respective Presbyteries. Dr. Willson was honorably retired as emeritus professor. The library and all monies were given into the hands of Committees to hold in trust for Synod. The Board of Domestic Missions reported that much money had been contributed and that many promising stations had been opened up. A systematic plan for the operations of home missions was inaugurated, and much interest manifested in this part of the work of the Church. The Committee appointed to express the views of the Church in reference to the Fugitive Slave Law, reported the following preamble and resolutions:

As human enactments are to be tested by the Divine law; and as it is the duty of the church to testify against all that is in opposition to the law of God; and as her Head came "to proclaim liberty to the captive," so she should open her mouth for the dumb. Therefore,

1. *Resolved*, That this Synod reiterate its uncompromising opposition to the institution of slavery as a system of complicated and unmitigated wrong, and utterly repudiate all the arguments and excuses of slaveholders and their abettors for its continuance; and recommend to all our people more vigorous and persevering efforts for its removal.

2. That the fugitive slave law is essentially tyrannical; not only securing the enslavement of those who are in fact free, but in forbidding freemen to exercise the sympathies of Christian compassion, and commanding them to assist in returning men to cruel bondage. It brings deserved infamy upon our land, dishonors God, and is expressly contrary to the plainest precepts of this law—"Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee." "Bewray not him that wandereth." "Relieve the oppressed." And it is the duty of all not only to refuse compliance with its provisions, but to show others its hideous enormity.

3. That the main element of the fugitive slave law naturally

flows from the provisions of the Constitution of the United States upholding slavery. Art. 4, Sec. 2. "No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor; but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due." Art. 4, Sec. 1. "Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records and judicial proceedings of every other State." And we see in this another exemplification of the immorality of the United States Government, and it shows clearly the evil of swearing oaths of allegiance, and thus sustaining slavery.

4. That those ministers of the gospel who teach the binding obligation of this law to be obeyed for conscience's sake, and the conduct of those Christians who sustain the law, hypocritically professing to love God while they hate the negro, bring reproach upon religion, encourage infidelity, and rivet still more tightly the chains of the oppressed.

5. That it is the duty of the ministers of Christ to teach clearly that magistrates in Christian lands should yield to the authority of God's law, and that any law that is in opposition to the precepts of the Bible does not bind the conscience, and ought to be resisted by every means consistent with religion; for we must obey God rather than men.

6. That we recognize with gratitude the hand of God in making this infamous law the means of showing many the enormous evil of slavery, and convincing them of their practical and constitutional connection with slavery; and that we rejoice in the efforts that are making to free some of the Churches from the incubus of slavery. And we trust that the "Free Churches" will, ere long, see the sin of upholding a government that rejects the law of God; and that they and we, upon the broad ground of Christian principles, may labor to bring this nation into submission to God's higher law.

The Rev. William Wilson of the New School body, who desired to return to the communion of the Reformed Presbyterian Church upon certain conditions in papers laid before the court, learning that

he could not enter the body without a full reception of all her principles, withdrew his papers.

The Synod of 1853, met in the city of New York. Synod re-affirmed its deliverance of 1847, that the consistory, an assembly composed of the pastor, elders and deacons to manage the temporalities of the Church, is not an ecclesiastical court. The special Committee to which was referred the subject of civil legislation against the traffic in ardent spirits, reported the following which was adopted by Synod:

The Church of Christ is a divinely instituted association, organized, not only for the conversion of sinners and sanctification of saints, but for the reformation of society; and as a reformatory association, she should be in advance of the world in all reformatory movements. In the temperance reform we would not only be active, but until the object of that reform is accomplished, would use all the means in our power to give a proper direction to the efforts put forth by others. We would not close our eyes to the fact that the side of intemperance, now flooding this land, is truly alarming, calling not only for mourning and commiseration, but for greater activity on the part of the Church to stem that torrent that the appalling amount of crime and misery, consequent upon the use of intoxicating drinks, may be speedily diminished, and the evil wholly removed.

The principles involved in the law of the Church, and particularly set forth in the action of this Synod in 1841, should be carried out in civil legislation so as to forbid, and wholly prevent, the traffic in intoxicating drinks as beverages. Civil government is intended, among other objects, to protect the people against the wrongs inflicted by venders of ardent spirits. This can be done effectually only by utterly prohibiting the traffic. Therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. That we hail with joy the efforts that have been made recently in several of the States, to suppress entirely the traffic in intoxicating drinks, and we earnestly hope that the work may go on until there be no place where license will be given, or the protection of law afforded to that traffic, so wicked and so ruinous in its consequences.

*Resolved, 2.* That this Synod gives its hearty approbation to the principles involved in the law commonly called the Maine Liquor Law, viz: the right and the duty of civil government to wholly prohibit the sale of intoxicating drinks, except for medicinal, chemical, mechanical, and sacramental purposes.

*Resolved, 3.* That in the temperance reform we depend wholly upon the Spirit of God for success, and regard the gospel of Jesus Christ as the only efficient means of permanently removing the evil.

The Synod embodied the following reformatory sentiment in its proceedings at this session:

There are two great evils which must be removed from the world before the state of society can be healthy: Popery, which directly enslaves the soul and indirectly the body; Slavery, which directly enslaves the body and indirectly the soul. We cannot, consistently, claim the character of Reformers if we do not untiringly employ the armour of light on the right and left against these great, and alas! yet growing evils in our land. We may incur some temporary odium, and, perhaps, not only be reproached, but persecuted on this account; but, assuredly‡ the advocates of impartial liberty for the souls and bodies of men will prevail, and their memories be savory if they die in the field of contest; and their persons will be honoured if they survive the strife.

The Synod of 1855, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. The reports of Presbyteries revealed the fact that there had been great emigration to the Western States and Territories, and that mission stations were springing up in various places, demanding the care of the Mission Board. A delegation from the New School body invited the Synod to attend a farewell missionary meeting in Pittsburg, and also expressed the Christian affection and respect of the body they represented. The Committee preparing a "Form of Covenant," reported, and it was published in the appendix to the minutes of Synod. Arrangements were

made to renew the Covenants, at the next meeting of Synod, if the way should be open. The organization of a Foreign Mission Board was recommended, as well as the resuscitation of the Theological Seminary.

The Synod of 1856, met in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Board of Foreign Missions selected Syria as the field of operations, and, after several elections, the Rev. Robert J. Dodds and Mr. Joseph Beattie, licentiate, accepted appointments to that field. They left the same Fall for the scene of their labors.

The Theological Seminary was reorganized, and located in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, where it has since remained. Revs. Drs. James Christie and Thomas Sproull were chosen professors. A friendly correspondence was carried on with the Associate Presbyterian Church and New School body, but nothing agreed upon as a basis of union.

The Synod of 1857, met in Northwood, Ohio. There was a large delegation and much interest manifested in all the proceedings. The vexed question of "the deacon" disturbed some parts of the Church for many years, and the following paper, after being amended, was adopted, and is as follows:

WHEREAS, Much of our troubles in the Church, and at our meetings of Synod for some years past, has originated in the attempts, too often successful, to form congregations on the principle known as that of "elective affinity;" as also in the formation of congregations by commissions of Synod, and not by Presbyteries to whom the business of organizing congregations belongs; therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. That hereafter no congregation shall be organized by any Presbytery on the principle of elective affinity, to evade discipline, or reconcile parties at variance, or to settle difficulties which properly

belong to the discipline of the Church, or upon a difference in principle, or the meaning of the Standards of the Church.

*Resolved, 2.* Synod shall hereafter leave the organization of congregations to the Presbyteries to whom it belongs; and

WHEREAS, The Form of Church Government recognizes deacons as ordained officers in the Church, and “requisite” among the officers of a particular congregation, and this by the will and appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, The Form of Church Government defines the duty of the deacon to be “to take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor,” and the Testimony declares that the “deacons have no power except about the temporalities of the Church;” and

WHEREAS, This office has not yet been exemplified in all our congregations; therefore

*Resolved, 1.* That Presbyteries be directed to exercise due care and diligence to have deacons chosen and ordained in congregations where they are still wanting, with no other powers than those defined in the Standards.

*Resolved, 2.* That Presbyteries be enjoined in organizing new congregations, to see to it that deacons be chosen and ordained in them.

*Resolved, 3.* That no action of last Synod was intended to rescind or repeal the resolutions of 1845 and 1847, on the subject of the deacon’s office, the trustee or consistory, nor were they so affected.

An elaborate and convincing report on “Systematic Beneficence and a Sustentation Fund” was submitted and its claims enforced. The reports from all the Presbyteries were full, satisfactory, and represented the Church to be in a generally good condition. Another lengthy report was submitted on the subject of slavery, and the Church resolved to plead with more earnestness for the cause of the oppressed, and work more diligently for the emancipation of the slave. Large contributions and bequests were made to the support of the Theological Seminary, and a plan of endowment was submitted. The Foreign and Domestic Mission Boards reported affairs to be in an encour-

aging condition, and the Church was generally supporting these departments of her work. The Synod was not yet ready to enter into the work of Covenanting.

During the year 1858, a conference of two Committees from the Synod and the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Churches, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, to confer on the subject of union. There were present of the Synod, Revs. Thomas Sproull, J. B. Johnston and J. M. Willson. Of the General Synod, Revs. Hugh McMillan, A. W. Black, William Wilson and J. N. McLeod. Dr. Sproull was chosen Chairman, and Dr. McLeod, Secretary. After much discussion and the reading of letters which had passed between the Committees and the Synods, and after holding several sessions, the delegates finally submitted the grounds upon which a union could be effected. Rev. J. B. Johnston submitted the following, in behalf of the Synod, as the only ground upon which a reunion could be effected:

The Committee present the brethren, the Committee of the other Synod, the following theses, as embracing for substance the ground on which we understand the Reformed Presbyterian Church stood in regard to *civil relations* anterior to 1833, and as the only ground on which we can give any encouragement to our brethren to expect that a re-union of the two Synods can be effected.

1. That we dissent from the Constitution of the United States, because of its immoralities.
2. That this dissent from the Constitution requires to abstain from the oath of allegiance, and from oaths of office binding to support the Constitution.
3. That it prohibits voting for officers who must be qualified by an oath to support the Constitution.
4. That it prohibits sitting on juries, as explained by our Testimony, understanding that such juries do not include various other

juries, where there is neither an incorporation with the government, an oath to an immoral law, nor any implied engagement to support the Constitution.

Rev. Andrew W. Black then read the following statement on behalf of the General Synod, in reply to the theses already presented:

1. The ground occupied by the Reformed Presbyterian Church in reference to the civil institutions of the United States, State and Federal, prior to the disruption, is as expressed in her own language in 1821, "That no connection with the laws, officers, or the order of the State, is forbidden by the Church, except what truly involves immorality."

2. That in the application of the above principles, we regard ourselves as dissenters from immorally constituted civil establishments; that is to say, whenever the recognition of an immoral law is made essential to the action of the juror; or to the exercise of the elective franchise; or to holding civil office; or to the discharge of any other civil duty. Reformed Presbyterians must abstain from all such acts, as involving immorality.

3. That the moral character of the Federal Constitution of the United States, being a matter of opinion, and undecided by any competent authority, the recognition or non-recognition of it should not be made a term of ecclesiastical communion.

4. We therefore recommend, that as the two churches are united in their views of the great principles of civil government, and in the belief and declaration of the fact that no communion should be held with immorality, the ground of the re-union should be the exercise of forbearance in regard to those special governmental questions by which they are now divided. It is the belief of this Committee that the Reformed Presbyterian Church was divided, not by difference of religious principles, but by other causes, as is shown in the letter, to which a reply is expected.

5. Should the brethren of the other Committee and the Synod not agree to these grounds of re-union, we recommend to the ministers and members of these Churches to treat each other with Christian courtesy and respect, and to co-operate as far as possible on the large common ground they occupy as Reformed Presbyterians.

A re-union of these bodies has never been effected for the reason that the one party is not willing to come back to the high position from which it departed in 1833, and the other is not prepared to abandon the historic and true position of the Church.

The Synod of 1859, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. A communication from the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church was received, with a basis of union. The following is the reply:

DEAR BRETHREN—Your letter containing a resolution of your Reverend Body, and inclosing a copy of the Basis of Union of the United Presbyterian Church, was received during the session of our Synod.

Your kind and fraternal greeting we most heartily reciprocate, and unite with you in the prayer that “the great King and Head of the Church will direct the way by which the friends of Zion and of the truth shall be led to see eye to eye.” We have His sure promise that He will accomplish this in his own time.

The steps by which you have arrived at your present position we have watched with attention and interest. It gives us joy to find in your Basis of Union the statement and assertion of some of the principles for which we have long contended. The supreme dominion of Messiah as Lord of all—Prince of the Kings of the earth—occupies a place in your Testimony, and our hearts rejoice on this account. It is the application of this and kindred principles to the civil institutions of the country that has placed us in the position of dissenters from a government that ignores the claims of our Prince. In our view it is only by maintaining this position that we can consistently carry out our principles, and succeed in bringing our land into subjection to its Lord and King. Our present standing has been deliberately taken, and in the strength of Divine grace we purpose to hold on till the great end—the enthronement of Messiah—shall be effected.

In order to bring up the Testimony of the Church to prevailing evils, the following preambles and resolution were adopted:

WHEREAS, Secret Associations and Slavery are present evils of enormous magnitude, and are rapidly extending their power and pernicious influence in this land; and

WHEREAS, In our present Testimony, there is no direct and explicit utterance against these sins proportionate to their prevalence and heinous character; and

WHEREAS, There is a demand for a new edition; therefore,

*Resolved*, That Synod proceed to take, at once, the requisite steps for adding a section on Secret Societies, and a chapter on the subject of Slavery.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church has always been consistent with her position and held that human slavery is a sin against God and men. In the fearless advocacy of the cause of the oppressed, the ministers of this Church have been mobbed, stoned, egged and burned in effigy. All manner of reproachful epithets have been pronounced upon them. Notwithstanding the unpopularity of the cause, they proclaimed fearlessly the sin of the nation and the outrage committed upon humanity until God heard the cry of the oppressed and sent them deliverance.

A vacancy being created in the corps of professors in the Theological Seminary, the Rev. James M. Willson was chosen a professor. Geneva Hall was taken under the care of Synod and left under its present management. The reports from the Foreign and Domestic Missions pronounced both these departments in a flourishing condition. The following memorial was prepared, generally signed throughout the Church, and transmitted:

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:*

The memorial of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, now in session in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, sheweth—That, desirous to

promote the best interest of the country, and knowing that “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men;” that the Lord Jesus Christ is “Prince of the kings of the earth” and “Governor among the nations;” and that the law of God is the “law;” knowing, also, that nations and rulers should acknowledge God and submit to our Lord Jesus Christ, obeying God’s commands, your memorialists are also convinced that our nation does not thus submit itself to God in its Constitution, and exposes itself to the denunciations of God’s wrath—“the nations that forget God shall be turned into hell”—We, therefore, pray you to take measures for the amendment of the Constitution, so that it may contain,

1. An express acknowledgement of the being and authority of God.
2. An acknowledgement of submission to the authority of Christ.
3. That it should recognize the paramount obligation of God’s law, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.
4. That it may be rendered, in all its principles and provisions, clearly and unmistakably adverse to the existence of any form of slavery within the national limits.

The Synod of 1861, met in the city of New York. The dark political horizon indicated a speedy clash of arms, and the war of the rebellion broke out. The position and duty of the Church in the present crisis were presented in the following report:

That in view of the calamities brought upon this land by the iniquitous war now raging, *in the interest of slavery*, against the United States, Synod feels called upon to present, for the information of all whom it may concern, a brief outline of our position as a Church; and

1. We heartily acknowledge the numerous excellencies of the civil institutions of this land; we appreciate its code of laws, as, in general, wholesome and just; we prize the privileges and protection we here enjoy in our personal pursuits and rights, and take a deep interest in this land of our birth or adoption, endeared to us as the early refuge of the friends of civil and religious liberty, as the scene of a noble conflict for national freedom and independence, as our home and that of our children.
2. Notwithstanding all this, we are constrained, in conscience, to maintain, as we and our fathers have heretofore done, a state of dissent from the Constitution of the United States, inasmuch as there

is in this instrument no acknowledgement of the name of God, Most High and Eternal; no recognition of the supremacy of His law contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; no profession of subjection to the Mediatorial authority of the Son of God, who is "King of kings and Lord of lords:" while on the other hand, this Constitution contains certain "compromises" in the interest of slavery and slaveholders. On these grounds we are compelled to withhold from said Constitution our oath in its support, and thus to deny ourselves certain privileges which we would gladly enjoy could we do so with good conscience toward God. But

3. That our position may be fully and definitely understood, we declare,

(1.) That we disclaim allegiance to the government of any foreign nation.

(2.) That we "consider ourselves under obligations to live peaceably with all men, to advance the good of society, and to conform to its order in everything consistent with righteousness."

(3.) That we disown all sympathy, even the least, with the traitors styling themselves "the Confederate States," now in arms against these United States.

(4.) That we will, as true patriots, defend this, our common country, against these and all like enemies.

The Synod re-affirmed its position on the jury question, and exhorted the members to firmness and confidence in this respect.

The Synod of 1862, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. The Domestic Mission Board established Mission Schools among the freedmen in several localities in the South, and several missionaries were sent out to Port Royal, South Carolina, and other vicinities where the way was open for mission work. The Theological Seminary received the attention of Synod, and the professors reported a good attendance of students and an addition to the library.

The Synod of 1863, met in Sharon, Iowa. The

Domestic Mission Board reported the establishment of mission schools in South Carolina, Florida, Mississippi and Arkansas, and missionaries and teachers had been sent to these respective fields. The Foreign Mission and Theological Seminary were in a flourishing condition and received the generous contributions of the Church. The Synod appointed a committee to go to Washington and confer with the President of the United States, and heads of departments, in reference to the duty of the nation to submit to King Jesus. Presbyteries were directed to minister to the sick and wounded soldiers in the military hospitals within their bounds. Some objection being brought against the army oath, a Committee framed the following oath and sought the proper authorities for the sanction of the same, when members of the Church entered the army: "I do swear by the living God, that I will be faithful to the United States, and will aid and defend them against the armies of the Confederate States, yielding all due obedience to military orders." This oath neither encouraged members unduly to enter the conflict, nor pledged them to support an immoral Constitution. Covenanters regarded the government justifiable in the war so far as it was waged to maintain the integrity of the country and to overthrow the iniquitous system of human slavery. Taking this position the members of the Church generously supported the cause of the Union with their substance and their lives. There was not a rebel within the pale of this Church. They believed that the Southern‡ Confederacy was a conspiracy against God and humanity, and that

her members were doing God's service when they enlisted to break it up. While recognizing this fact they still claimed that the secession from a human government was not to be compared to rebellion against the divine government, and they would embrace every opportunity to teach the nation this truth and insist upon the recognition of the same. There was no sin or inconsistency in aiding the government in a lawful and righteous work, and while Covenanters heroically defended their homes and their country by suppressing their enemies, they in no sense became responsible for the immoralities of the government although some wicked men were the brave leaders in the conflict.

In February, 1863, a number of ministers and members of several Christian denominations met in Xenia, Ohio, for the purpose of discussing the subject of amending the National Constitution. At a subsequent meeting in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, circulars were addressed to the supreme Judicatories of several Christian denominations to appoint delegates to a convention in July, 1863, but to these invitations no bodies responded but the two Synods of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. This was the origin of the present National Reform Association, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church has ever since been the chief supporter of the movement. Mr. John Alexander of Philadelphia, is, in many respects, the father of the Association, and has been the chief supporter of it in the way of personal contributions. Not a single religious paper in the country had a word of cheer to offer, and when the

*Christian Statesman* was founded for the propagation of the principles of the Association, some sneered at the project and others passed it by in silence. What a wonderful change in sentiment in twenty-five years! The most able ministers and jurists of the country are now wheeled into line with its glorious principles, and soon the cause which it advocates will finally triumph. The good which this Association has done in the last quarter of a century is incalculable, and at the present time lecturers are in the field from different denominations.

The Synod of 1864, met in the city of Philadelphia. Among the first resolutions was this:

*Resolved*, That this Synod recommend to the members of the Church entire abstinence from the use of tobacco.

The Committee previously appointed to wait upon the President of the United States, made the following report:

The Committee appointed to confer with the President and heads of Departments touching the duty of the nation to recognize God and the claims of His Word, have attended to the duty imposed upon them. About the beginning of February we visited Washington, and had a pleasant and satisfactory interview with the President. We proffered and read in his hearing an address expressing the well-known views of our Church in regard to the duty of nations, and of the duty of this nation in particular, in the present exigency. A copy of the address is herewith submitted. The Committee also prepared, and caused to be laid before the National Congress, a memorial craving such changes in and amendments to the Constitution of the United States as are set forth in the address.

The Committee took no steps toward securing an acceptance by the proper Department of the form of oath prepared by Synod. In view of the circumstances of the case, it was deemed unnecessary to do so. The Committee understand that the prescribed form of oath was

specifically intended to meet the case of those who might be drafted under the new conscription law of the United States. It was ascertained that under this law no oath of any kind was required of the soldier, and also that in the case of those who had felt it to be their duty to offer their services to the nation in special emergencies, they had been accepted without any oath. Under these circumstances no end was to be gained by pursuing the matter any further.

The Synod of 1865, met in Utica, Ohio. Resolutions on slavery, and Committees to present the same to the President, were passed. Geneva Hall was revived for the education of colored persons as well as all others. The Mission Boards reported great encouragement and large results from the efforts put forth at home and abroad. The Theological Seminary was not as fully attended as usual owing to the disturbed state of the country. As the rebellion was now put down the Synod adopted the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, 1st. That this Synod congratulate the country upon the utter overthrow of the slaveholders' rebellion, which has for the past four years filled the land with mourning and aimed at the destruction of the nation.

*Resolved*, 2d. That we recognize in the death of President Lincoln by the hand of an assassin, a severe chastisement from Almighty God, and the legitimate fruits of that system of wrong and bloodshed which inspired and animated the Southern conspiracy.

*Resolved*, 3d. That inasmuch as it is a principle of the divine government that "he that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord;" it is our calm and deliberate judgment, that it is the duty of the government, to inflict the penalty of death upon the leaders of the late rebellion.

*Resolved*, 4th. That we recognize in the late war a signal manifestation of the divine wrath against the sins of the nation, especially the rejection of the authority of Messiah and oppression of man.

*Resolved*, 5th. That we heartily rejoice in every step which has been taken for the destruction of slavery, and urge to carrying for-

ward of the work, until every man in the nation, without regard of color, stands upon a perfect equality before the laws.

*Resolved*, 6th. That we again call upon the nation to abandon its rebellion against God, acknowledge His name, submit to His authority, and recognize the mediatorial claims of His Son.

The Synod of 1866, met in the city of Rochester, New York. Rev. R. J. Dodds, missionary from Syria, was present and addressed the court and presided over the deliberations. The question of voting for proper amendments to State Constitutions came up, and received the following answer:

That while there may be instances in which it would not be wrong to do so, yet as there are other ways by which countenance and approbation may be given to what is proper, as by petition, and by public and private expression, Synod does not recommend such a course.

Strong resolutions were passed against the use or sale of intoxicants, and Synod gave its promise to aid the cause of temperance in every way. Cheering reports were received from the Southern and Foreign Missions, and the work of evangelization and reformation was hopefully progressing in all the Church's departments.

The Synod of 1867, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. A plan for the endowment of the Theological Seminary was set before the Church. A weekly paper was established for the dissemination of the principles of the National Reform Association. Rev. Samuel O. Wylie was chosen professor of Theology to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Rev. Dr. James M. Willson. To an inquiry whether a member of the Church living in Canada may hold office in a case where no oath is required, the following answer was given:

The principle involved in this question is not local but general in its application. The position of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in regard to accepting office, the committee understand to be, not that it is sinful in itself and wrong in all cases, but that it may become sinful either by the imposition of an immoral oath or by involving an obligation to perform a sinful service. When either of these conditions exists, the law and practice of the church forbid the holding of office.

Rev. Joseph McCracken was chosen President of Geneva Hall and Seminary, at Northwood, Ohio. The education of colored persons at this institution promised to be a success, and the Church was deeply interested in this work of elevating the condition of the sable race.

The Synod of 1868, met at Northwood, Ohio. The Theological Seminary and Geneva Hall received special attention. Rev. Samuel O. Wylie having declined the professorate in the former institution, the Rev. J. R. W. Sloane was chosen to the position. Arrangements were made for Covenanting in the near future. Synod re-affirmed its position on the jury question and intemperance, viz: that members are prohibited from sitting on juries, and that they are to cease touching intoxicants in any way. The law of the Church was declared to be positively prohibitory in these respects. Rev. Joseph McCracken having resigned the Presidency of Geneva Hall, Mr. S. J. Crowe, student of theology, had been appointed by the Board as Principal, and conducted the school several years in a most efficient manner.

The following deliverance of Synod upon the voting for amendments was given:

The Reformed Presbyterian Church has deliberately taken the position of dissent from the civil institutions of the United States, not

on the ground that participation in all the functions and operations of government is sinful in itself, but on account of the immoral character of the Constitution and laws under which the citizen must act. Hence the Church has applied this principle by prohibiting her members from holding office and voting at civil elections.

The inquiry now demanding an answer is, Does voting for an amendment of State Constitutions involve, as in the other cases already documented by the Church, anything sinful or inconsistent with the principle and practice of the Church? Synod answers unequivocally, that it does. Inasmuch as voting for this object or any other, involves incorporation with the national society and imperils our dissent from it. Is. 8:12, "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy." It exposes the members of the Church to temptation. I Cor. 8:12, "But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." It encourages other Christians to continue their sinful connection with an ungodly nation, and renders nugatory the discipline of the Church. On these, and other grounds, Synod is resolved to abide by the distinctive principles of the Church, and to apply the law of her exalted Head. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." I Thess. 5:22. "Lo the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Numb. 23:9. And ere long "the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." Dan. 7:27.

To the two inquiries: 1st. In a State where there is no objection to the school law, except that it requires of all officers an oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the United States, as well as an oath to discharge the duties of their office, provided they let it be known that they will not take the oath of allegiance prescribed by law? 2d. Can members of the Church vote for an individual for school director who will take the oath of office with the above limitations and explanations? In accordance with the principles stated in the foregoing case, Synod answers, No.

The Synod of 1869, met in the city of Newburgh, New York. A most stirring and hopeful report was given of the cause of National Reform. The educa-

tional and Missionary Departments of the work of the Church were in a most healthy condition, and several new organizations of congregations and settlements of ministers were reported. The following resolutions on Secrecy were unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That this Synod views with deep concern the reviving growth and influence of the Secret Orders in the United States.

*Resolved*, That we condemn these associations, because their effect is to establish spurious and artificial social relations among men and a new code of duties founded upon these relations; because the secrecy they practice and enjoy is inconsistent with the candor becoming the Christian character; and because they virtually assume to establish a religion distinct from the religion of Jesus, and therefore false. On these grounds we renew our traditional testimony that those who enter these associations are unworthy of ecclesiastical fellowship.

*Resolved*, That we welcome with great satisfaction the rise of an earnest and wide-spread opposition to the Secret Orders, and we trust it shall increase and prevail till society be delivered from the dangers and purified from the corruptions which they occasion.

The Synod of 1870, met in the city of New York. The Church was encouraged to organize Sabbath Schools in all the congregations, but not in such a manner as to supplant parental training or home instruction. The Reformed Presbyterian Church has always excluded members of oath-bound societies from her Communion, the reasons for which action are embodied in the following timely report on the subject:

WHEREAS, Secret Orders are institutions avowedly setting before themselves ends of no more temporary character, but permanent as those of the Church and State; and

WHEREAS, Their boasted efforts of friendship and beneficence are designed not for the benefit of all men, nor for the aid of society and the Church in their work, but for the advancement of the orders themselves as rivals of the Church and State; and

WHEREAS, The social institutions formed by membership in these orders must therefore be artificial and false, and the performance of the duties imposed by their obligations an injustice to all outside, including the families of members; and

WHEREAS, Secrecy, which is an essential feature of these orders, however justifiable in exceptional circumstances, is in all ordinary cases needless, opposed to candor, unworthy of a benevolent enterprise, and unscriptural; and

WHEREAS, These orders become to many of the members a church and their ritual and services virtually a religion, and thus not only tend, as prove by fact, to keep men from uniting with the Church, but also induce professing Christians to abandon her; and

WHEREAS, In many of these orders the members are bound together by oaths, horrible in themselves, and administered by no civil or ecclesiastical authority, and may thus become ready instruments in the hands of designing leaders for the overthrow of our civil and religious liberties; therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. That we emphatically condemn all these orders as wrong in principle and necessarily injurious in their operation.

2. That it is as much the duty of the Church to prohibit the connection of her members with these orders as to forbid their participation in a system of rebellion or oppression.

3. That in the view of the advocacy of Secret Orders by influential papers, and even by respected Christian men and ministers, we pledge ourselves to labor for the thorough agitation of the subject, believing that a clearer understanding of their character and influences will lead to the withdrawal of their most effective support.

There was a general and earnest desire upon the part of the Church to now go forward with the act of Covenanting, and definite arrangements were made to enter upon this important work at the next meeting.

The Synod of 1871, met in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It is the most notable meeting because during its sessions the Synod entered into the solemn act of Covenanting. The “bond” of the Covenant

and the "Confession of Sins" had been overtured by the Church. This important event in the history of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America took place in the Pittsburgh Church, May 27, 1871, after a sermon on "Covenanting" by Rev. Andrew Stevenson, D. D. Rev. James M. Beattie then read the Covenant, Rev. J. R. W. Sloane, D. D., addressed the Synod on "The Spirit in which we should Covenant," and Rev. Thomas Sproull, D. D., offered prayer. After a few minutes of silent prayer, the Covenant-oath was taken by the members of Synod and others who joined them. The Covenant was then again read by Rev. Thomas Sproull, D. D., and at the close of each section all responded "Amen." At the close of the last section all repeated in concert Exodus 24:7, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." The Covenant was then subscribed by seventy-four ministers, seventy elders, and by five licentiates, four students of theology, and nineteen elders not members of the Synod at that session. After the bond was signed, the Rev. William Milroy delivered an address on "Covenant-keeping," and the service closed by singing Psalm 72: 17-19.

As the proceedings of this memorable occasion have been preserved to the Church in the "Memorial Volume," it is thought proper to insert nothing in this volume but the Covenant itself, in order that this sacred bond may meet the eye of the casual reader.

#### COVENANT.

"We, Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Members of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA,

with our hands lifted up, do jointly and severally swear by the Great and Dreadful Name of the LORD OUR GOD:

1. “That coming into the presence of the Lord God with a deep conviction of His awful majesty and glory, of His omniscience, His purity, His justice and His grace; of our guilt and total depravity by nature, and our utter inability to save ourselves from deserved condemnation to everlasting punishment; with renunciation of all dependence on our own righteousness as the ground of pardon and acceptance with God, we receive for ourselves and for our children the Lord Jesus Christ as He is offered in the Gospel, to be our Saviour—the Holy Spirit to be our Enlightener, Sanctifier and Guide—and God, the Father, to be our everlasting portion; we approve and accept of the Covenant of Grace as all our salvation and desire, and take the moral law as dispensed by the Mediator, Christ, to be the rule of our life, and to be obeyed by us in all its precepts and prohibitions. Aiming to live for the glory of God as our chief end, we will, in reliance upon God’s grace, and feeling our inability to perform any spiritual duty in our own strength, diligently attend to searching the Scriptures, religious conversation, the duties of the closet, the household, the fellowship meeting and the sanctuary, and will seek in them to worship God in spirit and in truth. We do solemnly promise to depart from all iniquity, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, commending and encouraging, by our example, temperance, charity and godliness.

2. "That after careful examination, having embraced the system of faith, order and worship revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and summarized as to doctrine in the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, and Reformed Presbyterian Testimony, and, as to order and worship, justly set forth in substance and outline in the Westminster Form of Church Government and Directory for Worship, we do publicly profess and own this as the true Christian faith and religion, and the system of order and worship appointed by Christ for His own house, and, by the grace of God, we will sincerely and constantly endeavor to understand it more fully, to hold and observe it in its integrity, and to transmit the knowledge of the same to posterity. We solemnly reject whatever is known by us to be contrary to the Word of God, our recognized and approved manuals of faith and order, and the great principles of the Protestant Reformation. Particularly, we abjure and condemn Infidelity, under all its various aspect; Atheism, or the denial of the divine existence; Pantheism, with its denial of the divine personality; Naturalism, with its denial of the divine Providential Government; Spiritualism, with its denial of the Bible redemption; Indifferentism, with its denial of man's responsibility; Formalism, with its denial of the power of godliness. We abjure and condemn Popery, with its arrogant assumption of supremacy and infallibility; its corrupt and heretical teachings; its dogma of the Immaculate Conception; its hostility to civil and religious liberty, to the progress of society in civilization and intelligence, and especially its denial, in

common with Infidelity, of the right and duty of the State to educate in morality and religion by the use of the Bible in schools enjoying its patronage and support. Believing Presbyterianism to be the only divinely instituted form of government in the Christian Church, we disown and reject all other forms of ecclesiastical polity, as without authority of Scripture, and as damaging to purity, peace and unity in the household of faith. We reject all systems of false religion and will-worship, and with these all forms of secret oath-bound societies and orders, as ensnaring in their nature, pernicious in their tendency, and perilous to the liberties of both Church and State; and pledge ourselves to pray and labor according to our power, that whatever is contrary to godliness may be removed, and the Church beautified with universal conformity to the law and will of her Divine Head and Lord.

3. "Persuaded that God is the source of all legitimate power; that he has instituted civil government for His own glory and the good of man; that he has appointed His Son, the Mediator, to headship over the nations; and that the Bible is the supreme law and rule in national as in all other things, we will maintain the responsibility of nations to God, the rightful dominion of Jesus Christ over the commonwealth, and the obligation of nations to legislate in conformity with the written Word. We take ourselves sacredly bound to regulate all our civil relations, attachments, professions and deportment, by our allegiance and loyalty to the Lord, our King, Lawgiver and Judge; and by this, our oath, we are pledged to promote the interests

of public order and justice, to support cheerfully whatever is for the good of the commonwealth in which we dwell, and to pursue this object in all things not forbidden by the law of God, or inconsistent with public dissent from an unscriptural and immoral civil power. We will pray and labor for the peace and welfare of our country, and for its reformation by a constitutional recognition of God as the source of all power, of Jesus Christ as the Ruler of Nations, of the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule, and of the true Christian religion; and we will continue to refuse to incorporate by any act, with the political body, until this blessed reformation has been secured.

4. "That, believing the Church to be *one*, and that all the saints have communion with God and with one another in the same Covenant; believing, moreover, that schism and sectarianism are sinful in themselves, and inimical to true religion, and trusting that divisions shall cease, and the people of God become one Catholic Church over all the earth, we will pray and labor for the visible oneness of the Church of God in our own land and throughout the world, on the basis of truth and Scriptural order. Considering it a principal duty of our profession to cultivate a holy brotherhood, we will strive to maintain Christian friendship with pious men of every name, and to feel and act as one with all in every land who pursue this grand end. And, as a means of securing this great result, we will, by dissemination and application of the principles of truth herein professed and by cultivating and exercising Christian charity, labor to remove stumbling blocks,

and to gather into one the scattered and divided friends of truth and righteousness.

5. "Rejoicing that the enthroned Mediator is not only King in Zion, but King over all the earth, and recognizing the obligation of His command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and resting with faith in the promise of His perpetual presence as the pledge of success, we hereby dedicate ourselves to the great work of making known God's light and salvation among the nations, and to this end will labor that the Church may be provided with an earnest, self-denying and able ministry. Profoundly conscious of past remissness and neglect, we will henceforth, by our prayers, pecuniary contributions and personal exertions, seek the revival of pure and undefiled religion, the conversion of Jews and Gentiles to Christ, that all men may be blessed in Him, and that all nations may call Him blessed.

6. "Committing ourselves with all our interests to the keeping of Him in whom we have believed: in faithfulness to our own vows, and to the Covenants of our fathers, and to our children whom we desire to lead in the right ways of the Lord; and in love to all mankind, especially the household of faith in obedience to the commandment of the everlasting God to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, we will bear true testimony in word and in deed for every known part of divine truth, and for all the ordinances appointed by Christ in his king-

dom; and we will tenderly and charitably, but plainly and decidedly, oppose and discountenance all and every known error, immorality, neglect or perversion of divine institutions. Taking as our example the faithful in all ages, and, most of all, the blessed Master himself, and with our eye fixed upon the great cloud of witnesses who have sealed with their blood the testimony which they held, we will strive to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, in hope of the crown of life which fadeth not away. Finally, we enter upon this solemn act of covenanting before the Omniscient God, with unfeigned purpose of paying our vow. All sinister and selfish ends and motives we solemnly disavow, and protest that we have no aim but the glory of God, and the present and everlasting welfare of immortal souls. And our prayer to God is and shall be, to strengthen us by His Holy Spirit to keep this our promise, vow and oath, and to bless our humble attempt to glorify His name and honor, His truth and cause with such success as will bring salvation to our own souls, the wider spread and triumph of truth and holiness, and the enlargement and establishment of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, one God be glory in the Church throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

With a very few exceptions, all the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America entered into and subscribed this same Covenant in the respective congregations. The Rev. Samuel R. Galbraith was

chosen missionary to Syria, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of the Rev. Robert J. Dodds. Rev. David McAllister was appointed by Synod to give his whole time to the interests of National Reform.

The Synod of 1872, met in York, New York. An offer was made by Mr. James Kelly of Wilkesburg, Pennsylvania, and also by friends in Newburgh, New York, for the location of the Theological Seminary. The Pittsburgh Presbytery donated the buildings of Westminster College to the Seminary Board. Wilkesburg was chosen as the seat of the new Theological Seminary. Elaborate reports on Missions, Education, National Reform, and other vital departments of the Church's work were submitted. The Committee on the "Homestead Oath" reported:

That they have examined the Homestead laws of the United States, and find that every applicant must swear that he is a citizen, or that he has filed his declaration of intention to become such, as required by the naturalization laws of the United States. (See Brightley's Digest of the Laws of the U. S., p. 288, sec. 41.) At the time the patent is made out, he must swear that he has borne *true* allegiance to the government of the United States. (*Idem.*, page 288, sec. 42.)

There never has been a question in the Church as to the first oath. It has always been deemed wrong. As to the second, which both natives and foreigners must take, a majority of the Committee think it inconsistent with our refusal to incorporate, by any act, with the government of the United States.

The Committee recommended that Synod take steps to obtain such a modification of these oath as may be consistent with our dissent.

The Rev. H. H. George was chosen President of Geneva College, and has since continued to hold that position.

The Synod of 1873, met in Northwood, Ohio. For several reasons the location of the Seminary at Wil-

kingsburgh was not satisfactory to some parts of the Church, and the Synod adopted the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That a Committee of seven persons be appointed to locate and erect the Theological Seminary Building in the city of Allegheny, and that the place and style of building and appurtenances be left to the judgment of the Committee; and that the limit of expense be thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000).

The Synod of 1874, met in the city of Philadelphia. The Committee appointed to report on the "Patrons of Husbandry" or "Grangers," after ascertaining facts, reported the following:

1. That this order was organized by Freemasons and Oddfellows; is modelled after their forms in its rites, ceremonies, and officers; is largely under their control, and as a matter of fact furnishes recruits for these detestable orders.

2. That it is in itself a secret and substantially oath-bound society, the candidate for admission being required to pledge his sacred word and honor, in the presence of God, to keep secrets, obey laws and assume responsibilities wholly unknown to him, and utterly incompatible with Christian integrity and simplicity.

3. That the order in its constitution assumes the false and impossible position of neutrality both with respect to religion and politics, and as a consequence of this its religious services are conducted indiscriminately in a Christian or Anti-Christian and pagan manner; and instead of being neutral in politics, it is practically a political party.

We therefore emphatically and unequivocally condemn this and all other secret orders as ensnaring, deceptive and sinful in themselves, as prejudicial to the best interest of society, and as a lawless and inefficient way of obtaining redress of grievances. We also recommend that Synod enjoin it upon all sessions not to fellowship members of this or any secret order, and to warn all under their care to beware of the ensnaring influences of such organizations. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

The Synod, as the representative of the Church, again pledged itself to the hearty support of the

principles incorporated by the National Reform Association, and has unceasingly carried forward the pledge embodied in the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That this Synod, and the whole Church, in whose interests it is met, regard with the liveliest interest all efforts to reform our nation, and to bring it, in its constitution, and administration, and into conformity with the revealed will and written Word of God.

*Resolved*, That a distinct constitutional recognition of Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man, as the legislative head and ruler of nations is the indispensable duty of this nation, and that any proposed form of amendment to the national constitution, or States constitution, in which such recognition is omitted, is and will be held by this Church to be fundamentally defective.

*Resolved*, That we will pray and labor for the reformation of our nation, nor cease our efforts until we see it a Christian state, administering its authority in subserviency to the kingdom of Christ, in suppressing blasphemy, idolatry, licentiousness, and every other form of public hindrance to its progress, and in giving positive countenance, encouragement, and support to the Christian Church throughout the commonwealth as the great restorer and conservator of the true religion, which as a leaf of the tree of life, restores and heals the nations.

The Synod of 1875, met in Coulterville, Illinois. Rev. David B. Willson was elected to a professorate in the Theological Seminary. All the reports from the different agencies of the Church were full and satisfactory, and, with the exception of direction in the settlement of a few local cases of discipline, the proceedings of this Synod were routine.

The Synod of 1876, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Rev. Joseph Beattie, of Syria, was present, and presided over the sessions of Synod.

Strong and definite resolutions bearing upon the different reforms of the day were passed at the meeting, and they were of such a character as to conclusively

show that this Church is composed of thorough reformers.

The Synod of 1877, met in the city of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. The following report explains itself:

The Committee appointed to confer with a similar Committee appointed by the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, reports that, after several meetings of the joint Committee, it was agreed to report to the respective Synods, that while we recognize with thankfulness the identity in faith, and practice and testimony in many important respects of these closely related branches of the Church of Christ, we are constrained to admit that the obstacles in the way of organic reunion appear, for the present, to be insuperable.

The special Committee, to which were referred petitions relation to inviting clergymen of other denominations into our pulpits, report:

1. That while desiring to cultivate and cherish the most friendly and fraternal relations with our brethren of other evangelical denominations, it has never been the custom of the Church to invite them to minister to our people in the preaching of the Word.

2. That we see no good reason, in the present condition of the visible Church of Christ, for departing from existing usage.

The Synod of 1878, met at Linton, Iowa. With reference to the conference on union with the New School body, the Committee made the following report:

After a frank, earnest and friendly conference, it was agreed that there was not, at present, any special encouragement to take steps in the direction of attempting to heal the breach between the two branches of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and while it was agreed that we should foster in all proper ways friendly, fraternal feelings, that it was not advisable to continue the conference further.

Synod thought it proper for women to speak and lead in prayer in social praying societies. The Fourth Term of Communion was revised, and is as printed.

Synod advised the Missionary among the Chinese to baptize such persons as give evidence of "intelligent

and unfeigned faith and repentance.” Synod also regarded “the language of the Testimony on the duties of the Christian magistrate as the exhibition of the doctrines we hold upon this subject, and as properly interpreting the Confession of Faith.”

The Synod of 1879, met in the city of New York. Rev. David Metheny, M. D., Missionary to Syria, was present, and was chosen to preside over the sessions. Rev. A. M. Stavely, of New Brunswick, was also present, and addressed the meeting.

The following resolutions of tobacco were unanimously adopted by Synod:

Inasmuch as tobacco is extensively used throughout society, and in its use is a positive evil, which manifests itself—1. As an injury to physical health; 2. As an offence to good manners; 3. As an unnecessary expenditure of money; 4. As it is associated with much vice; 5. As it exerts a demoralizing influence upon the youth; 6. As it is inconsistent with moral and spiritual purity. Therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. That this Synod condemn all indulgence in the use of tobacco.

*Resolved*, 2. That we urge our people to abstain from it in every form except as prescribed by competent medical authority, and use all lawful and wise means to eradicate this evil from society.

*Resolved*, 3. That Presbyteries be hereby advised to license no one to preach the gospel who indulges in the use of tobacco; and session be advised not to ordain any officers in the Church who practice this habit for mere carnal gratification.

*Resolved*, 4. That this Synod condemn the cultivation, manufacture, and sale of tobacco.

With its earnest desire, and with the hearty concurrence of the Irish Synod, the Presbytery of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia was received under the care of this Synod. The change of the location of Geneva College having been agitated for some time,

the Synod now chose to remove the institution from Northwood, Ohio, to Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, on the condition that ten acres of ground and twenty thousand dollars were given for the erection of buildings. This offer was made by the Economite Society and accepted by Synod. The College first opened in Beaver Falls in September, 1880, and the building erected for the purpose was occupied the following year. The Synod re-affirmed the law of the Church with reference to marriage with a deceased wife's sister, that it is prohibitory. In a concrete case of a member of the Church being summoned to sit upon a jury in Pittsburgh, and the Judge refusing to excuse him, a Committee of Synod was appointed to wait upon the Judge, who decided that he would not excuse the member, but was willing to accept, instead of the usual juror's oath, such an oath as would be approved by the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

The Synod of 1880, met in the city of Philadelphia. General Rules for the organization and government of Geneva College were submitted. The following report explains the manner in which affairs were settled by the removal of the College to Beaver Falls:

That the notes given to the endowment by persons in the vicinity of Northwood, on the condition that the College remain in that place, be returned to those who make this request.

That the Board of Education, as connected with the College in Northwood, Ohio, be continued in existence until all business matters relating to the transfer of the College to Beaver Falls shall be fully accomplished, and that the Executive Committee of the Board be authorized to make a quit claim deed to a Committee to be appointed by members of the Church at Northwood, of all the buildings there

belonging to Synod, on condition that the Northwood Committee meet all the expenses afterwards accruing.

That the moveable property of the College, such as the library, apparatus, &c., be removed to the College building at Beaver Falls.

The Synod of 1881, met in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS, It is important for the interests of the Church to place before our people and others a statement and vindication of the principles professed by us, and to justify the practice grounded upon these principles, and particularly in connection with questions made of immediate and pressing urgency from the circumstances of the times; therefore,

*Resolved*, 1. That Synod take measure for the issuing of a series of tracts, of not more than 4 pages, 12 mo., for distribution among our people, and for general circulation, so far as it can be accomplished.

2. That D. S. Faris be appointed to write on the duty of our members in regard to the use of the Elective Franchises, Dr. Sloane on Psalmody, James Kennedy on Instrumental Music, Professor Willson on Dancing, J. Lynd on Temperance, D. M'Allister on the Jury Question, and Dr. Sproull on the Testimony of the Church, in regard to Christian people who are in political fellowship with nations, which disown the Kingship of the Lord Jesus; and that these papers be published at once in the magazines of the Church.

On the question of voting for temperance amendments, the Committee say:

On this paper we report that as the Synod by its action of 1866 and 1867 refused to authorize such voting on the part of the members of the Church, and as it not only appears to many inconsistent with our position on the jury question, and in some measure an incorporating with government, but also inconsistent with the position, solemnly taken in our act of Covenanting of 1871, that therefore Synod should distinctly declare that it disapproves of and discourages such voting on the part of our members as if not positively a breach of their testimony, at least in many respects dangerous and ensnaring.

Synod thought that members acceding to our Com-