

The Reformed Churches of Europe and America, in
Relation to General Church History.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY REQUEST OF THE

Presbyterian Historical Society,

BEFORE THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ST. LOUIS, MO.

MONDAY EVENING, MAY 21, 1855.

BY

HENRY B. SMITH,

PROFESSOR IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND OF THE PRES-
BYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY HENRY B. ASHMEAD,
GEORGE STREET ABOVE ELEVENTH.

1855.

A N A D D R E S S

DELIVERED BY REQUEST OF THE

Presbyterian Historical Society.

THE two well-known sayings, that "history is philosophy teaching by example," and that "the historian is a prophet with his face turned backwards," suggest important lessons as to the value of history and the functions of the historian. For history contains a philosophy, and the historian alone has all the data of rational prophecy. Only he who knows what has been, can understand what is, or can anticipate what is to be. If we cut ourselves off from the past we shall be disowned in the future. The facts of history are one of the surest tests of our speculations about the final destiny of the human race.

A sense of the dignity of history, and the consciousness of an historic destiny, are impressed upon all great nations, upon all great personages. The Greeks and the youthful Alexander, the Romans and the imperial Cæsar, the Papacy and the grasping Hildebrand, the Franks and the lordly Charlemagne, the Germans and Luther strong in faith, the French and Napoleon strong in will, the English with the sagacious Pitt, and our own land favored with the wise Washington, have all felt the ardor of this historic inspiration and have changed the face of the earth. And those who follow the march of these nations and study the biographies of such men, tracking them consecutively down the long evolution of historic time, must be led to the

ennobling conviction, that history has its rational as well as personal aspects, its divine plan, disclosed while the warp and woof are woven together by the flying shuttle of time.

The fluctuations seem human, but the tide is made by celestial influences. One advancing plan pervades all; as has been nobly said, by England's present laureate :

" Well I know, that thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened, with the progress of the suns ;
Not in vain the distance beacons ; forward, forward let us range,
While the great world sweeps forever down the ringing groves of change."

Even the genealogy of the historic muse, in the ingenious and graceful fable of the old Greek mythology, shows some sense of this commingling of divine and human elements in history. Clio, like her sisters, those ideal representatives of the various arts and sciences, is the progeny of Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, and of Apollo, the god of wisdom. This signifies that all the arts have a divine wisdom for their father, and are under memory's fostering care ; for without memory the sciences would have no continuous and accumulative being, and without a divine impulse they would have no inner life. And Mnemosyne herself is the daughter of Uranus and Gaia, of the heavens and the earth ; it is her office to retain and transmit what may be known of the one or the other. Born of such a parentage, Clio is depicted in a sitting posture, as befits her calm office, displaying an unrolled scroll, and pointing to an open chest filled full with parchments. These are her treasures, the perpetual memorial of the divine and human acts, which make up the record of history.

The order and end of history are of divine origination, the chief instruments and agencies are human. The composer does not make the laws of music, he works in obedience to them ; nor do men make the law of history, or shape its ends, they but work out the eternal and o'ermastering plan. It is only by an illusion that men believe that they construct history. History is the work of God ; his greatest work in time. Its seemingly isolated and fragmentary events are parts of one connected and orderly series, of which the divine providence is the method, human welfare the chief subject, and the divine glory the last chief end.

It is only when the whole of human history is thus viewed, as one series, one connected plan, that we can understand its real dignity, or that it can claim for itself a place among the sciences. Its lessons are then more than those of mere moral examples for our imitation; they are the lessons of a divine wisdom, they instruct us in the weightiest problems of human destiny. History as a mere chronicle of facts has indeed its value; as the biography of individuals, it has its charms, its warnings and its inspirations; as the biography of nations, it is an earnest and serene moral teacher, discoursing ever of justice, more true and wonderful than any drama; but history, as the biography of humanity, binding together all the empires and races that have peopled the earth, in one unfolding plan, reaching already through six thousand years of time, centering in one kingdom, which began in the beginning to be consummated only at the end, progressive, conflicting, never subdued and ever victorious, the only kingdom which has survived all change and has the high augury of final supremacy, human history when thus viewed is more than human, it is divine, bespeaking an omniscient and omnipotent author, rehearsing his power and proclaiming his glory. The course of nature has been called "the art of God," the course of history is his highest art, as much loftier than nature as spirit is better than matter, and as spiritual are superior to physical ends.

Such is human history in its real and sacred aspects, thus first unfolded, in record, promise and prophecy in the Word of God. All Pagan literature has nothing, in grandeur and completeness, to be compared to this vision, this sublime conception of the human race, as one in origin, one in destiny, the theatre of the divine work of redemption. Augustine, the greatest teacher of the Latin church, first felt to its full extent, the grandeur of this idea, which he sets forth as the plan of history, in his "City of God," an immortal work, composed in reply to the heathen taunt that Christianity had ruined the earth, amid the downfall of the old Roman empire, and in the beginning of the new Latin civilization. He daringly proclaims that the City of God, the home of the elect, is to subdue Rome and the earth; that the prophecies of Scripture foretell the fall of both

the ancient and the modern Babylon.* Bossuet, limited by his Roman Catholic prejudices, took up the same theme. It was expanded to still fuller proportions in Jonathan Edwards' "History of the Work of Redemption," written in the beginning of our new American civilization, and sketching with masterly outline, though imperfect in historic details, the whole of human history as a divine theodicy, a real body of divinity, which is from, for and to God, centering in the person of Christ and the work of Redemption. In this redemption, and here alone, is to be found the centre of unity to human history; the race is viewed in its two prime and fundamental relations to the first and to the second Adam, and all converges upon the idea of a redemption, prepared, purchased and applied, running through the whole of man's history, to its consummation in eternity. This general idea is indicated in the motto to Hase's manual of Church History, which declares, that "the Lord of the times is God, the turning-point of the times is Christ, the true spirit of the times is the Holy Spirit." The great Swiss historian, John Von Müller, gives the results of his life-long labors, extracted, he says, from 1733 authors in 17,000 folio pages, in the striking confession, that "Christ is the key to the history of the world. Not only does all harmonize with the mission of Christ; all is subordinated to it." "When I saw this," he adds, "it was to me as wonderful and surprising as the light which Paul saw on the way to Damascus, the fulfillment of all hopes, the completion of all philosophy, the key to all the apparent contradictions of the physical and moral world; here is life and immortality. I marvel not at miracles; a far greater miracle has been reserved for our times, the spectacle of the connection of all human events in the establishment and preservation of the doctrine of Christ."

It is, we conceive, one of the most wonderful facts about the

* Augustine, in the second book of his "Retractationes," (ii. 43.) gives the following account of the origin of this work:—"Interea Roma Gothorum irruptione, agentium sub rege Alarico, atque impetu magnæ cladis eversa est; cujus eversionem decorum falsorum multorumque cultores, quos usitato nomine Paganos vocamus, in Christianam religionem referre conantes, solito acerbius et amarius Deum verum blasphemare cœperunt. Unde ego exarscens zelo domus DEI adversus eorum blasphemias, vel errores, libros de *Civitate Dei* scribere institui."

sacred Scriptures, that, from the beginning, they have held up this vision of the kingdom of God in Christ to elevate man's faith and enlarge his charity. No other book, not deriving its materials from this source, has such a comprehensive and connected view of the course and destiny of our race. Infidelity has never been able to cope with the argument from prophecy, which gathers corroboration with each revolving century. It is precisely the most daring and universal of the inspired prophecies which has been receiving constant fulfillment. This is an unexampled wonder. God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, is the burden of the Bible, and it is also the burden of history. He whose mind is filled with this ennobling idea knows the soul of prophecy, which is the substance also of history.

All history is thus in its inmost nature religious. It centres in the church of Christ. And hence, as members of his church, we must feel a special attraction towards whatever concerns the past, the present or the future fortunes of that church. Its history, wisely and largely understood, lifts us far above any merely sectarian sympathies, while it also deepens our interest in the narrative of each part in its relations to the whole. He who loves the whole, loves also each part, and cares for it for the sake of the whole. And the history of the whole church cannot be known without the records of the parts. No true general history can be written unless preceded by a series of minute and local investigations. It is the necessity of historical investigation, that chronicles, biographies and monographs should go before the summary; they give the data for the true inductions. One of the chief reasons why we have not a good general history of any part of Christ's church in our own country is, that we have so few complete local histories; the stones have not yet been made for the arch. The Presbyterian churches of our land have, in a special manner, too long suffered in general repute from this neglect. Other churches have pursued a wiser policy. Had our Calvinistic churches a history at all to be compared with that of Bancroft for the United States, it would place us in our proper vantage ground. Where portions of our history have been written, it has been, alas! too often in a controversial spirit, for the exigencies of debate,

a spirit which unconsciously sacrifices our broad characteristics to some special peculiarities or party ends. And hence it is, that no German or English church historian has ever even begun to understand the true position and character of the Reformed churches of our land, which lead the van in the grand, progressive march of the kingdom of God, as it goes on to subdue this continent. You never met a European who could comprehend the actual working of our church system, either in doctrine or polity. And one reason is, that we have been so busy in doing the work, that we have not found time to make a book for his instruction.

The Presbyterian Historical Society, in whose behalf I have the honor to address this General Assembly, was instituted to meet this need; to supply the materials for such a history, and to stimulate the spirit of historical investigation through all the Presbyteries and local churches of our communion. It has wisely brought together the representatives of different branches of the great Presbyterian family of our land, which will lead, we trust, to a feeling of closer sympathy, to a sense of community in great things, thus lessening the sharpness of conflicts in lesser things. The increased conviction of a common historic basis will bring us nearer together. Let it be more than a republic of letters; let it increase our sense of brotherhood. History should lift us above local and personal animosities, and party names. That history which is above our feuds is our truest history. It should make us feel that union is better than discord, that the whole is more than the part.

The influence of the Presbyterian Historical Society should be felt through all our churches. We need, as a people, more of the historical spirit, especially of the spirit of church history. If to our youthful energy we could add the wisdom of the past, we have a "combination and a form indeed to give assurance" of our power. Our political historians, our State Historical Societies have outstripped our churches. In our different States and Territories there are now twenty-eight distinct historical societies, several of which have published ample and valuable collections. Even the Territory of Minnesota has already issued four annual historical reports. Wisconsin and Iowa are beginning their work. The historical society of the State in which

we are now assembled, has a noble field to cultivate. Several denominations, the Episcopal, the Baptist and the Congregational are moving in this matter. Let them stimulate the Presbyterian churches to a healthful rivalry. Let these too exalt, not unduly, their own history. Let them, also, pay a fitting tribute to the memory of their fathers and founders. Though we may not think it quite time to appoint our historiographer for the whole church, let every Presbytery see to it, that each local church prepares its own history. Let old mansions be ransacked for documents; let periodicals, newspapers and pamphlets be carefully collected by some zealous antiquary, such as every Synod should have. We need for all parts of the church more of such sketches as those of Drs. Foote and Hill; of Hotchkin, for Western New York; of Dr. Davidson, for Kentucky and Virginia; and of the Old Red Stone, by Dr. James Smith. Of the individual churches, too, we should collect the authentic records, extending back to the time of their origination. Light will thus be thrown upon the true character and composition of these churches; as is exemplified in the elaborate and able history of the First Church of Newark, by Dr. Stearns; in Dr. Murray's account of the Church of Elizabethtown; Tuttle's of Madison; and Sherwood's of Bloomfield. Only with such preparations can we be brought to a full knowledge of the facts, from which we may deduce the principles which have shaped our history. Neither the first schism of 1741-1758, nor the second great schism beginning in 1837, can be understood without patient and impartial investigations. The important history of the relations of the Presbyterian churches to the other churches of our country, their influence on us and ours on them, is also as yet unwritten. The publication of such documents as the Minutes of the Convention of Delegates from the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, and from the Assembly of Connecticut, held annually from 1766 to 1775, not only throws light on our relations to the New England churches, but it serves to bring out some of the hidden causes, not yet fully appreciated, which led to our separation from the mother country.

The Presbyterian Historical Society ought also, in all appropriate ways, to facilitate the preparation of biographies of the

worthies who have built up and honored its churches. Even of Makemie there is no adequate memorial. The lives of the pastors of the first Presbyterian churches of Philadelphia and of New York deserve an ample record. Witherspoon, the patriot, who also defended the claims of moral philosophy against a New England writer; Davies, that great preacher; Gilbert Tennant, that soul of fire; Wilson, Dickinson and Blair; McWhorter and Burr; Blackburn, Mason, Griffin and Richards; these are surely worthy of some lasting testimonials. Let us have their biographies as we have those of Rodgers, of Alexander and of Green. To the history of the Log College should be added that of Nassau Hall and other colleges.

The doctrinal as well as ecclesiastical history of our churches is still to be composed: it is peculiar and calls for subtle distinctions as well as a catholic spirit. It cannot be measured accurately or fully by any standard of the old world. We need a point of view which may comprehend Rodgers and Tennant, Wilson and Green, Richards and Alexander, the Westminster Confession and the elder Edwards. The expected publication of the whole correspondence about Dr. Bellamy's call to New York, will doubtless throw light on that interchange and conflict of doctrinal views between the different parts of our country, which has served to give its special shape to our theology.

And were it too much to expect that the different Presbyterian churches might also gather together the collected writings, so far as they can now be recovered, of its ablest divines, and issue them after the manner of the admirable Parker Society of England, and the Wodrow of Scotland? And we should be doing a good work if we could also issue a monthly Bulletin, after the manner of the admirable Bulletin now sent forth, richly freighted, by the "Society for the History of French Protestantism," under the honorary presidency of M. Guizot, now in its third year, and which has rescued many a valuable Huguenot document from oblivion.

It is only after such ample preparations and research, that we can expect a complete history of Presbyterianism for our whole country. The laborious investigations of Dr. Hodge, in his able, but incompleted "History," might then be carried on to more definite conclusions, in which there would be a more

general agreement. A complete ecclesiastical and doctrinal history of these churches, if it did not prove a bond of union, should at least promote a closer fellowship and sympathy.

We might thus be doing our part towards the preparation of a work, more needed than almost any other in church history, which should set forth the true character of the great Calvinistic or Reformed Churches of the Reformation, in their relations to the general history of the whole Christian Church. The history of these churches still remains to be adequately written; the aggressive and progressive portion of modern church history belongs chiefly to them. They are leading on Christianity, both in doctrine and polity, to its greatest and widest triumphs. The breadth and depth of this movement, its relations to Romanism and Lutheranism, to Arminianism and Socinianism, to Episcopacy and Independency; its great varieties, with the same substantial type, in the many and strong nations where it found foothold; its alliance with politics and influence upon them; its combination of the conservative and reforming elements; the energy with which it has applied and is applying Christian principles to all the relations of life and society; the vigor with which it has developed the most complete ethics in connection with the noblest divinity; and the relation of this whole movement to the final aim and destiny of the Christian Church, present subjects of high contemplation to every thoughtful mind.

It is but a slight outline that we can here present of the characteristics of the Reformed, or Calvinistic, especially of the Presbyterian churches. We will glance at these traits as seen in their European origin, in their planting and growth in our own land, and in their relation to the general history and final aim of the Christian Church.

The grandeur of the majestic Hallelujah chorus in Handel's Oratorio, is said to be seen in the fact, that though composed for a limited number of performers, it swells and grows to more magnificent proportions and effects, as the voices and instruments are multiplied and reduplicated, until it becomes a voluminous tide of enthralling and resistless harmony. And so, too, the grandeur of the principles of the Reformed Churches is attested by the still more conspicuous fact, that they are as

applicable on a broad, as they were on a narrow theatre, to nations as to individuals, to the present even more than to the sixteenth century. Increase of years, of numbers, and of countries, has only served to give them expansion, maturity, and energy. The new world is and has proved to be a better, because it is a broader sphere, for testing, among the most varied influences, the full efficacy of the system of doctrine and polity with which Calvin transformed Geneva.

The great Reformation of the sixteenth century, was "the salvation, because it was the restoration of Christianity." For two hundred years this European revolution was growing in secrecy, with here and there an occasional throe, pre-announcing this great birth of time. It was a comprehensive political, social, popular, and intellectual, as well as a deep spiritual movement. Even Roman Catholic writers have ceased to depict it as a merely sudden explosion, and trace back its causes to the heart of the middle ages. The scholastic system, that combination of ecclesiastical traditions and Aristotelian logic, had failed to give a satisfactory theology. A new psychology supplanted the Aristotelian metaphysics; the inductive was added to the formal logic, making new premises in theological discussion. The Papacy, that real anti-Christian power, had become a persecuting and extortionate despotism. The motto of the Waldenses, "*Lux in tenebris*," proved prophetic. From the heart of Europe came up that solemn invocation, not unheeded:

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold!

Ringling in many a silent hour were heard by the attentive ear the warning bells of those godly churches, which Rome had vainly tried to root out, even as it is said that sailors in the Caribbean seas still hear the lingering chime of the bells of a submerged island.

Our Lord issued forth, as with a new resurrection, from the sepulchre where they had laid him. With a deeper spiritual experience, the faithful came again directly to the Saviour. The "formal" principle, that the Scriptures are our only rule of faith and duty, and the "material" principle of justification

by faith alone, were placed in the front of the battle against the novelties of the Papacy. To these two principles, says Hagenbach, the Reformers added the "social" principle, in new vigor, whereby they formed their churches on the basis of the universal priesthood of believers. The old faith and the old charity became new again. The Reformation, says Guizot, "recalled religion to the laity." Responsibility for belief was no longer left to the care of a priestly caste.

Though the Reformation, under God, began with Luther in the power of faith, it was carried on by Calvin with greater energy, and with a more constructive genius, both in theology and in church polity, as he also had a more open field. The Lutheran movement affected chiefly the centre, and the north of Europe; the Reformed churches were planted in the west of Europe, all around the ocean, in the British isles, and by their very geographical site were prepared to act the most efficient part, and to leap the walls of the old world, and colonize our shores.

Nothing is more striking in a general view of the history of the Reformed Churches, than the variety of countries into which we find their characteristic spirit, both in doctrine and polity, penetrating. Throughout Switzerland it was a grand popular movement. There is first of all, Zwingle, the hero of Zurich, already in 1516 preaching against the idolatrous veneration of Mary, a man of generous culture and intrepid spirit, who at last laid down his life upon the field of battle. In Basle we find Oecolampadius, and also Bullinger, the chronicler of the Swiss reform. Farel arouses Geneva to iconoclasm by his inspiring eloquence. Thither comes in 1536, from the France which disowned him, Calvin, the mighty lawgiver, great as a preacher, an expositor, a teacher and a ruler; cold in exterior, but burning with internal fire; who produced at twenty-four years of age his unmatched Institutes, and at thirty-five had made Geneva, under an almost theocratic government, the model city of Europe, with its inspiring motto, "*post tenebras lux.*" He was feared and opposed by the libertines of his day, as he is in our own. His errors were those of his own times: his greatness is of all times. Hooker calls him "incomparably the wisest man of the French Church;" he compares him to the

“Master of Sentences,” and says, “that though thousands were debtors to him as touching divine knowledge, yet he was to none, only to God.” Montesquieu declares that “the Genevese should ever bless the day of his birth.” Jewel terms him “a reverend Father, and worthy ornament of the Church of God.” “He that will not honor the memory of Calvin,” says Mr. Bancroft, “knows but little of the origin of American liberty.” Under his influence Geneva became the “fertile seed-plot” of reform for all Europe; with Zurich and Strasbourg, it was the refuge of the oppressed from the British Isles, and thus indoctrinated England and ourselves with its own spirit.

The same form of faith was planted in the German Palatinate, modified by the influence of Melancthon, receiving an admirable exposition in the Heidelberg Catechism, and the writings of Ursinus, and forming the German Reformed Church. Holland accepted the same system of faith with the spirit of martyrdom; against Charles and Philip, against Alba and the inquisition, it fought heroically, under the Prince of Orange, of imperishable fame. In contending for freedom in religion it imbibed the love of civil freedom, which it brought also to our shores; and though Guizot does not once name Holland in his *History of European Civilization*, we can never name it but with honor and gratitude; itself oppressed, it became the refuge of the oppressed. In England, God overruled the selfish policy of Henry VIII. to the furtherance of the Gospel; the persecution of Mary, 1553–8, sent forth the best of England’s blood to Zurich and Geneva, there to imbibe more deeply the principles of the Reform, and to bring back the seeds of Puritanism, which germinated in spite of the High Court of Commission and the Acts of Uniformity of 1559 and subsequent years. The Universities were Calvinistic in their most vigorous period, when Bucer and Peter Martyr taught in them a pure faith. “The Reformation in England,” says the *Christian Remembrancer* (1845), “ended by showing itself a decidedly Calvinistic movement.” “The Reformation produced Calvinism; this was its immediate offspring, its genuine matter-of-fact expression.” And need I speak of Scotland, where the towering form of John Knox, also taught in Geneva, stands out severe

in doctrine and morals, in vivid contrast with the loveliness of the frail and passionate Mary. Her chivalry could not stem the tide. Presbyterianism prevailed, never to lose its hold of the Scotch nation. Their "fervid genius" was well pleased with this strong theology. Tenacity like that of the Burghers, and of the Anti-Burghers, both New and Old Light, and the indomitable spirit of religious independence, go with them wherever they go. The Free Church battles in the nineteenth century for the principles of its sires. The Solemn League and Covenant reappear in our own land, transferred from religion to politics in the Mecklenburg Declaration.

The same spirit which elevated Switzerland, Holland and the British Isles, broke forth in the reforms of Spain and Italy, to be strangled in blood. In France we read its saddest tale, in that dark night of St. Bartholemew, lighted by lurid fires, while not a star of heaven shone, for which Rome by order of Gregory XIII., sung its *Te Deum*, from whose baleful influence France has not yet recovered, and which could not be expiated even by the horrors of its revolution. That revolution was but the catastrophe of the drama, begun in the revocation of the edict of Nantes; "the feet of the avenging deity," says a Greek proverb, "are shod with wool." Those high-minded Huguenots, nobles and artisans, cast out from France, were scattered through Europe, and have added lustre to our own history. The names of the Prince Condé, and the Admiral Coligny, of Beza praying at Poissy, in the presence of the royalty and nobility of France, of Jurieu and Amyrant, of De Mornay, D'Aubigné, and Henri Estienne will be remembered as long as Christian chivalry and learning receive their meed of praise.* Something of their spirit lingered long in France in Jansenism, adorned by Pascal's virtues.

These general historical statements make it apparent, that

* A tardy justice is beginning to be rendered in France to the deeds and worth of the Huguenots. Other countries have hitherto appreciated them better than has their native land. M. Haag, "*La France Protestante*," Sayons, "*Etudes littéraires sur les écrivains français de la Réformation*," Coquerel, "*Histoire des églises du désert*," Lalanne's "*Memoirs of Agrippa D'Aubigné*," and especially Weiss, "*History of the Protestant Refugees*," in Mr. Herbert's version, with the researches of Mr. Charles Reid, are among the works which are contributing to elucidate the history of the French martyrs.

the principles of the Calvinistic churches were more widely diffused than those of the Lutherans, and among the most vigorous nations. Lutheranism was in the centre, but the Reformed churches begirt the whole of Western Europe, to the English isle,

That precious stone, set in the silver sea
Which serves it in the office of a wall.

But that sea which was England's wall, became to these churches the highway for the propagation of the Gospel, opening a path for their feet. Lutheranism had its *ne plus ultra*; Calvinism its *plus ultra*. The former soon settled down at peace with princes; the latter was always in difficulty with the rulers of this world, ever contending and advancing. The one has been well termed the Church of the theologian, the other the Church of the people. Both were Presbyterian, as was all the Reformation, excepting the Anglican, but the Lutheran insisted more on territorial and consistorial, and the Calvinists more on Presbyterian and congregational rights. The former, after Melancthon, had but one type of doctrine, the Reformed had greater diversities, with the same general features. The one retained the sacramental theory, the other subordinated it to electing grace. Montesquieu says, "that each believes itself to be most perfect, the Calvinists believe themselves most conformed to what Jesus has said, the Lutherans to what the apostles have done." The one dwelt chiefly on the sovereignty of God, the other on the wants of man. The Calvinists, says Schweizer, contended against the Paganism of Rome, and the Lutherans against its Judaism. The former has ever applied the standard of the Scriptures with more unsparing and exclusive rigor, to all society and all life; the latter, absorbed in science, pays less heed to the life. The one has led a more secluded life, the other has done stern battle on the open sea. Each has its reward. Lutheranism has been speculative and stationary, Calvinism thoughtful and aggressive. Calvinism has its roots in a deeper practical necessity than Lutheranism, as it also has had a more penetrating and reforming power, working its way through many nations.

Three points characterize the Calvinistic movement, and give to it a special supremacy in modern church history: its

theological system, its organizing power, and its practical efficiency in applying the Gospel to the whole of life.

The theological system received by the Reformed Churches was a revival of Augustinianism, without its unhealthy leaven of sacramental grace, and a return to the special form of scriptural truth, inculcated by Paul, in the Epistle to the Galatians, and in that to the Romans, "still," says one, "an epistle to the Romans of our times." It applied the formal principle, that the Scriptures are our only divine rule, with an unwonted energy. As the barons of England said to Henry III., that "the laws of England should not be changed," so said the Reformers of the laws of God. They viewed all as from, for and to God. They elevated the doctrines of grace on high. They bowed in deepest submission only to a sovereign will.

With the same solid and severe general cast of doctrine, in all the countries where these elect ones emerged into this new life, they combined a much greater variety in incident and detail, than the sister Lutheran churches. This has been, contrary, perhaps, to the general impression, a signal mark of the Calvinistic movement. It was most prolific in varied systems of theology, and in a rich symbolical literature. Such symbols are needed by the Church, and will always be, for a threefold office; as a bond of union; as a testimony and confession; and as an instrument of teaching; not superseding but expounding the Word of God. Of such confessions, all the Reformed countries produced eminent examples, in fullness, and doctrinal consistency far in advance of the simple symbols of early times, and these still remain, the historical basis of our churches. While Rome bound itself hand and foot to mediæval corruptions at the Council of Trent; while the Lutherans were consolidated by their Formula of Concord (1577); in all the other countries of Europe, the Calvinistic system was in substance confessed, by many a Swiss council, by the French, by the Germans at Heidelberg, by the Scotch, by the English in the XXXIX Articles, by the Dutch at Dort, and last and best of all, in the Westminster Confession, made by the combined wisdom of England and Scotland, immediately received in New England, adopted by the Presbyterian churches of our land, and never superseded,—the ablest product of this sym-

bolical movement, containing the best results of the controversies between Romanism and Protestantism, and among the Protestants themselves. It was composed with the greatest care, under direction of the Long Parliament, submitted to them 7th December, 1646, and sent back for "proof texts." Goodwin, Lightfoot, Calamy, Selden and Evelyn, and the Scotch Henderson, Gillespie, Rutherford and Baillie, with much prayer and earnest study of the Scripture, made it what it is.

✓ The general theological system of the Reformed churches, first fully expounded in Calvin's Institutes, carried to its most detailed exposition in Geneva by Beza and Turretin, moved on steadily between the two extremes of Antinomianism and Arminianism. It received a more historical and less scholastic character from the Dutch theology of the Covenants, through the labors of Cocceius and Witsius. From the too exclusive predominance of the idea of the "Covenants," it has been redeemed in Scotland and especially in our own country, in subsequent discussions. It is a singular fact that the revival of Calvinistic theology under Edwards in our own land, was coeval with its decline on the continent of Europe; since the middle of the last century, no great Calvinistic works have been there produced until the most recent times. In Scotland, England and our own country its fortunes have been different; the English race and language seem more favorable to its spirit. But everywhere it has been signalized by comprehensiveness and acuteness, with occasional excesses, indeed, in the revival of merely Jewish ideas and polity. It insisted in a special manner upon the unity of the Old and New Testament dispensations. By its early and careful separation of natural and revealed theology it was probably saved from the rationalism of Germany; its manly thought kept it from degenerating into "pietism." The respective provinces of reason and revelation it has always carefully defined and guarded. It is rescued from scholasticism by its deference to the Word of God. Divine sovereignty and human freedom are its two poles, while midway between God and man stands the person of Christ, and his mediatorial work, applied not directly through sacraments but by the internal efficacy of the Holy Ghost.*

* A competent history of the theology of the Reformed churches is a desideratum in English literature. Joshua Wilson's "Historical Inquiry concerning

With these theological characteristics of the Reformed churches, their polity harmonized; the one seems made for the other. This ecclesiastical polity is equally removed from Prelacy and Independency; from that prelacy which annuls the rights of the churches, and from that independency which in the part forgets the whole. Prelacy annuls and independency isolates, the single church; the Reformed churches have ever striven to retain both the unity of the whole and the relative freedom of each congregation. The theory of prelacy resolves the essence of the visible church into the Episcopate; with the theory of independency there cannot be constructed a united church, a proper church government for the whole body, any more than the theory of the rights of man can give us the idea and functions of the State. A true theory of the church avoids both these extremes.

There is the invisible church, the true church, which according to all Protestant consent, is the communion of the faithful, in Christ with each other. There is also the visible church, a body of believers having the Word and Sacraments. As necessary to the well-being, though not to the being of each church, there are its officers, its presbyters and deacons; a church with its presbyters gives the unit of the system, which is constituted throughout on the representative idea. Such a constitution adopted by the Reformed bodies, was but a revival of the primitive practice; not an innovation, but a renovation. Cut off the superinduced hierarchy, and in all the church, you would still have presbyters and presbyteries; such as Hilary and Jerome describe as the primitive condition. Comparatively

the Principles, Opinions, etc., of the English Presbyterians," second edition, 1836, contains some valuable historical materials. In Germany, the discussions and writings of Schweizer, Ebrard and Schneckenburger have thrown new light upon the progress and influence of the Calvinistic system in Europe, and have made its elements of power more fully felt. Gass, in his "History of the Protestant Doctrinal Theology," Vol. I. published the last year, has done it more justice than previous Lutheran writers. Schweizer's "Glaubenslehre," and especially his "Protestantische Centraldogmen," Vol. I., though strictly necessarian, are composed with great ability and research. In Ebrard's "Christliche Dogmatik," the sections which narrate the history of the Reformed Theology are of much value and interest. But none of these works know any thing about the Scotch and American systems.

independent presbyteries still lingered in the third century in Africa, as Cyprian testifies.

But besides these features of the Calvinistic polity, there was developed under its influence, a remarkable self-organizing spirit, which it has carried with it wherever it has gone. In this it is strongly contrasted with the Lutheran system. It has a kind of social instinct. It made churches of covenanted believers, such as had not been known since the apostolic times. The general influence, too, of Calvinism, has been, in the main, for union among Protestant bodies; it has been coöperative as well as aggressive. The ideas of confederacy and of federal union were ingrained through the "Covenants" into the leading Reformed churches. By these it has controlled and shaped States as well as made Churches. The union of church and state in the old world has prevented the full effects of this Reformed influence from being felt; but our land has inherited and applied it in the fullest measure.

With such a theology and such a polity we might anticipate the third trait of the Reformed churches, their aggressive and reforming influence. To apply the whole of Christianity to all the relations of life, and thus to regenerate society, is that portion of its work which has given it the most marked and popular historical influence. It has transformed the theory of despots, "all for, and nothing by the people," into the maxim, "under God, all for, and all by the people." Under God, "*salus populi, suprema lex.*" Its theology and polity both adapt it to be a practical system. It would transform the Christian faith into the Christian life. Hence it insisted upon the purity of church membership, reviving the ancient discipline wherever the State would allow. It asks for Christian obedience to the great law of Christian love, which is the only universal solvent. It insists upon the rights of believers, and the headship of Christ, above all contravening human authority. It contended first for civil, for the sake of religious freedom. The whole Reformation was a battle for the rights of national Churches against the Supreme Pontiff; Calvinism, taking a step in advance, has also been ever contending for the rights of individual bodies of believers against the domineering claims

even of a national church. This problem Europe is still trying to solve; this problem this country has left behind it in its onward march. Here was the soul of the Puritan movement of England. The Puritans cared as little as any men for the tippets and cape and vestments, which Elizabeth,—shall we say? with a kind of feminine instinct—and her bishops, with another kind of instinct, sought to impose upon them. But they did care for the rights of God's people, for these they contended, and won the battle, not so much for themselves as for us. And we venerate their manly independence! Had they been less stern, we had been less free! A saintly halo adorns their rugged lives! They have found the glory they sought not, and found it because they sought it not.

And in contending for religious, they purchased for England and ourselves the boon of civil freedom. Many, with superficial judgment, find an inconsistency in their unqualified devotion to the divine sovereignty, and their zealous assertion of human rights. But there is a logical as well as an historical connection; obedience to God made them fearless toward man: God's sovereignty decrees man's freedom. Kings are to do the behests of the Almighty; by them princes decree *justice*. Christ is the only Head of the Church; and for Him his people are to live and die. Civil freedom is necessary for religious; and religious precedes civil; here as elsewhere, religion went before politics. Hence, the Puritan love of liberty long repressed, sometimes forgotten for a moment by themselves, but still a sacred fire in their very souls. The instinct of despots all over Europe was speedily arrayed against the Calvinists. Louis XIV. and Philip II. turned against them with fire and sword; James I. averted his face from the Puritans. It was not a godless freedom for which they contended, it was liberty in law, first the law of God, and then the laws of man. A recent Roman Catholic defamer of the Calvinists in our country has said, "that they denied to all men, all natural rights, assuming all rights to have been forfeited by the fall," that they "contended for liberty only for the elect." But it is the principle of his own church, put into the mouth of those whom he traduces, in the face of the uniform historic testimony, that civil freedom here and in all Europe has ever followed in the wake

of the Reformed Churches. History is the grand revealer of the real soul of any system.

The practical power of the system of the Reformed Churches is also seen in the energy with which they have pressed all moral reforms, so far as the state of society would admit. Their reforming influence extended not only to doctrine, but also to life; not only to private life, but also to the purity of the church; not alone to the purity of the church, but also to the whole well-being of society. The purging and aggressive part of modern church history, belongs peculiarly to them. Christ is present as of old in his church relieving the distresses and ministering to all the wants of men, breaking the bonds of the oppressed, raising the lower to the higher, sending the Gospel to the ends of the earth. The ethical side of Christianity, which Rome neglected, has been developed with most consistency by the same bodies, which in theology are so comprehensive, and in polity so efficient. And the triumph of the Gospel in time is completed, when and only when such reforms are completed; to carry Christian faith and love into all the relations of life is the earthly triumph of the Gospel.

These three leading characteristics of the Reformed churches of Europe admirably prepared them for the great work, which, under divine providence, was set before them in advancing the history of the Church of Christ. That work was not chiefly to be performed in Europe, but in our own land. Their theology, their polity, and their reforming spirit, were to be transported to a wider sphere, where, comparatively unimpeded by tradition, and custom, and prejudice, no longer "cribbed, cabined, and confined," they might have room and verge enough to work out anew and yet more widely the grand purposes of redeeming love. In all the countries of Europe these men were prepared, and from all the countries of Europe they came, in the appointed time, to colonize our shores. It is no accidental circumstance, in Providence, that it was precisely and chiefly from the Reformed Churches of Europe, that our temperate zone was peopled; and that the tone of thought and manner was given by them to our land in its infancy and prime. We received the winnowed wheat of Europe's fields. The men most deeply imbued with the spirit of Calvinism were our sires.

The Puritans and the Huguenots were so far in advance of their own native countries, in theological, ecclesiastical, and consequently in political ideas, that they must needs be persecuted at home. And their persecutions drove them hither, to found a new and mighty republic. Cromwell could not give a commonwealth to England, but we received it. The Genevese polity could not reshape France, but it formed the Huguenots for us. The noble Robinson must leave Scrooby, and enjoy the hospitality of Holland, that he might train his pilgrims, Brewster, Bradford, and Carver, to take possession of New England. These men lived not for themselves, but for us; not for us, but for God.

This is the real central point of view for understanding our own history. It was planted by a colonization such as has been never before known. It was not for politics chiefly, it was not for commerce, it was for the church of God, to advance Christianity yet another stadium in its course, that our fathers came hither from all these nations. Christianity in its first era subdued unto itself the old Greek and Roman civilization, took the spoils of the ancient world, and got the basis for its theology through its prolonged discussion of the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Divine Grace. The same Christianity in its second and mediæval era subdued the German world, and brought kings and nations in subjection to an ecclesiastico-political authority. But Christianity is not only a system of doctrine, is not only an ecclesiastical system, it is also a working system, given to redeem the earth. And hence in its last stadium, under the regenerated Anglo-Saxon race, it is to reform the whole life by the mighty power of divine truth and faith. The application of the whole of Christian theology, through and by the church, to the whole of society and life is the problem, which Calvinism grasped as never before, and to which this land was given, that it might work the problem out. Rome vainly tried to reduce the temporal to the spiritual, through an organized corporation, usurping the functions of Christ; we are working at the same task in a more spiritual method. Europe since the Reformation has also been vainly trying to apply Christianity to the whole of society, by the union of Church and State. We are engaged in the same work

✓ in a different way, abolishing this union, and working directly through the church upon society and individuals, and not through the state. This is our peculiarity; this is in the very genius of Calvinism; and thus is our church history connected with the whole plan of God. For this was our country reserved, and the elect ones of Europe sent here. Our country is the product of the Reformed Churches of all Europe.

How wonderful it seems, that in the course of divine Providence, this Western world, so long hidden, should have been unveiled and disclosed, at the very time that Europe was preparing for the Reformation: how much more wonderful, that its central portions should have remained still unsettled, for more than a century, waiting for the results of the conflicts of the Reformation, reserved to receive and develop the principles engendered in these strifes! For such a land, prophecy had longed! The vision of an El Dorado, of a new Atlantis, has cheered the wisest of our race. The vision was dissipated, the reality disclosed, when the New World was discovered. Some expositors find it foretold in the Scriptures, that speak of the land overshadowed by the eagle's wings. Lord Bacon reads in Seneca (*Medea*, act ii. v. 375 sq.) a prophecy of it, where he describes an age "in which the ocean shall dissolve the bonds of things and a great land appear, and there shall no more be an Ultima Thule." Erik the Red, from Iceland, visited its Vine-land, now New England, five centuries ere Columbus came in his frail, adventurous bark, comforting himself, as Hakluyt says, "with the thought, that the land had a beginning where the sea had an ending." He, too, died not knowing all that he had found; but he took possession of it in the name of the Catholic Church. And the Southern islands and coast, and the Northern limits and lakes of our country, the St. Lawrence, Canada, and Acadia, Penobscot, and the shores of lake Huron, the whole of the Mississippi Valley, up to the Falls of St. Anthony, and down to its mouth, were settled under Roman Catholic auspices. The adventurous Jesuits were sagacious and indefatigable in planting missions; even a Fénelon probably labored in New York to propagate the faith of Rome.

But not to Spain, nor to France, nor to the Papacy was our land to be given; they surrounded the country but neglected

its centre. That was to be colonized under other auspices. Charles I. and Laud would have a hierarchy at home, and the Puritans came to New England. The Presbyterians of Scotland, dragooned by Claverhouse, were sent as bondsmen to our Middle States, and from their martyr seed sprang up armed men in our Revolution. The Huguenots, expelled from France, made their first attempt, under Calvin's and Coligny's influence, to settle this country in Brazil in 1555; next in Florida, then in New England; and they infused something of their chivalric spirit from Maine to Georgia, ever honored in the names of Legaré, Bowdoin, Boudinot, and Nash Le Grand. The pretensions of Anglican Episcopacy, too, nourished here the seeds of opposition to England: the Archbishop of Canterbury virtually claimed under England to be, what a Pope had called him "*Alterius orbis Papa*,"* and resistance to him became among all our Puritans, resistance to England. Through what wonderful and hidden causes runs the cause of Divine Providence. We were made great and free by the influences which would have destroyed our sires, had they not resisted, but yielded. What Providence meant in all these incidents is seen in the result. Thus does history extort from Providence its secrets and disclose them to man in his own progress in freedom and virtue.

The summary of the European history, since the Reformation, in its bearings on our own is then briefly this. The Reformation found in the Calvinistic movement its most decided and complete expression, in doctrine, in polity and in relation to life. The heart of the conflicts of the European States was in this Calvinistic struggle, consummated in Puritanism; this is the central point of view from which to read the European his-

* This title appears to have been first given to Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, as a compliment, by Pope Urban II. (1087-1099); thus Gervase, monk of Canterbury writes, "Tantum ejus gratiam habuit, ut eum (Anselmum) alterius orbis papam vocaret (Urbanus Papa). Cf. Twysden, "Historical Vindication," p. 22. That the pretensions of the Anglican Church fostered the seeds of our Revolution appears from the "Minutes of the Convention of Delegates from the Synod of New York and New Jersey, and from the Association of Connecticut," from 1766 to 1775, published some years since at Hartford. A leading object of this Convention was to consult respecting the Anglican project of making Episcopacy predominant.

tory of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To those nations in which this movement attained its greatest strength, its most decided character, was committed by Divine Providence, the office of colonizing and building up the States of our confederacy. The conflicts which Calvinism engendered in these nations had their issue in this emigration to our land. Their men of faith and zeal, those in whom the principles of this movement were most ripe, persecuted yet not cast down, came from all these European States to found new States in a new world, and here to continue the succession and the progress of the history of Christ's kingdom, even to its ultimate triumphs. They came from England, Scotland, France, Holland, and the Palatinate, and settled in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas and Georgia, unconsciously forming the elements of a new and mighty Christian nation. Northern and Western Europe was the nursery of the trees which God planted there to be transplanted here.

How apparently insignificant the incidents, and yet how varied and complicated, which have served to make us what we are. To ascribe great events to little causes is an art by which some historians elicit a cheap wonder, and seem to cast irony on the whole of history; as when it is said that only a cobweb kept Mohammed's pursuers from capturing him in his cave of refuge. But all great events are somewhere small in the details and analysis. The real wonder is, that out of such petty circumstances, the greatest results are worked out: and, because they are so slight, to weave them together into one plan demands a divine power and skill. It is not the blind goddess of chance who can make these grand combinations. Great events are those, and only those, which embosom great thoughts and principles. The play of every human passion may be a gossamer filament in the web or woof of human destiny. And men are great in history, not chiefly by the force of intellect, not by foresight of all the consequences of their acts, but by the depth of their moral convictions, and by the fact, that even their insignificant deeds are part of a divine plan;

And in such indexes, although small pricks
 To their subsequent volume, there is seen
 The baby figure of the giant mass
 Of things to come at large.

Thus has it been in a most conspicuous manner with the facts of our earlier, as illustrated by our subsequent history. This is also strikingly apparent in the foundation and progress of the Presbyterian Churches of our country.

These Presbyterian Churches have retained the great general characteristics of the Reformed churches of Europe as we have already sketched them; but they have developed them in a peculiar way, with new combinations and under freer auspices. That they have been, or must be, conformed to any one type of European Calvinism, to the exclusion of others, is contrary to their history and spirit, and the whole circumstances of their origin. Each of our larger religious bodies has been made up by a fusion and compromise of elements nearly, but, in very few cases, wholly the same. This is a great law of Providence in accomplishing great things; it combines in a new form, for higher efficiency, already existing elements. Races sundered in the old world are here reunited; they intermarry and forget their feuds. The sectarianism of Europe is the catholicity of America. The smallest bodies of the old world are the largest here. If all parties remained here, just as they are in Europe, we should have no America. The very separation of Church and State, into which Calvinism here grew by an internal, as well as external necessity, would of itself alone produce great changes. This separation was what all the great Reformers Calvin, Luther and Melancthon, desired, but were unable to effect in Europe. We have in consequence a greater multiplicity of sects; but we have also less jarring of these sects, and a gradual growth of a more liberal Christian spirit, in spite of many sectarian diversions.

The dividing line of the Presbyterian, as of the whole ecclesiastical history of our country, must be taken with our political independence. All before this is preparation, the cradling and youth of our churches. What they truly were in spirit and polity has since become manifest. To attribute to our manhood, what were the errors and needful restrictions of youth, or the prejudices of our state of tutelage, is to do injustice to ourselves, to history and to divine Providence. The separation from the mother country was the stroke that burst the shell, and showed what we really were. By that event,

the divorce of Church and State was fully inaugurated in principle. The consummation of that divorce, and its incalculable influence upon the whole character of the Church, we are now experiencing. Christianity stands as it has never yet stood, upon its own vantage ground. We are proving that it is self-sustaining; that it needs not the secular arm to stay it up; that it works most efficiently as it works of and for itself.

In the period of our preparation, the most significant circumstance, as far as it affects Presbyterian history, is, that while the chief regions of our land, New England, New York and Pennsylvania, were settled by other religious bodies, and chiefly for religious ends, that the Presbyterians came, and were at first dispersed through the different colonies, without any favor from any colonial government, but rather opposed, and that they grew and came together in spite of manifold discouragements. New England was colonized by the Puritans, and their church polity was fostered by the state; so that their civil and religious history is interwoven. But the Presbyterian Church history, from the beginning, is the history of a church, and not of a Church and State. In New York the Dutch and Episcopalians grew with the favor of the reigning powers. The Friends in Pennsylvania, the Roman Catholics in Maryland, the Episcopal Church in the Southern States were all cherished by the colonial governments. But the Presbyterians from England, Scotland, Ireland and France, came and were scattered, chiefly through the Middle States, and found none to help them. Their hardships made them stronger, wiser, and also, more ready for the Revolution. They were as the sheep scattered among the mountains, until at Rehoboth the first congregation was assembled. Francis Makemie was laboring at Accomac, in 1690, though he had previously preached to any he could find in the dispersion. He was a man abundant in labors and devotion; of dauntless energy, whom the imprisonment and the fine of £83 7s. 6d. of the New York governor, for his endeavors "to subvert the Queen's ecclesiastical supremacy" could not deter; and, in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware and Pennsylvania, he preached comfort and strength to those whom the Scotch persecution, between 1660-1668, had brought hither. As the Presbyterian congregations were gradually

formed, in the early part of the eighteenth century, they drew together men of different origin, but of kindred faith, Scotch, Irish, English, Welsh, French and also emigrants from New England. The first Church of Philadelphia was organized in 1701, under Jedediah Andrews, from New England, to whom Makemie bequeathed his "black camlet cloak." The churches at South Hampton, Long Island, and at Newark, and several in East Jersey had been already formed chiefly from the New England emigration. From the nature of the case, the individual churches were first formed, and became, as in apostolic times, the elements of the ecclesiastical system. The Presbytery of Philadelphia was organized in 1705; it was expanded into the Synod in 1717, consisting of twenty-nine ministers, about half of whom were from New England, and half of Scotch and Irish origin. The Covenanters and Seceders, following the stricter tradition, remained chiefly apart. By the Adopting Act of 1729, the Westminster Confession and Catechism were received, as they had already been in doctrine in New England for eighty-one years, "as being in all the essential and necessary articles, good form of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine," and it was enjoined, that none should be admitted to the ministry, who did not declare their "agreement in opinion with all the essential and necessary articles of said Confession." Scruples about articles not essential were to be waived.

From this point the churches rapidly advanced, and with the increase of emigration from Ireland and Scotland. This is not the time to discuss the influences of the Great Revival, which added so largely to the growth of the body, increasing the ministry from forty-five to one hundred, killing the theory of an unconverted ministry, and rooting out Antinomian views; nor to dwell upon the labor of the Tennents; the Log College of Neshaminy; the founding of Princeton and other colleges; the old division between Philadelphia and New York, the schism of 1741, and the fortunate and Christian reunion and healing in 1758, by which the church was consolidated afresh, previous to the Revolution, and prepared for the formation of the General Assembly in 1789, beginning its new and riper history, with that of our Republic. With scarcely an exception, all

the Presbyterians were republicans; their church polity was in harmony with republican principles.*

And since then the growth of the Presbyterian Church has been of an almost unexampled rapidity, keeping pace with the mighty progress of our whole land. It has stood upon the basis of the Westminster Confession. Into old forms, it has infused a new life. It has proved itself able, in doctrine and polity, to meet the new demands, without sacrificing its real spirit. It has labored for the education of all, especially for the ministry. As much as any ecclesiastical body in the land, it has shown itself able to combine, in just proportions, the conservative and progressive, the old and the new. It has borne its faithful testimony in favor of all true reform, and against all sin. In Foreign and in Home missions, it has girded itself for the task laid upon it. As a whole, it has sought for union and Christian fellowship among the divided sects. Especially has it recognized its fellowship with New England, in its Plan of Union and in much of its theological spirit. The works of the elder Edwards, with the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, are a kind of spiritual bond between Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Conflicting elements and tendencies have also come from thence into our churches: the problems which they raise, both in doctrine and in polity, have not yet been fully worked out. But this much at least the occasion not only allows, but demands, that we should say, that the Presbyterian Churches have no controversy, and no cause thereof, with the New England theology, and the New England polity, when the former does not substitute a merely ethical system for that of the Westminster Confession, and when the latter does not degenerate into a mere ecclesiastical independency.

Of the various and complicated influences which led to the division of 1837, since which time both branches of the Pres-

* The Mecklenburg Declaration of the Convention of North Carolina, framed on the pattern of the Solemn League and Covenant, was adopted in May, 1775. The Synod of New York were the first ecclesiastical body to counsel open resistance to England. Dr. Witherspoon well represented the whole body, when he said on the floor of Congress, "in the very nick of time;" "of property I have some, of reputation more; that reputation is staked, that property is pledged on the issue of this contest."

byterian Church have nearly doubled in numbers, and of our present position and conflicts, the occasion forbids me to speak. Nor would I say a word which might serve to embitter an unhappy strife, or to rekindle the fires of an old jealousy. In a more comprehensive faith and a larger charity, may the children forget the separation of their sires. But this at least, I may express as my heartfelt conviction,—that in a body constituted as is ours, and in our land, no extremes of measures or of theory can find a permanent influence. Individuals may demand an unlicensed liberty; individual theorists may press some doctrine of human freedom in an absolute sense, and some theory of virtue, so as to seem to exclude the vital necessity of personal faith in Christ: some partial and local tendencies may deny all moral connection between the race and Adam, and resolve justification into pardon, and deny that Christ's merits are a strict and proper *moral* ground of our acceptance; some bold theorists may substitute an abstract ethical system for the truth as it is in Jesus; but such cannot be the character of the theology which our churches require, and it is alien to the whole spirit of the theology which all the Reformed Churches of Europe and our own land have confessed. Nor can it meet the demands of our country and of our times for a living system of divine truth; for such a system as may be the bread and water of eternal life for our land and for the whole earth. The truth is, we have outgrown some of our old discussions, and are better able to appreciate them; and we are in the midst of movements and influences which demand that we rally anew on the old foundations, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

And this leads me to the concluding part of this discussion, and that is, the bearing of the system of faith and of the whole spirit of our churches, upon the great ends for which the Christian Church was established; upon the accomplishment of the divine purposes in the kingdom of Redemption; upon the problem of the final destiny of the human race. How does our land, how does our system stand in relation to this ultimate and all-absorbing question?

If I have given a correct representation of the character of the Reformed Churches, they have grasped the grand features

of this historic problem with a more definite aim, and with a larger promise of success than any other portion of the Christian Church.

✓ The solution of the problem of the world's history is to be found in the right answer to the question,—What is the final destiny of the human race? The answer to that question is to be found, and can be found, only in the Kingdom of God in Christ, which is the centre and sum of history. The end of that kingdom is, the redemption of the world through Christ, to the glory of God the Father. This end can only be attained, as the whole Christian system penetrates and is applied to the whole of human society and life. The real solution of the problem of all history is to be found at last in the practical sphere, the sphere of life. And as we have said and seen, the very idea of the system of the Reformed Churches centres and culminates in its practical efficiency. Here is the test and proof of its real greatness. And this land, cut off from the embarrassments, while reaping the full heritage of the past, was given to it, that it might work this problem out. The reform of the whole of society, by the religion of redemption, the transformation of society into the kingdom of Christ—this is our great work; and in this work are found the aim and sum of the whole history of the race, the solution of the chief historic problem. This point has never been raised anywhere as it is now in our land. To this, our theology, our polity, and our life, are tending. To make society Christian, to bring all around Christ and in subjection to Him, seems our highest destination, above all that mere ethics or civil power can effect.

✓ And what a commanding geographical position has been given us for this work, as to no other people. Rome was only in the centre of the Mediterranean sea, we are in the same relative position to the two oceans, the middle way, between the ancient world of Asia, and the modern world of Europe. Our territory is nearly twice the extent of that of the Roman empire in its palmiest days. And what a stupendous theatre, commensurate it would seem with the grandeur of our lot! It needs but to come from the Atlantic to St. Louis to be oppressed with the boundless magnificence of our material basis and means. One day carries us, as on the wings of the wind, through the

cities and villages and wheat fields of New York; the next we vex the waves of one of the noblest of our inland seas; the third transports us through the heart of majestic forests; the fourth we are swept along over prairies so vast as to bewilder the imagination vainly attempting to recall them, and so fertile, that they may give sustenance to a nation; and even then we have not yet come to the centre of our continent, we have only reached its central, living stream, this mighty Mississippi, with twenty thousand miles of navigable tributaries; and all along this course are those towns and cities, hardly less wonderful than the country in which they are planted, instinct with life, with all the appliances of civilization brought to the very fireside, and St. Louis at the end fitly crowning the whole; and all this unequalled magnificence of lake, forest, prairie and river is but the material substratum,—the noblest foundation of the highest civilization. And why was all this reserved, until now? What destiny is commensurate with such an opportunity? What wonderful purpose of divine Providence, hidden for ages, is to be accomplished in the centre of this new world, which is also older in a large part of its geological structure than any other portion of our earth! What a solemn, yet inspiring, trust is committed to the people of our land!

But the working out of the great problem of human destiny demands not only a fitting theatre, but also, that upon that theatre should be concentrated and brought together the representatives of the leading races, and of all the leading moral, social and religious tendencies, out of which the end is to be elaborated. And these, too, we have, as never yet had ~~another~~ people. More tongues are spoken within our borders, than ever Rome compelled to subjection. More races are here congregated than ever met under the same equal government. The extremes of black and white; the Asiatics already swarming on our western coast; the native Indians; and also the Caucasian in its three leading varieties of German, Celt, and Anglo-Saxon; and in the midst of these the tone is given, the march is led, by that one of them which never yet has faltered a step in its onward course, which like the wheat can migrate to all climes, and is not like rice confined to one, the only race of such tenacity and versatility that those belonging to it, after

the age of thirty, can change their abode and whole professional sphere and be successful,—a race which combines the leading traits of the ancient Greeks and Romans, and is animated by the law and the faith that came from Judea. Why were these races so brought together as never elsewhere, in the long course of human history?

And here too are leading representatives of the greatest moral, social, political and especially religious tendencies, out of whose conflicts the final issue of human history is to be evolved. I speak not merely of the number of our sects, but of the great tendencies of our times. By the very character of our government, and especially by our separation of church and state, these tendencies are able to press forward to their ends, as nowhere else.

These tendencies may, perhaps, be classified as five: the Humanitarian, comprising the democratic and social movements; the Scientific, striving to subjugate nature to the service of man; the Speculative, whose aim is to construct a rational account of man's relations and destiny; the Ritualistic, insisting more upon the external organization and rites, and the Evangelical, instinct with the spiritual life, of the Christian system. All these tendencies are here earnest, alert, contesting, striving for the supremacy. Each has its men of thought, its men of fire, its conscious aim. Each at some points is opposed to all the others; each at some points is forming alliances with the others.

The battle seems likely to rage chiefly between three, the Humanitarian, the Ritualistic and the Evangelical, each of which has its complete theory, and puts itself as the acme of human destiny. The other two, the Scientific and the Speculative must be subservient to one of the others; and there are significant signs of a combination of these, with the Humanitarian tendency, in opposition to both Ritualism and Evangelical Christianity, on the basis of pantheism. The great question for us is, to which of these three great powers, the Humanitarian, the Ritualistic or the Evangelical, is this land to be given; which of them offers the real, practical solution to the problem of human fate?

The Ritualistic tendency culminates in the Roman Catholic pretensions; the Humanitarian view makes the reorganization of society its great end. The former says, that the end of

history is to bring all mankind under the dominion of an organized hierarchy, subject to the See of Rome; the other, that that end is to be found in the subjugation of nature to the service of man in a perfect social state. The one has its truth in the idea of a universal kingdom of Christ, and its falsehood in its ritualism and Anti-Christian Papacy. The other has its truth in the conception of a perfect social state, and its falsehood in the denial of Christ's church, and by some, even of immortality. The Evangelical view has the truth of each, without the falsehood of either. It would bring all to Christ and make his kingdom to be the perfected social state for man here and hereafter.

Both of these other tendencies are alien to our predominant spirit as a people; both are chiefly fed from foreign sources, the one from the Celtic, the other from the Teutonic stock; is it not our destiny to receive and to transform them both by the infusion of an Evangelic Anglo-Saxon seed? The one is Anti-Protestant in nature, the other retains of Protestantism only its outer, human, political side. The former nullifies, the latter deifies, human reason and human rights. Each is opposed to the other; both are opposed to us; we are to oppose both that we may win both. The one is strong in its reliance on the past, the other courts the future; the one claims divine tradition, the other our human sympathies. Both insist on compact organizations; the one tends to a religious, the other to a social despotism, merging the rights of the individual. Philosophy is the idol of the Humanitarian, the voice of Rome is the oracle of his opponent. Both claim infallibility, the one of reason, the other in the interpretation of tradition. Both have great mastery over different phases of the popular mind; both give full play to minds astute, energetic, politic and strenuous. The last word of the Roman Catholic is, the word Papacy, and it rallies its followers around the standard of Mary of the Immaculate Conception; the last word of the Humanitarian is the word Pantheism, and it summons its hosts under the banner of Socialism.

Is the end of human history, and of our own, to be found in either of these, or, in that Reformed faith, given to our land in its earliest prime, and which has made us strong enough to receive and to contend with these hostile powers?

We would attempt no vain, we would rely upon no human prophecy. We single out no one branch of the Reformed family of churches as the inheritor of the spoils of all time. But this at least may be said, that in this land the true church has ampler means for diffusion than anywhere else, secured by that religious freedom which is our national instinct, the very apple of our eye; that here, too, all the material and social influences which make the basis of the State, may also help on the progress of the Church; and that here, as yet predominant in moral power, is that sublime system of faith, in which our land was baptized by the blood of our sires, and to which we pray that it may be given by the peaceful victories of our sons. It is a faith which is the soul of that divine Kingdom of Redemption, eternal in the counsels of God and ever present, since the fall, in the history of man. It is the oldest of traditions as well as the most living of inspirations. Not for tyranny, not for anarchy, not for the Papacy, not for Pantheism, was our land planted and builded. But rather may we be animated by the grateful vision, that between these foreign powers and extremes, the people native to our shores, as also those with us of all other lands who imbibe our true spirit, gathering strength and unity from the spectacle both of the dangers and of the reward, shall advance in that magnificent career set before them, as never before another people, pressing through the hosts by which they are on either hand assailed, and subduing them both unto itself, the one by the majesty of divine truth, and the other by the power of its human sympathies. Thus may we show, that there is that which is mightier than any hierarchy, that there is that which is more fitted to man's needs than any merely social organization. Thus may it be our lot to combine and reconcile in one kingdom all of divine authority and all of human needs. Thus may we prove, that the last and best word for the human race is not the name of any Pope, is not the ideal of any Pantheism, but is the name of Him, who is both God and man, our great High Priest and Saviour, to whom belong power and honor, dominion and might, and of whom it is recorded, in the sure word of that prophecy which never yet has failed, that unto Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.