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The Historical and Theological Background of the Reformed Church in the United States

Carl J.G. Russom

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THE HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND
OF THE
REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

by

Carl J.G. Russom

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Christian Doctrine

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FOREWORD

Long ago God reverently commanded His people Israel to relate to their children and their children's children, what it was He had done for His people in the days of old. We believe this responsibility still to be incumbent not only upon the great church since that day, but upon every community of Christian people since then. The Reformed Church has enjoyed many evidences of God's favor and has experienced many signal deliverances which we too, must feel obligated to pass down to the generations of those yet to come, in order that "we may know the hand of the Lord that it is mighty; that we may fear the Lord our God forever."

It is with this impression that we deign to offer to whoever will read it, this account of the beginnings of the Reformed Church. It is not within our intent to write a complete history, nor that we would engage upon an analysis of the many controversies involved. In our brief sketches, we must of necessity omit some things which might be regarded as of great value; but it must be remembered that this paper is intended for the casual reader and will have but little room to consider minute particulars.

The Reformed Church is much older than its name. One reason for this is the fact that its early forerunners strenuously objected to being named after any particular leader. It did not in the least dawn upon them that they were about to establish a separate Christian denomination; nor could they imagine that their work could in any way break
the succession of the ancient church. Inasmuch as they insisted on proclaiming the pure Gospel, they preferred to be called "Evangelical Christians." However, various names were tacked upon them in various places. At length, when a more specific name had become necessary, some one in France, so it is believed, called the church "Reformed," which name seemed to cling to it. It was accepted as an appropriate name for the body of Christians which was called by it claimed to be nothing more than the old Roman Catholic church reformed. Some of its strictest members at first objected to the use of a capital letter in writing the name of the church. It was their desire that they should be known as the "reformed church," or rather as "the church reformed according to God's word," and they objected to any other title as smacking too much of sectarianism. "On the continent of Europe," holds Dr. Mayer, "Reformed is the distinctive title of those Protestant communities which are not Lutheran, exclusive of Socinians and Anabaptists." (2)

These communions differed from the beginning in minor matters, but held to the general religious system and were evidently pervaded by a common life. Hence the English and Scotch reformers may be looked upon as belonging to the Reformed type; but as Dr. Haganbach says, "Whoever is familiar with the peculiarities of the churches which they founded will find it natural that their names should not permanently appear." (1)

(1) Professor K. R. Hagenbach, - Geschichte der Reformation Leipzig - 1851

(2) Dr. Lewis Mayer - Colonial Correspondence with Holland
The Reformed Church is often considered to bear close analogy to the River Rhine, on whose banks many of its adherents lived. Similar to that romantic stream, it has its source in the mountains of Switzerland, derives its tributaries from France and Germany, and then gently flows on to fertilize the plains of Holland. As has already been intimated, the Reformed Church does not derive its source from a single individual; rather, there are in its history various stages of development which give us an idea of its growth and progress. These must be studied individually. Three streams there are which converge into a mighty river. Zurich, Geneva and the Palatinate are the communities from which these developments grew. Besides these great movements, we must not overlook the fact that the Reformed Church gained impetus in Switzerland by absorbing the Waldenses, an old medieval group of Christians, the majority of whom formally united with the Reformed Church although a minority of them has kept its organization intact to the present day. The Polish group of the followers of John Huss was, in 1627, also "grafted upon the Reformed Church of Poland, and in the next decade grew to be one with us."(1)

The Swiss Reformation was the result of a movement whose beginnings are to be traced far back in the Middle Ages. Like the Alpine glacier, the movement was at first hardly perceptible; but gradually it took on movement, until at last its progress could hardly be stemmed.

(1) Bishop E. De Schweinitz, Moravian Manual
Since the beginning of the thirteenth century, the cantons of Switzerland had been in part, in the possession of civil liberty and were naturally a thorn in the side of the kings of Europe and for the period of nearly two hundred years were in constant conflict with the house of Austria. They would have perhaps succumbed to their Austrian neighbors had it not been for the fact that their impregnable natural fortress, the mountains, made it impossible to dislodge them. Every attempt was made to penetrate their valleys with hostile armies. It was but natural that little Switzerland should become a shelter for the oppressed and the persecuted, the political offenders, as well as for those who had exposed themselves to ecclesiastical censures. Even the very existence of the Swiss league was a constant irritant to royalty and the rulers hated it with perfect hatred. This feeling of wide-spread dislike in part accounts for the evident unwillingness of the Germans to cooperate with the Swiss at the outset of the Reformation. Had it not been for this prejudice, the doctrinal differences might have been more easily reconciled.

Ulrich Zwingli, one of the foremost of the Swiss Reformers, first saw the light of day in the little Alpine village of Wildhaus on the first day of January, 1484. Ulrich's father was an "Amman," or a district judge, and the family, the modest and unassuming, was fairly wealthy and eminently respected in the community. Each of his parents had one brother who was prominent in the church, and the natural desire of the parents was that at least one of their offspring should choose a like vocation.
Ulrich was the youngest of ten children. Already at a tender age there were evidences that this youngest of the family was extraordinarily gifted. When events of the Swiss heroism were related at the family fireside, they fell like embers upon his youthful imagination and left him glowing with patriotic enthusiasm. Far more profound was the impression made upon the youth’s spirit by the dazzling scenery that enveloped his birthplace. At an early age, he followed his brothers to the Alpine mountain slopes, where the grandeur of it all kindled the imagination and thrilled the soul. In later life he wrote to his friend, Oswald Myconius, "I have often thought in my simplicity, that on these heights so near to heaven, I assumed something heavenly and divine. When the thunder rolls along the mountains and the deep abysses are filled with its reverberations, we seem to hear anew the voice of God saying 'I am the Almighty God; walk in my presence with reverence and fear.' When with the dawn of morning the glaciers glow with rosy light so that an ocean of fire rolls over the mountain tops, the Lord of Hosts appears to stand upon the high places of the earth, as though the hem of His garments glorified the mountains, while we hear the words that were spoken to the prophet Isaiah, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth! All the earth is full of Thy glory.'" (1)

When Ulrich had reached his ninth birthday, his father resolved to place the boy in charge of his brother, Bartholomew, dean of the church at Wesen. It seemed to be generally understood that the lad had inclinations toward the priesthood; therefore educational advantages

were set at his disposal. There were also evidences of musicianship in the lad's makeup and soon he mastered all the musical instruments of that day. The eminent scholar, Luplus, taught him Latin with such success that the young man came to speak Latin even better than he did his mother tongue. Later he was introduced to the study of Greek, which he pursued with marked enthusiasm. He was told that Greek was the grandest literature in the world and also that it was a means of becoming familiar with the Holy Scriptures. After completing the full course in Vienna, young Zwingli became an instructor in the Latin School of Basel and at the same time heard lectures in the University. Here a famous teacher named Thomas Wyttenbach gathered about himself a company of young men whom he delighted to lead aside from the arid wastes of scholasticism to the fertile meadows of the Word of God. Zwingli was indelibly impressed by a statement that fell from the lips of this learned man, "The time is at hand when the ancient faith shall be restored according to the word of God. Indulgences are a Roman delusion, and the death of Christ is the only ransom for our sins." Among this group of students, besides Zwingli, were such other forerunners of the Reformation as Leo Judas, Capito and others. (1)

In 1506 young Zwingli, having ordered his life according to his own desires as well as those of his parents, was ordained to the priesthood and assumed charge of the church at Glarus, where he was parish (1) Dubbs, J. W. Nevin D. D. Historical Manual of the Reformed Church Lancaster, Pa. 1855
priest for ten years. It was during this period that he was twice induced to accompany Swiss troops on campaigns to Italy. On these campaigns he received impressions that greatly influenced his future career. Swiss cantons furnished armies of mercenaries, which fought for the side paying the highest wages. Zwingli became convinced that the mercenary system, together with all evils and vices that attended it, was the curse of Switzerland and he determined to do all in his power to obliterate it. It was to be expected that such opposition would made him unpopular with the unemployed mercenaries and led to his un­timely death.

While in Italy, Zwingli's attention was directed to the corruption in the papal court and he resolved to pray and labor earnestly for its reform. Furthermore, he lost confidence in the Roman mass when he found in an ancient liturgy that in olden times both bread and wine were given to the communicants, and not bread alone as had become the rule. Neither he nor any of his associates had ever believed in the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

Zwingli acknowledged Erasmus as his great teacher and master, and it was at the time when he was reading one of his books that he dated his conversion. Zwingli, also about that time, met the able Cardinal Matthias Schinner who had papal aspirations and hoped that the young Zwingli would lend him his support. But Zwingli wrote, "I will be true toward God and man in all the relations of life. Hypocrisy and lying are worse than stealing. It is only through truth that man can come to resemble his maker."
In 1616 Zwingli was appointed to be parish priest of the Einsiedlen convent. This convent has, to the present day, been the center of Swiss Catholicism. Pilgrims come there to worship an image supposedly miraculous and to receive the benefit of certain papal indulgences. Zwingli addressed these pilgrims with great eloquence, exhorting them to place their trust in Christ alone and not in the saints, whose relics were preserved in the convent. The effect of this discourse was overwhelming. Hundreds accepted the truth and proclaimed it wherever they went. Monks forsook the cloister and for some time the place was entirely deserted.

When, in 1618, Zwingli came to be the pastor of the great Cathedral Church at Zurich, it was with the understanding that he would give himself entirely to the advancement of the cause of the Reformation; and in January, 1619, he gave himself unremittingly to the cause. Except for a brief period when he suffered from a serious illness, he preached almost daily, wrote many volumes, and, because of his position, took a great interest in state affairs. He cultivated an extensive correspondence, gave himself to the organization of many churches and was the first to convene Protestant churches. Under these circumstances, it could hardly be expected that he should develop a theological system. His prominence in the Church was due rather to the extraordinary eloquence with which he popularized evangelical doctrine, than to his profundity as a theologian. His interpretation of the Lord's Supper may have been incomplete; however, it was left for the great Genevan
Reformer, John Calvin, to formulate the creed of the Reformed Church concerning this great mystery. This fact is, however, no excuse for his treatment at the Marburg Conference in 1529, when Luther refused his hand in Christian Fellowship, although he pleaded with tears in his eyes. Zwingli appeared there at no disadvantage and at least held his temper, which was more than can be said of his great antagonist, Martin Luther.

Upon Luther's excommunication by the Pope, Zwingli's enemies insisted that he be included in the same condemnation as Luther. Hereupon Zwingli published a declaration of which the following is an extract:

"I began to preach the Gospel of Christ in the year 1516, before anyone in this region had heard the name of Luther. Who called me a Lutheran, then? When Luther's book on The Lord's Prayer appeared, concerning which prayer I had recently preached, many good people finding in it the same thoughts as mine, could hardly be convinced that I was not the author of the book, supposing that I was too, fearful to own my work, and had therefore put the name of Luther on the title page. Who could at that time have called me a Lutheran? How does it happen that the cardinals call me a Lutheran until after they had called Luther a heretic, although of course they could not really make him one? Then they cried out that I too was a Lutheran, though I did not know Luther's name for two years after I had made the word of God my only guide. It is only a Papist trick to give me and others such names. If they say, 'you must be a Lutheran; you preach as Luther
writes;’ this is my answer; ‘I preach as Paul writes, -why not call me a Paulist? I preach the Gospel of Christ, - why do you not rather call me a Christian?’ In my opinion, Luther is a noble champion of the Lord, who searches the Scriptures with a degree of enthusiasm that has not been equalled in a thousand years. What care I that the Papists call both of us heretics? With such an earnest, manly spirit as that of Luther, no one has ever attacked the papacy during all the years of its existence. But whose work is it? Is it God’s work or Luther’s? Ask Luther himself and he will surely tell you, ‘It is the work of God’ ......Therefore, dear Christians, do not suffer the name of Christ to be exchanged for that of Luther; for Luther has not died for us, though he teaches us to know Him for whom our whole salvation flows. If Luther preaches Christ, he does precisely what I do; tho, thank God! an innumerable multitude is led thru him to Christ, - far more than thru me and others to whom God gives a greater or smaller measure of success, as pleases Him. I will bear no other name than that of my captain, Jesus Christ, whose soldier I am. No man can regard Luther more highly than I do. Nevertheless, I testify before God and man, that in all my life I have never written a line to him nor he to me, nor have I caused it to be done. I declined to do it, not because I was afraid of anybody, but rather because I desired to show all men the uniformity of the working of the Spirit - how Luther and I dwell so far apart and yet are so harmonious; but I do not pretend to be his equal, for every man must do that to which God has called him.” (1)

It is a striking fact that Zwingli came through the study of the classic authors to the study of the Scriptures, while Luther's way to the Scriptures led with a special pleasure through the writings of Mediaeval mystics. Thus from the opposite directions, without being aware of the other's existence they arrived at the same point. Both of them simultaneously protested the depravity of Rome.

When but in the prime of life, with his work far from finished, Zwingli was cut down. War broke out in 1531 between the Protestant and the Catholic cantons of Switzerland. Eight thousand Catholics crossed the frontier of Zurich in a surprise attack upon the Protestants who were outnumbered by about nineteen hundred men. Zwingli had been commanded by the Great Council of Zurich to serve as chaplain in the army. It was religion coupled with deep patriotism that prompted him to accompany his people to give courage and comfort to those about to die for faith and country. It was a brave battle which those Protestants fought on the eleventh day of October, 1531; but the little army was overpowered, and Zwingli was left on the battle field mortally wounded. When the fighting had died down, Zwingli was found by an enemy, lying on the field. He was still conscious but unable to speak. Asked if he desired the services of a priest, he replied by a negative gesture. His dying words were "What does it matter? They may still the body, but they cannot kill the soul." Upon being recognized by a Catholic soldier, an officer killed him with a sword. The following day, after his body had been mutilated in the most brutal manner, it was burned to ashes.
To a noble soul like Zwingli, the incident of death was but a little thing. "No Christian is afraid of death," said Zwingli, "he can only dread dying." He had a deep trust in his Master and realized he was about to receive the martyr's crown.

The emblem chosen in the early part of this great religious movement was "the burning bush," because, though constantly enveloped by the flames of persecution, it remained unconsumed. Everywhere it was attacked by fire and sword, still it remained eternally alive and moving forward. It has suffered persecution, yet it remained beautifully refined and still bears its full measure of flowers and abundant fruit.

The death of the great leader of the Swiss Reformation was a great blow to the cause and for a time it did appear as if the death knoll of the movement had sounded. However, everywhere other able leaders sprang up ready to carry on the work where Zwingli had been compelled to lay it down. Some of these eminent leaders were Henry Bullinger, and Leo Juda in Zurich; John Oecolampadius and Oswald Myconius in Basel; Berthold Haller in Berne, Wolfgang Capito and Martin Bucer in Strasburg and Southern Germany.
CHAPTER ONE - After Delong

The Bible, regarded by many, was published the very year that Delong died. However, it was not the first German Bible that had been printed in Germany. The New Testament had made its appearance from the Janaeus-Drummer press in Stralsund in 1525; the first part of the Old Testament in 1529, the New Testament in 1531. In 1532 an edition of the entire Scriptures was printed in Frankfort, Germany. Luther had published his translation of the New Testament already in 1534, but his first complete German Bible with its appearance had been published in 1534, the printer being Hausbacker. But before that date, some time the earlier of the German versions had been published but there was one defect that prevented its widespread usage. The translations had omitted the Scriptures as already as possible into the language of the common folk, while Luther had carefully chosen the refined language of the upper-class people. And this is precisely a work that was more progressive. The Delong version was naturally familiar to musicians and churchmen, while that of Luther became a find almost everywhere.

Luo date (1521-1568), contemporary of both Delong and Luther, was the chief among Swiss translators. When Ballinger, who was the son of a priest, was privately working, despite the prohibition of the Swiss Church, in the while he was at the university that he developed Delong's friendship and later became his assistant in Paris. Having
CHAPTER ONE - After Zwingli

The Bible, it will be remembered, was published the very year that Zwingli died. However, it was not the first German Bible that had been printed at Zurich. The New Testament had made its appearance from Cristoffel Froshauser's press in Zurich in the year 1524, the first part of the Old Testament in 1525, and the last part in 1529. In 1529 an edition of the entire Scriptures was printed in Latin characters. Luther had published his translation of the New Testament already in 1522, but his first complete German Bible made its appearance in Wittenburg in 1534 in the printshop of Hans Lufft. But before that date, more than six editions of the Swiss version had been published; but there was one defect that prevented its widespread usage. The translators had rendered the Scriptures as closely as possible into the language of the common folk; while Luther had carefully chosen the refined language of the more cultured people. And thus he produced a work that was more permanent. The Swiss version was naturally confined to Switzerland and Southern Germany, while that of Luther began to find acceptance everywhere.

Leo Juda (1482-1542), contemporary of both Zwingli and Luther, was the chief among Swiss translators. Like Bullinger, Juda was the son of a priest, who had privately married, despite the prohibition of the Roman Church. It was while he was at the university that he developed Zwingli's friendship and later became his assistant in Zurich. Having
been offered Zwingli's position at Zurich, he declined it, deeming the responsibility too great. Leo Juda was a great scholar of the Bible, and a great preacher, but felt himself too weak for a position that demanded real leadership. Juda not only translated the Scripture, but composed hymns and wrote catechisms and assisted in writing confessions of faith. His great life was climaxcd by the translation of the Scriptures from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, a work that has been recognized as being of the highest caliber. Oecolampadius was next offered the position of Zwingli as chief pastor of Zurich; but when he also declined to accept, Henry Bullinger accepted and came to be recognized as the chief leader of the German Reformed Church.

Henry Bullinger (1504-1575) whom Providence had determined to be the man of the hour, came to Zurich at a time of great depression, Pestalozzi said of that hour, "The ship had lost its main-mast, and appeared to go down." The Catholic party became greatly encouraged by its victory at Cappel, and Protestants suffered bitter persecution. At that time, King Ferdinand wrote his brother, Emperor Charles V, "We have won the first of the battles of faith. Remember that you are the head of Christendom, and will never have a better opportunity of covering yourself with glory. The German sects will be lost when they cease to be sustained by heretic Switzerland." (1)

There was indeed a gloomy time ahead. Besides doctrinal differences, the princes and nobles turned against the Protestants for sympathizing with the peasants in their unfortunate rebellion known as the "Peasants' War." To make matters still worse, Switzerland at that time (1) Dubbs, J. H. -Historic Manual of the Reformed Church in the United States, p.28
was overrun with Anabaptists who believed themselves to be directly and divinely inspired, and who therefore thought themselves to be superior to the laws of church and state.

Bullinger, in those dark days, became father of all who were desolate and depressed. At his table there were always many who were hungry and forsaken. He adopted Zwingli's children and provided for the wants of his widow as long as she lived. His own fortunate circumstances enabled him to meet these costs. His eloquent sermons were effective, and the church soon became so prosperously situated that his friend, Ambrosius Blarer of Constance could write him, "All hail! Under the heavy cross the church of Zurich has grown stronger and the strength of the Lord has become perfected in your weakness."

The Berne canton had long halted between two great issues; but finally in 1528 it determined to favor the Reformation. On January 9th, 1532, a synod of the clergy of the canton, numbering 230, was held at Berne. It was there that a series of very important decrees were adopted. Although the synod was at first intended to be only for the Canton of Berne, delegates came from great distances. This synod is generally regarded as the first of the great synods of the Reformed Church. Capito of Strasburg secured the adoption of that momentous article entitled "Christ is the substance of all doctrine." The gist of this document is this: "Christ is the sum of the teaching of the Scriptures, and whatever is contrary hereto is also adverse to
our salvation, and that even God Himself must be held forth as He is in Christ." That this pronouncement had tremendous effect on the subsequent teachings of the Church, goes without saying. Its overwhelming influence may be clearly traced in the Heidelberg Catechism.

The article pertaining to the Lord's Supper declares that "the breaking of bread is not an empty ceremony, but a sacrament which conveys to the believer the body and blood of Christ by the Holy Ghost, as really as bread taken into the mouth feeds the perishable body." The results of the Synod of Berne encouraged the Reformed churches and did much to solidify the work begun.

Before the Reformation it was in reality unnecessary to provide for the education of young men for the priesthood. The church offered wealth, ease and a brilliant career, to its applicants. But the new Reformed Church lacked all these inducements and could offer nothing but poverty and persecution, and parents were not much inclined to submit their children to such privations. Zwingli had been instrumental in the gathering of a meager fund to aid students who had the Reformed ministry in view. It was left for Bullinger to take hold of this work, and he did so with energy and determination. It was through his influence that a former convent was re-opened for such work, and about twenty students received their food and often clothing too. Promising students were permitted to study in foreign universities and were given suitable support. Every year young ministers were sent to other count-
ries to preach the gospel. Thus it was that the newly founded church inaugurated not only Beneficiary Education, but the work of Missions as well.

It was at this point that a sectarian group called the Anabaptists appeared in Switzerland and Germany, and created a difficult situation for the new church. Men like Thomas Muenzer (1490-1525) came upon the scene. A man of learning and a follower of Luther as he was, joined the fanatical sect known as the "Zwickau Prophets" and came to regard himself as divinely inspired to preach a dispensation of the Spirit and as he had leadership ability, he succeeded in finding many followers. He it was who introduced this strange movement into Switzerland, where under his direction, hundreds claimed to "see visions and dream dreams." He later became involved in the "Peasant War" and was finally executed as a rebel. This sect finally became divisive and Schwenkenfeld of Suabia and a contemporary of the Reformers counted no less than forty-four sects. All of them agreed in rejecting infant baptism. However, their chief peculiarity was that most of them believed that present "inspiration of the Spirit" is to be considered as being higher than the written word of God. Bullinger said of them; "They insisted that the true church must be formed by the withdrawal of the righteous from all existing church organizations; they had little faith..."
in the Old Testament and denied justification by faith; they approved of community of goods, although this was not obligatory, and they absolutely refused to appear before courts of Justice or swear to a judicial oath." (1) Again he said, "Some of the Anabaptists are very good people and really live separate from the world. But, like a new order of monks, they make rules about clothing, what garments people shall wear, and of what cut and how long the coat must be. They reject all ornaments and call those who wear them 'heathens.' They also prescribe rules about eating, drinking, sleeping, standing and walking. They often sigh deeply and when they see anyone laughing, they cry, 'Woe unto you, that laugh now!' In some places they oppose the bearing of arms and weapons." (2)

There were factions that insisted that all existing governments must be subverted so as to make way for the celestial kingdoms about to be established. It was the year 1533 that they proclaimed as the time for the establishment of the millennium they expected to be set up in Switzerland. Their leaders, however, were driven out of the country. They gathered at Strasburg and insisted on making it "the celestial Jerusalem." Being repulsed there, they went to Munster in Westphalia, where they seized the civic government and declared their prophet, John of Leyden, whom they publicly crowned, "King of Zion and of the whole world," after the example of David and Solomon. In a "revelation" that soon came to John, he was

(1) Dubbs, J.H. -Historic Handgood of the Reformed Church in the U. S. p.32

(2) Ibid p.32
ordered to introduce polygamy. He married sixteen wives, one of whom he recognized as "Queen of Zion." It was announced "that baptism was regeneration, and that the regenerate could commit no sin." This led to a year of terror. All who opposed the will of the king were cruelly executed. However, on June 12, 1535, Munster was stormed by the army of the bishops of Cologne and of Paderborn. The "king" and his followers were condemned to death and the whole conquest became nothing less than an infamous massacre. From this point, the Anabaptists were everywhere persecuted as rebellious fanatics.

It goes without saying that the whole Reformed church of Switzerland was at this time affected thus with Anabaptism, and the outlook appeared to be gloomy indeed. But at this time, upon the scene came a young man who was estimated as being the greatest theologian of his age, and who was destined to be instrumental in transmitting the Reformed church to foreign nations. It was John Calvin, the protagonist of the Genevan Reformation.
CHAPTER TWO

JOHN CALVIN AND THE SWISS REFORMATION

The second great success of the Reformed Church was Switzerland. In the northeastern corner of that little country, where the Rhine emerges from Lake Lucerne, there on both sides of the river within sight of the romantically undulating mountain range of Mount Lavaux, stands the ancient city of Geneva. Because of its proximity to France, Geneva was well called as a center of a great religious movement in Europe.

The earliest leaders of the Geneva reformation were exiles from France. The staple center, Bishop of Savoy, herself a brilliant student of the classics, although never a Protestant, took part in the general attack upon the legality of the priesthood of that day. The early French reformers deemed her to be a constant friend of the cause. Many of the leading French Calvinists were found at that reformation. Among these were Brissot, the Bishop of Angers, and his close associates, Forester and other enthusiastic evangelists. His lectures, he endeavored to bring about a reformation in their time. Thus the cause of the reformation and the renewal of learning were forward. Reformed, at the time the chief theological school of France, had in 1531, declared Luther a heretic, and the government consequently had arrested Protestant worship under severe penalty.

A persecution ensued, legal and very of his associates fled for their
CHAPTER TWO

JOHN CALVIN AND THE GERMAN REFORMATION

The second great source of the Reformed Church was likewise in Switzerland. In the southwestern corner of that little country where the Rhone emerges from Lake Leman, there on both sides of the river within sight of the eternally snow-capped mountain summit of Mont Blanc, stands the age-old city of Geneva. Because of its proximity to France, Geneva was well suited as a center of a great religious movement embracing many nations.

The earliest leaders of the Genevan reformation were exiles from France. The King's sister, Margaret of Navarre, herself a brilliant student of the classics, although never a Protestant, took part in the general attack upon the lasciviousness of the priesthood of that day. The early French reformers found her to be a constant friend of the cause. Many of the leading French ecclesiastics were behind that reformation. Among these were Briçonnet, the Bishop of Meaux, and his close associates, Farel, Lefever and other enthusiastic evangelistic leaders, who endeavored to bring about a reformation in their diocese. Thus the cause of the Reformation and of the revival of learning were forwarded. Sarbonne, at the time the chief theological school of France, had in 1521, declared Luther a heretic, and the government consequently had forbidden Protestant worship under severe penalty. A persecution ensued. Farel and many of his associates fled for their
lives and found refuge in Feneva.

On July 10, 1509, there was born at Noyon, near Paris, a babe who was destined to play a great role in the Protestant Reformation. This was John Calvin. His parents were people of considerable means, and they saw that young John received a very excellent education. Studies were pursued at Paris and Bourges. Young Calvin displayed no fondness for poetry, but he did show a remarkable aptness for logic and Latin. Often in the absence of his instructors, he was prevailed upon to preside over the class, and everyone marvelled at his extraordinary ability. The parents persuaded their son to take up law, and young Calvin soon became familiar with the legal science. But it was theology that attracted him most, so that he studied law by day and theology by night. It goes without saying that his legal studies had an overwhelming influence in the development of a legalistic mind, and in the years to come Calvin showed himself a statesman of the highest order.

Thus it was that in an hour of deep discouragement, the infant church was thrilled by the news that a new protagonist had been awakened to come to the aid of the cause. It was Melchior Wolmar who was the first to teach Calvin not only to read but also to understand the word of God.

It could hardly be otherwise than that such a brilliant and capable leader should espouse a cause like that of the Reformed Church.
He secretly proceeded to gather the dispersed people everywhere in centers like Paris and preached to them the word of God. Margaret of Navarre gave him shelter when the persecution became severe. Here he directed his criticisms against the Anabaptists, who, he felt were running the Reformation into fanatical extremes.

Later, Calvin lived in seclusion in Normandy and assumed the name of Charles d' Esperville. He preached to a select company in a cave which later became known as the "cave of Calvin." It was during these years that he gathered materials for his famous "Institutes of the Christian Religion." He published this work anonymously in 1535; however, in 1536 the first edition bearing Calvin's name was printed at Basel. It was recognized even by his foes to be a great work of literary achievement. No other Reformer had ever produced so complete a systematic exposition of Reformed doctrine. Calvin was but twenty-five years of age when he wrote this classic, and strange to say, he never afterwards found it necessary to change a single doctrine or position, or in any way change his views.

The central theme of this great work is the utter destruction of all human glory that God might be all in all. This principle, bound up with his strictly logical and literal interpretation of the Pauline epistles, gave rise to the doctrine of predestination, which was likewise accepted by others, reformers like Luther and Zwingli.

With reference to the Lord's Supper, Calvin taught that the believer partakes of the body and blood in the Sacrament, but he did
not bind this effect to the visible elements; he rather believed it to be conveyed by the Holy Spirit. This view became more fully developed in that historic confession of the Reformed church, namely the Heidelberg Catechism. Calvin never denied the real presence in the Last Supper by regarding it as spiritual. To him it is the spiritual alone that is real and permanent; the material is always changeable and evanescent.

Upon Calvin's return to Paris, he found the affairs of the infant church to be rather gloomy and perplexing. The king had prosecuted a persecution of the Protestants with fire and sword, and had burned at the stake about a half dozen of Calvin's intimate associates. Calvin found it impossible to remain longer in France, and fled at first to Strasburg and then to Basel where he hoped to devote his life to a quiet study of the word of God.

In 1536 Calvin came to Geneva. He had been on a visit to the good Duchess of Ferrara, and had planned to remain but a short time. However, Farel, the great leader of the Reformed Movement, in Geneva, prevailed upon Calvin to assume the leadership of the church. Calvin at first declined, but Farel recognized him as the man who had been born for the hour, and exclaimed with such a degree of earnestness "I announce to you in the name of Almighty God that if you do not remain to assist me in the holy work to which I am called, He will dreadfully punish you for preferring your own pleasure to his service," that Calvin could not resist such a call and accepted it.
Geneva was then in a pitiful condition. After a long conflict between the city and the Duke of Savoy, who had sought to rob it of its independence, Geneva had at last, on August 27, 1535, with the aid of Farel and Viretus, passed over to the Reformed Church. Confusion reigned everywhere. Farel, who was unequal to control the elements of Protestantism, which for the time had gotten beyond control, was glad to become subordinate to a stronger man. He found John Calvin to be just such a man. It was an immense task to rebuild the broken down social order; however, Calvin was equal to it. With other pastors, he preached against existing abuses and endeavored to re-establish church discipline. When the wild excesses became too great, Calvin and his associates denied the privilege of the Lord's Supper until the people desisted from these newly found liberties and showed signs of moral improvement. Finally, when threatened with death, Calvin and Farel fled from the city to find refuge in Strasburg, where Calvin remained for a period of two years ministering to a great congregation of fifteen hundred French refugees. But conditions in Geneva grew worse and worse until at length a reaction set in and the city council vainly urged Calvin's return. But not until 1541 did the authorities of several Reformed cities succeed in persuading Calvin to then return to Geneva, with the understanding that his plans of discipline be completely carried out.

No king ever exercised the power of government equaling that of
Calvin's. His salary was 250 franks, with a "plain house", which the writer of this thesis saw still standing near the old church. Calvin had no interest in money or show, but he soon bent all things under the rule of his iron will. He it was who arranged the laws of the state. His views of the character and functions of the church stood exceedingly high. To him, the church stood far above the state, whose main object he felt to be that of aiding her in the preservation of truth and order. He insisted that the church must be independent of the control of the state. To him the Reformed Church is indebted for its classes, or presbyteries, and its consistories. He it was who also defined the four offices of the church: Minister of the Word, Teacher of Theology, Elder and Deacon. Calvin had little confidence in princes, as did Luther, but preached self-reliance and independence to the church.

It can be readily understood that the discipline which Calvin introduced at the Geneva church was rigid and stern. The church decreed no greater punishment than excommunication; but the government generally declared the excommunicants to be deprived of all civil rights. Appeal by the church to the State for redress but increased the measure of punishment, and often Calvin's own intercession even failed to secure an amelioration of the sentence.

Harsh as Calvin's discipline may have been, still that prob-
ably was the only thing that suited the exigencies of the case.
The method brought success, for Geneva later became the most
quiet and prosperous city of Europe. Calvin's system was given
the credit for this record. By the exercise of Church-discipline,
Calvin produced results which in our days would require
a standing army and a great force of police.

In 1549, the churches of Zurich and Berne came to unite
with Geneva in a common confession of faith concerning the Lord's
Supper. Although there were still many local divisions of opinion,
the Swiss influence of Calvin increased rapidly. A theological
institution was founded at Geneva which opened with six hun-
dred theological students. It was Calvin's ardent friend and suc-
cessor, Beza, who was chosen to be the first rector. Calvin taught
theology, and the brightest young students of many nations gathered
at his feet. One of the most celebrated of these was John Knox,
who later became instrumental in the founding and organizing of the
Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The amount of labor Calvin performed in this rich period of
his life was prodigious. Though he was in precarious health, he
often preached every day, taught theology, wrote many books and
discourses, and was engaged in directing the destiny of church
and state. Calvin's correspondence reached unbelievable propor-
tions. Cranmer of England sought his council with reference to
organizing the Church of England. In Holland, too, his letters made strong in their cause of the Reformed Church. Even in distant Bohemia, Hungary and Poland, his opinion and guidance were sought with respect to the organization of the churches. It was in France that his influence was almost boundless. Even in Spain and Italy there were many secret adherents. However extensive his influence became in Germany, his theological system never fully sprang root. Calvin seemed never to sleep, and it is true that many a night he did not sleep. Often he took no food, much less did he stop to look up to greet the blessed sunlight. Utterly emaciated and worn out, he breathed his last in his fifty-fifth year, on May 27, 1564. His entire personal estate amounted to approximately two hundred and fifty dollars. By his own wish a monument was never erected over his grave.

A just estimate of the person of John Calvin is nigh unto impossible. He disliked the fine arts, especially poetry. Nor was there room in his being for tender affections. He could not escape slander and boundless criticism. His enemies repeated many calumnies concerning his private life. Yet Beza, his great protege, loved that great, stern, cold theologian with what was more than filial affection. Melancthon said that he wished he could lay his weary head upon that faithful heart and die there. Farel, Bullinger, Viretus and Bucer confessed a very devoted attachment for him. Calvin was without doubt a fierce contro-
versalist. His legal training contributed to this. He was probably the most eminent man in the history of the Reformed Church. He was without doubt the most prominent guide and leader of one of the most important currents that entered into its life stream.
CHAPTER THREE

The third source of the Russian Empire must be sought for in the Balkans. Although the Balkanics was disconnected from the Empire by the Ottoman occupation in western Europe, they were completely cut off from the rest of the empire. This fact is still on the textbooks in history that it will probably never cease to be applied to the upper three centuries that were included within the empire.

The Balkanics was the last large province, although they were not a single people. The Slavic Balkanics was situated in the southern part of what was now Russia. The province was divided which was Hungary. It was a fact that governed by an elected and the people was the little part in the religious orthodoxy. Daily, in the Balkans, they had a more Orthodox. The other Balkanics was the more important of the two. It was situated on both sides of the Bay of Thessaloniki and extended across along the hinterland of Central Europe of the lesser, one of the most fertile spots in the world. They were that was patriarchal, almanach, patriarchal, archbishop, bishop, and the Balkanics Prussian. The principal themes were those of history, religion, and Orthodox.

Following the death of the tsarist Czar Alexander II, the Franco

Frederick's 11th session the emperor. Frederick, born in 1826 in Blenheim, was an ardent Greek Catholic, but he was converted to Protestantism.
CHAPTER THREE

THE PALATINATE REFORMATION

The third source of the Reformed Church must be sought for in the Palatinate. Although the Palatinate has disappeared from the European map, its territories having been absorbed by its avaricious neighbors, that once surrounded it, its name and fame are still so unforgettable in history that it will probably never cease to be applied to the upper Rhine country that was once included within its bounds.

The Palatinate consisted of what were once two large provinces, although they were not contiguous. The Upper Palatinate was situated in the eastern part of what was once Bavaria, the principle city of which was Amberg. It was at that time governed by an elector and its people took but little part in the religious movements. Early in the Reformation they had become Lutheran. The Lower Palatinate was the more important of the two. It was situated on both sides of the Upper Rhine and extended upward along the historical and beautiful banks of the Neckar, one of the most fertile spots in the world. There were then five principalities, Simmeru, Zweibruecken, Spohnheim, Veldenz, and the Palatinate Proper. The principal cities were those of historic Heidelberg, Mannheim and Franckenthal.

Following the deaths of the heirless Otto Heinrich, the Prince Frederick III became the elector. Frederick, born in 1515 at Simmeru, was an ardent Roman Catholic, but he was converted to Protestantism.
through the influence of the eminent John De Lasky. His conversion was truly genuine and he stood ready, if need be, to die for Protestantism's cause.

As a young man, Frederick had gained fame in his campaigns against the Turks. There was naturally much popular rejoicing when he attained to the electoral dignity. In Frederick, gentleness and firmness of character were perfectly blended. His impeccable reputation and his deep trust in God kept him safe in the times of his great trials and this was the marvel of his contemporaries. He desired to be absolute ruler of his people in religious as well as in secular affairs. It was in his famous court that the illustrious Swiss physician, Thomas Erastus, taught that all ecclesiastical authority is subordinate to the civil power. The slogan of this so-called Erastianism was "Cujus regio illius religio," which translated means "Who owns the region owns the religion."

This position was, of course, a far cry from the position of John Calvin with regard to this subject, for Calvin advocated complete separation of Church and State, and was a great protagonist of the cause of complete independence. He regarded the State to be only the handmaid of the Church.

But Frederick III was a German prince, and like others of his order, considered himself to be, by virtue of his office, the head of the church. He sincerely believed himself to be responsible to God for the faith of his subjects, and therefore considered himself to
be not only their religious guide but their temporal ruler as well. Thus he became a profound student of theology and did not hesitate to enforce the acceptance of what he thought to be the truth. But he was genuinely sincere, and if accused of unnecessary rigor in the execution of his convictions, he might have answered in the Scriptural language, "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up!"

The ruling spirit of the reformation of the Palatinate was the famed Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), a mild spirited soul who was born just five years after Columbus set sail to find a direct route to the East Indies. Protestantism was not completely established there, however, until 1546, the year of Luther's death. The order which Melanchthon introduced was like that of Wuertemburg, namely Lutheran in its general tendencies, yet mild and conciliatory.

Melanchthon was one of the most brilliant scholars of his day, and the value of his contribution to the cause of the Reformation can hardly be calculated. His contemporaries recognized this and on his tomb is found this inscription: "The most industrious and most faithful of the assistants of Dr. Martin Luther in explaining and sustaining the pure doctrine of the Word of God."

At first, Melanchthon was not inclined to be friendly toward the Swiss Reformers, but upon seeing the earnestness of their zeal he came to regard them highly. As the years went by, Calvin, Bucer
and De Lasky became his most intimate friends and valued correspondents. He, of course, embraced Luther's view of the Lord's supper, but saw no reason why Calvin's view could not be tolerated as well. He consequently altered the tenth article of the Augsburg Confession, of which he was author, that it might avoid offence to the Reformed Church. Together with Bucer, he drew up terms of union between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in 1536. Luther approved these articles, and they were formally adopted by the Reformed Churches of Switzerland. However, Luther repudiated them eight years later, much to the surprise of his associates. Some hold that he was prompted to this act by a marked tendency among his intimate friends towards the acceptance of the Reformed view. But MelANCHTHON faithfully adhered to the agreement until his death.

Already before his death, Luther realized that the extremists of the church were beginning to look upon Melanchthon with suspicion. To them it was an act of treason to alter an article of the Augsburg Confession for the purpose of avoiding offence to the Reformed Church. Following Luther's death, the feeling increased in intensity. His disciples were contemptuously labelled "Philistines," after their teacher's name, who was affectionately known as "Master Philip."

Minor differences between Luther and Melanchthon were painfully sought out and these became the occasion for bitter controversies. The extremists did not rest until they had not only deposed and
banished many of Melanchthon's friends but had driven the master himself out of Germany. It is not to be wondered at that Melanchthon prayed for deliverance from the "wrath of the theologians," and that shortly before his death he expressed the desire to go to the Holy Lands to spend the remainder of his life in the cell at Bethlehem which was once occupied by Jerome.

It was in 1552 that the old controversy concerning the sacraments broke out anew with terrific vehemence. It was Joachim Westphal, Lutheran minister at Hamburg, who seconded by Matthias Flacius, Tilemann Heshusius and others, led the attack against the Swiss Reformed churches. The occasion for this attack was prompted by the Zurich Consensus of 1549 in which the Zwinglians and Calvinists declared a formal union which had made the Reformed Church stronger than ever. But the attack was also directed against the Philipists and Crypto-Calvinists within the Lutheran church. Persecution was rife and hundreds of English and Dutch Protestants fled for their lives to the Palatinate where more moderate counsels prevailed and the fugitives were welcomed, especially in the town of Franckenthal, which by their industry soon grew to a town of prosperity.

Now when Frederick III assumed the government, he had no intention of introducing the Reformed church. But it was not long
intention of introducing the Reformed church, but it was not long before he discovered himself in the very midst of a furious controversy, at the head of which were men like Heshusius, a strict Lutheran on one hand, and Klebitz, a follower of Calvin on the other. The populace was in great excitement. Frederick, at first, on the advice of Melanchthon, discharged both of the contestants from their charges. But when this was to no avail, he decided to himself study the theology of both factions very diligently. But when he was forced to take sides in the issue in 1559, he declared himself on the side of the Reformed Church. Yet he never repudiated his allegiance to the Augsburg Confession. This was indeed a very bold step to take, but when the people saw that their ruler, after a very serious and impartial study of both sides, declared himself for the Reformed view, they immediately took the side of their beloved leader, their elector. Now the position of the Reformed church became secure, and it was not long until it became the leading church along the entire course of the Rhine, from its very source to the ocean.

Now when the Palatinate had gone over to the Reformed Church, Frederick felt that a new confession of Faith had become absolutely necessary. To this time, the German people knew little about the Reformed church and its tenets. Heshusius had added to the confusion by declaring that Frederick was preparing his people to embrace Mohammedanism, in the anticipation of a Mohammedan invasion. But good
elector, Frederick, took great interest in matters pertaining to the Kingdom of God. He experienced the power of the Gospel in his own life and heart. He diligently studied the Bible and the theological writings of his day. "He introduced the Reformed order of worship throughout his country, and abolished the pictures, crucifixes, candles and altars from his churches. He also introduced a simple and sober form of worship in place of the unbiblical pomp and substituted German psalms for the still customary Latin hymns." ¹

Then he directed his attention to doctrine, for he knew that much depended upon pure doctrine, even more than upon pure worship. He determined to prepare a catechism which would not only represent the faith of the Reformed Church, but which would also serve to convey its precious truths to the as yet unborn generations. With this purpose in mind, he selected two brilliant young men to undertake this momentous work. The choice fell upon Casper Olevianus and Zacharius Ursinus. They were but twenty-six and twenty-eight years of age, respectively, but despite their youth together they produced a monumental work which has ever been regarded by the succeeding generations as the crown of the Reformed church.

¹. A Short History of the Heidelberg Catechism, P.4.)
Casper Olevanus (1535-1587) disciple of Calvin, native of Treves, was a member of wealthy nobility, whose name was really Von der Olewege. He completed the school of his native French city, went to Paris and from there to Bourges to complete his studies. It was while at the latter university where he studied law that he secretly gave much time to the study of the Scriptures. There chanced to be in the university at the time, one of the sons of Frederick, and the two young men became very fast friends. One day while walking on the banks of the Oron, in the company of the private tutor of the prince, they were met by a group of young German noblemen, who suggested they all cross the river in a skiff. Olevianus declined to accept the invitation because of their all having imbibed too much wine. However, the young prince and his tutor acquiesced. While crossing the river, they playfully rocked the boat. The boat capsized and all of them were drowned. Olevanus made an unsuccessful attempt to rescue his friend, the prince, and in the attempt barely escaped with his own life. In his utmost peril, he made a vow that if God spared his life, he would consecrate it to the conversion of his native country.

Olevanus, having been spared in the moment of peril, did not forget his vow. Frederick subsequently became his best friend and patron. He sought entrance into one of the secret Reformed churches,
and thereupon paid visit to the Reformed centers of Zurich and Geneva. But upon his return to his native city where he began preaching the Gospel with a new emphasis, he was arrested and thrown into prison. It was the kindly Elector who interceded in his behalf and succeeded in gaining his release. The young man went to the historic old university of Heidelberg, where he was not only given a professorship of theology but where he became the pastor of the age-old principal church of the city on the banks of the Neckar. Olevianus was not only an eloquent preacher, but excelled as well as a splendid organizer, surpassing by far the scholarly but retiring associate, Zacharias Ursinus. Traces of this great and able spirit and man of God are evident in the composition of that little historic and valuable document, "The Heidelberg Catechism." It is claimed that after Ursinus had composed the little handbook in the Latin, Olevianus translated it into the German. Students of the Catechism claim that this is likely to be true, judging from a comparison of the literary style of the two writers. The section which deals with the subjects of the Office of the Keys and Church Discipline was derived from Olevianus, because its substance was discovered in his previous writings.

Upon the death of his friend and benefactor, Frederick, Olevianus moved to Herborn to spend his last days. It is of note to relate
that when his death was drawing near, an associate and friend asked him whether he was certain of his salvation as he had taught others that he must be, and he confidently replied, "Certissimus," that is, "most certainly." Having feebly uttered this beautiful word, his spirit winged its flight toward Heaven.

Zacharias Ursimus, a loyal follower and prodigy of Melanchthon, was born in Breslau, in Silesia, where his family, whose name was Von Baer, was of the German nobility. His father was a clergyman, who according to the custom of that day, had Latinized his name. He studied at Wittenberg under Melanchthon, who considered him a scholar of real distinction and a most promising pupil. Subsequently he attended the universities of Switzerland and France, where he cultivated the friendship and regard of Bullinger and Peter Martyr. He completed his studies under Calvin, "He diligently studied the Bible and theological writings." Later, his enemies accused him of being "Philipism" and "Calvinistic" and he was compelled to flee from Silesia. He found a secure haven of refuge in Switzerland. It was Peter Martyr who then was asked to carry on the work of organization in the Palatinate. But he was beginning to feel the weight of his years and he suggested that Ursinus be challenged. Frederick said of Ur-

1. A Short History of the Heidelberg Catechism P.5
2. Ibid P.4
simus "His fatherland was not worthy of such a man. Tell your countrymen to banish such a man, so that he may come to me."

After completion of his studies, Ursinus was first called to his native city of Breslau, as a teacher of theology. There he fell into disfavor when it was learned that he adhered to the teachings of Calvin. It was in 1560 that the Elector Frederick called him to Heidelberg to the professorship of theology. Although not a gifted preacher like his associate Olevianus, he was an excellent instructor. When he and Olevianus were commissioned to prepare a confession of faith, each of them presented a plan. The Elector preferred the one prepared by Ursinus, who thus became the chief author of the Heidelberg Catechism. It is to him the Catechism is indebted for its irenic character, for it is a well known fact that the polemic questions which appear were added at the specific command of the Elector, Frederick. In the catechism there is much material found which also was in the catechisms of Calvin and De Lasky. However, that the work is original has never been disputed. The little catechism may be regarded as the flower and fruit of the entire German and French Reformation. Some one has said that it has the Lutheran sincerity, the Melanch-
thonian clarity, the Zwinglian simplicity and the Calvinistic fire. It is true that whoever is not familiar with the Heidelberg Catechism, this intrepid little confession of the Reformed Church, which is acclaimed by the Reformed Church of the Old World as well as of the New World, does not know the Reformed Church; "whoever is well acquainted with all its particulars, all its excellencies and imperfections, is alone able to appreciate the Christian life and Christian spirit of our Reformed Church in all its strength and weakness." (1)

Ursimus was a man of rather quiet and retiring disposition. He made but few intimate friends. His greatest delight was in profound study. It is said that over the door of his study was placed a Latin inscription which read: "Friend, whoever thou art, if thou comest to me, be brief. Either leave me soon or aid me in my labors." Ursimus lived a life devoted to prayer. He seemed to be too pure and too holy for this world. His friends said of him that he never spoke an unnecessary word, yet everyone who came into contact with him was compelled to love him because of the rare loveliness and sheer beauty of his character.

Following the death of the Elector, the foes of the catechism enjoyed a brief triumph. But Ursimus left Heidelberg and became a professor of a Reformed Theological Seminary which Frederick's second son, John Casimir, had founded at Huyestadt. After laboring here

(1) Max Goebel, quoted by Dubbs, J.H. Historic Handbook of the Reformed Church, p.59
five years, his brief but successful life came to a close, on March 6th, 1583, when he had reached the age of forty nine years. Upon his monument at the church at Neustadt there is to be read this most striking tribute to his memory:

"A great theologian, a conquerer of heresies concerning the person of Christ, and the Lord's Supper, mighty with word and pen, an acute philosopher, a wise man, and a stern instructor of youth."

In a letter, Ursinus once gave the following clear testimony as to his faith, "If you think that it cannot be said definitely of anyone that he will be saved, you are right if you speak of others. But in reference to one's self, or one's own conscience and one's own conviction concerning himself, this is horrible, godless, devilish, blasphemous; it subverts the whole ground of salvation. Whoever taught you this, taught you like a devil, even if he had come from heaven. Yes, I will tell you more; If you are not certain before the end of your life that you will be an heir of life eternal, you will not be after this life, which God forbid." 1

1. A Short History of the Heidelberg Catechism
CHAPTER FOUR

The Reformation Church has always been regarded as "the Church of the Scriptures." It alone, therefore, is called by this title, for no other group of Christians has ever been willing to accept and maintain the New Testament wholly without change. Indeed, it has been estimated that nearly one-sixth of its people in some countries have not accepted the text of the New Testament. The history of the Reformation Church shows that in the beginning of its movement there was a strong desire to maintain the original text as it had been given by Jesus Christ, but as it still continues to arise, misunderstanding on the subject persists...
CHAPTER FOUR

THE FIRST MARTYRS

The Reformed Church has often been referred to as "the Church of the Martyrs." It justly deserves to be called by this title, for no other group of Christians has had so many members who have sealed their faith with their blood. It has been estimated that nearly 25,000,000 people of this denomination died the death of the martyr. The history of the Reformed Church abounds in instances of sublime heroism, and that it still continues to exist, notwithstanding all the bitter persecutions it has so bravely endured, is evidence of its divine mission.

Now before we engage upon a study of these persecutions, let us trace the noteworthy events that led to these merciless persecutions.

The Heidelberg Catechism is so pacific in its general character that we can hardly realize how its publication, in the year 1563 could have given the signal for one of the most vicious conflicts in the history of Protestantism. The Roman Catholics, of course, were its fiercest enemies. The Council of Trent, in session for a goodly number of years and called ostensibly for the restoration of the peace of the church, was coming to a close. However, it had been entirely under Jesuit influence; it had but served to intensify the already existing bitterness. The Protest-
ants had been given no hearing and the anathemas by which they were condemned were unexcelled in their fierceness.

It may be probable that the publication of these vicious anathemas may have provoked the Elector Frederick to insist on the insertion in the second edition of the Catechism, question and answer number 80, in which the Mass is declared to be "an accursed idolatry." It was a most emphatic assertion of the grounds which had induced Protestants to repudiate the mass. However this declaration was enough to exasperate the Romans to utilize every possible means of persecution.

The extreme Lutheran party, led by Heshusius, whom Frederick had expelled from Heidelberg, was hardly less bitter in its attack upon the Reformed adherents. At his instigation, the pulpits of Northern Germany rang with fierce denunciations. The attacks were leveled especially against its reference to the Person of Christ and the Lord's Supper, which they held to violate the Augsburg Confession. Everywhere the emperor and princes were called upon to employ the sword of secular power for the one purpose of annihilating heresy.

It is hardly possible to speak of every single blast of the impending storm. Even the Elector's household was divided. His eldest son, Louis, who ruled the Upper Palatinate as his father's representative, held with the extreme Lutherans. But Frederick
only fortified his own position and continued to remove pictures and crucifixes from the churches and introduced the stern and simple Calvinistic form of church worship and polity, which the princes condemned as treason to the rights of their order. But Frederick calmly asserted his adherence to the Augsburg Confession.

Zwingli had emphasized the memorial character of the Lord's Supper maintaining that the meaning of the words of institution is: "This signifies my body." It is, however, an error to suppose that, according to his view, "the elements of the Lord's Supper are mere signs." In the confession which he sent to Francis First, a short time before his death, he wrote "We believe that the true body of Christ is eaten in a sacramental and spiritual manner by the believing and pious heart." Calvin, indeed, emphasized the reality of the spiritual presence of Christ at the Supper; but had Zwingli been spared to see the time of Calvin, he would no doubt have adopted his more elaborate definition, for their views were not conflicting. (1)

Immediately upon publication of the Catechism, Olevianus had sent a copy to Bullinger, who upon receiving and reading the booklet, wrote back, "I regard this as the best catechism that has ever been written. May God crown it with His blessing." This good

(1) Van Horn, Life of Zwingli, p.171
will between Switzerland and the Palatinate continued and when his foes brought pressure upon Frederick, he wrote to Bullinger requesting him to prepare a full confession of the doctrine of the Reformed Church. This confession, published in 1566, which was primarily intended to serve as a defense against those who held that the Reformed Churches were at variance among themselves, although in actuality it became a bond which united the churches of the Palatinate with those of Switzerland and France, was known as the "Second Helvetia Confession."

Another important factor was the Diet of Augsburg called by the Emperor Maximilian II on the 23rd day of March, 1566. The Emperor, though a Roman Catholic, yet more liberal than any of his predecessors, had addressed a friendly warning to Frederick after the publication of the Catechism, but seemed to be disinclined to carry the matter further. But the German princes succeeded finally in inducing him to call a meeting of the Diet, and cite Frederick to appear. The emperor appeared with his empress and a magnificent retinue. After holding a caucus, the Protestant delegates determined to prepare an address to the emperor, demanding greater religious liberty; but at the same time they resolved not to allow Frederick to sign the petition unless he first explained his views concerning the Lord's Supper. Some even insisted that
he must sign an iron clad confession to the effect that the
"real body and blood are actually present in the sacrament
under the form of bread and wine, and are offered and receiv-
ed with the visible elements; that the aforesaid true body
and blood are not only spiritually but corporeally presented
and received, so that through communion of His flesh and blood
Christ dwells in us corporeally; and also that Christ is not
only in us spiritually through his love, but also by natural
communion." (1)

But after Frederick made his appearance at the Diet, his
presence created a reaction. Those who had never seen him were
impressed by his sincerity. The result was that the elector quiet-
ly but firmly declined to sign any new confessions. The effect
of the elector's defense was very great. At the conclusion of it,
Augustus of Saxony laid his hand upon his shoulder and said, "Fritz,
 thou art more pious than all of us!" The action of the Diet was
unexpected. Frederick was now vindicated. He returned to Heidel-
berg and was received with great acclaim.

Upon Frederick's death on October 26, 1576, Louis VI took
over the government. He dismissed the Reformed professors and
introduced a strictly Lutheran church order. However, the
struggle was far from being ended for many Reformed people

(1) Huppe, History of German Protestantism, Vol. 2, p.120
found refuge at the Court of Prince John Casimir, who was friendly toward them.

Yet troublous days were ahead for the members of the Reformed Church. Its members were widely scattered through the countries in which Roman Catholics held the reigns of government, and they were peculiarly exposed to the wrath of their enemies. The martyrs of the Reformed Church in Italy, France, Spain, Holland and other lands, may be numbered by hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions.

1. The Waldenses

At a very early date the Swiss Reformers crossed the Alps for the purpose of preaching the Gospel in Italy. They were cordially welcomed by a community of peasants, who in the obscure valleys of Piedmont, had for ages held convictions similar to their own. These humble folk were known as the Waldenses, a name which signifies "the people of the Valleys." Some believe that they got their name from Peter Waldus, a twelfth century merchant of Lyons; others hold that Waldus was so called because he belonged to the sect, whose origin was very ancient. (1)

The Waldenses had gradually migrated to the Rhone valley and then northward along the Rhine into Holland. Some of them even found their way into Bohemia and Poland, and also to England, where they engaged in commerce. But everywhere they were forced

(1) Dubbs, J.H. Historic Manual of the Reformed Church p.74
to keep their religion in utmost secrecy. Similar to secret societies, they had passwords and signs, even placing emblems on their houses which were recognized by the initiated. But by the sixteenth century, it is claimed, their number had increased to such proportions that in Switzerland and Germany a member could leave Italy on foot and find lodging every night with a brother of the faith until he reached Holland, from which country he might sail for England where hospitality was assured him.

In 1532 a Synod was held at Angrogna, at which they formally accepted the Reformed doctrines, and thus they thought to consummate the union of the Waldensian and Reformed Churches; but some of the absent delegates from Poland and Bohemia protested against this step. However the majority group united with the Reformed group while the minority group kept their organization intact through the years.

It was at this synod that the Waldenses resolved to bear public witness as to the idolatry of the mass. Hereupon the Roman Catholics were roused to take violent measures for their suppression, and the Inquisition was invoked to such a measure that everyone even suspected of being disloyal to Rome was put to death, not only in the Valley of Waldenses but in the secret fastnesses of the Alps whither
a small remnant had escaped. Refuges became so numerous in Switzerland that they were able to found Italian churches. Some of the most prominent of their ministers were Peter Martyr and Bernard Ochino. No language can adequately describe the horrors of that persecution, and the tortures to which victims were subjected before they were despatched.

2. Spain and Portugal

Protestantism was quietly gaining foothold in Spain and Portugal when Philip II returned from the Netherlands to take over the government after his father's death. Under the direction of this merciless fanatic, the agents of the Inquisition sought out victims everywhere. Even the archbishop of Toledo, one of Spain's foremost churchmen, was arrested and imprisoned on suspicion of favoring the new doctrines. Philip even gratified the Spanish taste for display by burning Protestants at their bull-fights. Philip even contemplated burning the remains of his father, Charles V, because he had failed to crush Protestantism at its beginning.

About this time, Protestantism had to encounter a new enemy in the powerful body, The Order of Jesuits, who were founded in Spain in 1534, by Ignatius Loyola, a young nobleman, and his six associates of whom the most eminent were men like Francis Xavier and James Laynè. Their chief objective, in addition to their monastic vows, was to
pledge unconditional obedience to the pope and to carry out the absolute suppression of Protestantism. They succeeded so well that not only was the best part of the nation ruthlessly sacrificed, but even Spain, one of the most outstanding of European nations, began to decline and eventually lost all political and ecclesiastical significance, while Protestantism was literally crushed out.

In Portugal where there was a disposition on the part of the most intelligent portion of the people to embrace Protestantism, it was promptly suppressed by the militant head of the Portuguese government.

3. The Hugenots

As to the time and for what reason the Protestants of France, who were followers of John Calvin and belonged to the Reformed branch of the Reformation, there is a great deal of uncertainty. Some hold that the name "Hugenot" was formed by a mispronunciation of the German word "Eidgenosse" or "Confederates," which word the Swiss Protestants applied to themselves.

It was during the reign of Francis I and Henry II that the French Protestants were so mercilessly persecuted. It was principally in Southern France where they were most numerous. It was the old nobility that generally sponsored the Hugenot cause and in their strongly fortified castles they were able to defy the King. The city of Roch-
elle ranked as one of the most influential and leading cities of the Reformation, and of the Reformed church, the others being Geneva in Switzerland and Wesel in Germany. Other rulers who viciously suppressed the cause of the French Reformed church of that day were Francis II, Charles IX, Henry III, and last but not least, the notorious Catherine de Medici, who was closely allied to the famous Catholic house of Guise.

4. The Massacre of St. Bartholomew

Catherine had arranged a marriage between her daughter, the beautiful but infamous Margaret of Valois, and the Huguenot protagonist, Henry of Navarre. The Protestants were completely deceived by the prospect of peace and came in great numbers to Paris to attend the wedding. Four days later, she instigated an attempt on the life of Coligni, Grand Admiral of France, one of the most illustrious Huguenots. Catherine had hoped to throw the blame for this on the Duke of Guise, whom she sought to destroy. But she found herself implicated, and she succeeded in persuading the King to consent to a general massacre of the Protestants, to which he reluctantly yielded. Catholics were warned to place lights in their homes, and not to appear upon the streets without wearing the badge of the cross. The great bell of the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois was to ring as a signal for the great slaughter to begin. Like madmen, the Catholics fell upon the helpless Protestants and murdered them by the thousands.
St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572, was the date of this dreadful massacre, often called "The Bloody Wedding." It continued for several days and extended even to the provinces. It was too horrible for description. Enemies fell upon each other without regard to religion. In some localities, governors refused to execute the King's orders. It is said that the Roman bishop of Lisieux even opened his palace to the Huguenots, and protected them from the vicious mob.

The pope, upon hearing of the massacre, ordered a TeDeum to be sung, and commanded a medal to be struck bearing the legend, "Hugonotorum Strages," that is, "the massacre of the Huguenots." But Queen Elizabeth of England commanded her court to wear mourning, and received the French ambassador in a hall draped in deep black.

5. The Dutch Martyrs

But even Holland was not without its violent persecution of the cause of the Reformed Church. Here it was singularly named "The Church under the Cross." On June 30th, 1523, two young men, Henry Voes and John Esch, paid for their Protestant faith by being burned at the stake in the great square of the city of Antwerp, as they cried, "We will die as good Christians for the faith of the Gospel."

The heroism of these early martyrs produced an effect directly opposite to what the persecutors anticipated. Those who beheld...
such death scenes that were accompanied by self-sacrifice and patient endurance were certain to be attracted to the faith that produced them. True it was, "The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church!"

6. The Spanish Tyranny

Charles V. abdicated in 1555 and retired to the convent of Yuste to spend his life's evening. He is represented as penitent, tired of the world and anxious to atone for his wrongdoing by the mortification of the flesh, which history hopes he accomplished. When he abdicated, Netherlands came under the rule of his son, Philip II, one of the most despicable characters in all history. He had anything but love for the Netherlands. When he assumed the reign, he had but two objectives; to wipe out Protestantism and to remove the civil rights of the Dutch people. He resolved to adopt even more violent measures and to persecute them more vigorously even than his father had done. He made their yoke heavier and chastened them with scorpions.

At the first he entrusted the government of the Netherlands to his sister, Margaret of Parma, but she was too mild for the purpose he had in mind; so the infamous Ferdinand of Toledo, Duke of Alva, became her successor. He was truly a suitable instrument for the King's sanguinary purposes. It was he who introduced the
the Inquisition and decreed to all who had been in any way related to the Protestants, in fact, all who had ever heard a sermon, a psalm, or even furnished shelter and comfort to some heretical preacher, should be punished by death. Ferdinand made it his boast that he had turned more than eighteen thousand Protestants into the hands of the executioner. True it is, that 100,000 homes stood vacant where dwellers had fled to other countries. But the Reformed Church remained undaunted despite the persecutions, for religious services were held in obscure places, and thousands attended them. In 1568, the year when fanaticism rang in highest of fever, ministers and elders succeeded in secretly crossing the German boundary and held the historical synod of Wesel. When the vicious Inquisition burned its victims at the stake, the people regarded them as martyrs to the cause. Philip and the Duke of Alva failed to become convinced of the futility of their ambitions, and Philip is reported to have said, "I would rather be a king without subjects than ruler over heretics." The uncalled for suffering on every hand affected him not the least.

7. The Netherland Revolt

The conflict continued with unmitigated severity forty-one years, from 1568 to 1609, unbelievable as it is, and witnessed heroism which will perhaps remain unequalled in all human history. In the forepart of the revolt, the leading spirit of the Dutch armies was William, Prince of Orange, born in Dillenburg, Germany,
in 1523, the eldest son of the Duke of Nassau-Dillenburg, and was often called William of Nassau. His principality of Orange was a tiny district which originally had belonged to Burgundy and at the time had not yet been absorbed by France, although completely surrounded by French territory. He was called "the silent", not because he seldom spoke, for he is said to have been a pleasant and talkative soul, but because he succeeded in keeping his own counsel.

At the first William was a Roman Catholic. His conversion to Protestantism later is said to have been thorough and sincere. He hesitated a long time before accepting the leadership of the revolting provinces, but when he did accept, he demonstrated remarkable courage and tenacity. On becoming Stadthalter of Holland, he visited England, France and Germany, for assistance in the impending struggle, but these countries gave him none except a little money and promises which they never intended to fulfill. His attempt to resist the overwhelming power of Spain seemed at first to be hopeless, and the intrepid Hollanders did not at first expect to free their county from the cruel Spanish yoke.

During the winter of 1572, the Dutch fleet was frozen up in the Amsterdamer harbor. The Spanish undertook to march across the ice to launch their attack, but the Dutch soldiers donned ice skates and hemmed in the enemy on every side "like flocks of birds," until they succeeded in repulsing them. At the siege of
Haarlem, well-bred ladies listed as soldiers and fought as fur-
iously as the men. But the town was finally taken and 3000 cit-
izens were brutally slaughtered.

The siege of Leyden was most eventful. The garrison was
greatly outnumbered, but the citizens joined battle with utmost
valor. The famine was terrific. But when finally a group of
them, maddened with hunger, came to Burgomaster Peter Vander-
werf to demand that he either give them bread or negotiate for
peace, he replied: "I have made an oath, which by the help of
God I will keep, that I will never surrender to the Spaniard.
Bread, as you well know, I have none, but if my death can serve
you, slay me, eat my body - cut it into morsels and divide it
among you."

At the time of William of Orange when he was with his fleet
at Delft, he was unable to make the approach without destroying
the dykes and flooding the whole country. In spite of the tender
young grain being in the fields and the populace needing bread,
the dykes were cut. A fleet of two hundred vessels set sail
from Delft, but an east wind twice drove the water back, and the
ships lay helplessly stranded. But finally a Northwesterner set
in and the waters poured over the ruined dykes. A fierce mid-
night conflict ensued between the Dutch and the Spanish fleets
amid boughs of orchards and chimneys of submerged houses. But
William at last succeed in reaching Leyden and victoriously sailed up the channel distributing leaves to the famished people along the banks. The pangs of hunger were soon relieved and the populace hurried to the great church to give thanks for their remarkable deliverance. William, desirous of establishing a suitable memorial, offered the people the choice of a great fair that would bring commerce from every corner of Holland, or the foundation of a Reformed University. Because the people chose the latter, he expressed great pleasure at the choice, by not only founding the Reformed University, but by also granting them the fair.

A Spanish emissary assassinated the kindly William of Orange in July, 1584. It was a very sad day for the Reformed people of Holland when they were thus deprived of their sponsor in the prime of his useful life. His young seventeen year-old son, Maurice, was chosen by the people to succeed his eminent father. Their confidence was not misplaced, for young Maurice soon proved himself to be a brilliant young commander. As for Spain, it would not acknowledge the political independence of Holland until 1648, although long before this time it had become the naval power of Europe. Civil and religious liberty had won a glorious victory over tremendous odds, and the blood of the martyrs had not been spilled in vain.
As a consequence, Holland became a haven for the persecuted of many nations. The Mennonites, who were persecuted with fire and sword, here found a secure refuge and became a prosperous and influential group. And the "Pilgrim Fathers" too, who later in America proved themselves to be so intolerant toward the Quakers and the Baptists, never spent happier years than those twelve years of their sojourn in Amsterdam. The Palatinate exiles, too, experienced the same kind hospitality in Holland and were immediately received as brethren of a common faith. Even after having emigrated to America, the fostering care of the Dutch churches followed them, and many of our first churches in the new world were not only founded but also supported by the Reformed churches of Holland. It is to the Reformed Church of Holland that both the Dutch Reformed Church and the German Reformed Church in the United States owe an unforgettable debt of gratitude.
CHAPTER FIVE

Althought the Reformed church at Antwerp was utterly isolated from other Protestant groups, especially in the United States, it is not very different to indicate here, at the outset, its place in the development of the Reformed Church.

CHAPTER FIVE

The authority of the pope in England was well established by the earlier century. He had a ready defender in Henry VIII, who was twenty-six years of age. When Luther published his "95 Theses" in 1517, Henry was not yet with his full strength, "The Olivia of Benson Euchologian." But this service, the pope's text, the apostrophe "Defender of the Faith," was a thanks of Henry can no other ancient text that ever received.

Later, Henry quarreled with the pope. After the death of his divorce from Queen Catherine and his marriage with Anne Boleyn, array was.
CHAPTER FIVE
ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND

Although the Reformed church of England may differ widely from other Protestant groups, especially in the matter of organization, it is not very difficult to indicate how, at the outset, it stood in intimate relation to the continental church. At the beginning of its history, Stilling says, "The Anglican, that is the English Church, is only different from the rest of the Reformed churches in this; that it has an episcopal form of government. Are the Swedish and Danish churches not Lutheran because they have bishops? Does the garment make the man?" (1)

The authority of the pope on English soil, was well established by the sixteenth century. It had a noble defender in Henry VIII, who came to the throne in 1509. When Luther published his "Babylonish Captivity" in 1521, Henry came back with his hot reply, "The Defense of Seven Sacraments." For this service, the pope gave Henry the auspicious title of "Defender of the Faith," but Luther launched such a vituperation upon the head of Henry, as neither Henry nor any other crowned head has ever received. Later, Henry quarrelled with the pope, when the issue of his divorce from Queen Catherine and his marriage with Anne Bolyn arose, and Luther was willing to become reconciled, but the king

(1) Stilling, Wahrheit in Liebe - p.288
snubbed his advances.

It was in 1534 that the church of England, by act of Parliament, was declared independent of Rome, and Henry was acclaimed its head. However, fickle Henry held to the Roman faith to the end of his life while he piteously persecuted all Catholics or Protestants who were unwilling to acclaim his supreme authority in ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs. Henry VIII did not introduce the Reformation in England, as some hold, but his alienation from Rome did make it possible for the Reformation to penetrate into England. So, then, while Henry engaged in his quarrels with the pope, Protestantism quietly slipped into England through the back door. Jane Seymour, Henry's third wife, was a devoted Protestant, and left no stone unturned to aid the Protestant cause. It was Thomas Cranmer, who at the time, was Archbishop of Canterbury and who was secretly married to a German lady, a niece of the eminent Osiander, who embraced Protestantism in Germany, who succeeded after the king's death in taking active measures for the organizing of Protestantism in merry old England.

1. Cranmer and Bullinger

A momentous event to the Protestant cause in England happened shortly after Henry's marriage to Jane Seymour in 1536; it was
the introduction by the celebrated Professor Simon Grynaeus of Strasburg, of Thomas Cranmer to Henry Bullinger of Zurich, Switzerland. In August of that same year, Cranmer and three young English students, John Butler, William Woodruff and Nicholas Partridge, came to Zurich to study Swiss theology and make a study of the Swiss churches. For a whole year they engaged in study and when they returned to England, they brought with them Rudolph Gualter, who engaged in studies at Oxford. It was this young man who later married Regula, a daughter of Zwingli, and became the chief pastor of the church at Zurich.

All these events succeeded in doing one thing, namely cementing together the relations of Cranmer and Bullinger, and this was of tremendous import to the cause of English Protestantism. Furthermore, upon Henry's death, there became king his ten year old son, Edward VI. The government was really in the hands of the boy's uncle, the Duke of Somerset, and a council of state of which Cranmer was an influential member. This too, was in the favor of the Protestant cause, for every effort was now made to organize the Church of England, on a Protestant basis. Edward was a precocious boy, but he took a keen interest in the movement. He even sent Christopher Mont to Zurich, with a letter addressed to Bullinger asking for a closer connection between the churches of England
and Switzerland. A considerable correspondence between the Protestant leaders of both nations resulted. Bullinger had no objection to the Episcopalian form of government, but he did suggest that the services should be "clean and simple, and without pomp." It is said of Hooper that when in 1550, he became Bishop of Gloucester, he objected to wearing the elaborate robes, but Bullinger counselled him to accommodate himself in such minor considerations to the policy of the government as a matter of expediency.

Two parties developed in England during these days. One held the position of Henry VIII, who wanted complete separation from Rome but insisted upon the preservation of every peculiarity of the ancient church. The other, however, was Protestant through and through, and was anxious for a complete assimilation of the Church of England and the Reformed churches of the continent. Bullinger was fearful that the factions would never become thoroughly united, and needless to say, his hopes of unification were never completely realized.

Now, when Queen Mary came to the throne, in 1550, the Romanists again had things their own way. More than 300 eminent Protestants were burned at the stake while thousands fled for
their lives to other lands. Zurich was so over crowded with English refugees, that the Zurichers were hard pressed to find entertainment for them. But when "good Queen Bess", (Elizabeth) ascended the throne, Protestants had an unfailing friend. She took recognition of Swiss kindness. A silver goblet, said to be still in existence, was sent by her to the Swiss of Zurich. It bears this Latin inscription: "The church of Zurich received the exiles of England during the reign of Mary. Elizabeth acknowledges this with thanks and reverently presents this goblet to Bullinger."

The names of several prominent leaders of Protestantism who greatly aided the cause of the Reformation in the Church of England, should now be mentioned.

1. Peter Martyr

Martyr is the first and one of the most prominent among these leaders. Vernugli was his real name. He was an Italian by birth and had been a theological professor at Zurich and Strasburg. He was one among several whom Cranmer invited to England to become Professor of Theology at Oxford. Here he labored under tremendous odds. But to him goes the credit of being influential in revising the Book of Common Prayer. When Mary became Queen, he was compelled to flee back to Zurich.

2. John De Lasky

This man was another distinguished leader of the Reformed
A Polish nobleman by birth and nephew of the Archbishop of Gnesen and a brilliant scholar, he became an intimate friend of Erasmus who called him "a soul without a stain." Although he had been converted to Protestantism early in his life, he hesitated before making a complete break from the Established Church. But in 1536, when the Polish king offered him a Roman Bishopric, he made a formal public confession of the Reformed faith and left his fatherland. It is to him especially that the Reformed churches of Poland and Bohemia owe their very existence.

His influence was hardly less extensive in the Netherlands, the Rhine provinces of Germany and those of Northern Europe, where he was a leading spirit. Upon the invitation of the king of England in 1550, he migrated to England to assume the shepherding of the foreign refugee churches which had been founded in London. His influence in England was pronounced, though he was inclined to extreme simplicity in the matter of church ritual, much to the disappointment of Cranmer. While in London, he published a catechism which some held to be a forerunner of the Heidelberg Catechism. His hand played a great part in the drafting of the liturgies of the Netherlands and the Palatinate. When Mary ascended the throne, De Lasky forsook England to establish a colony of several hundred people who found refuge in Germany.

3. Martin Bucer

This celebrated reformer was called to England through the
influence of Cranmer who was instrumental in his appointment to the Theological professorship at Cambridge. The two men had many ideals and views in common and also served as mediating spirits between conflicting parties; however, Bucer was the firmer and the more aggressive of the two men. At this time, Herman V was the Archbishop of Cologne, and he undertook to introduce the Reformation in his diocese without bringing about any more radical changes in ritual and government than were necessary in order to avoid disturbances. He secured the assistance of the gentle Melanchthon and the aggressive Bucer in the working out of the problems pertaining to ritual and government. But the movement at Cologne failed. The Archbishop was compelled to resign while Bucer became persona non grata with the emperor, whereupon Bucer gladly welcomed Cranmer's invitation to come to Cambridge. Here he continued his literary career. It was he who, commissioned to collaborate with Peter Martyr in the revision of the English Liturgy, which hitherto had been patterned closely after the Roman Mass, was instrumental in the elimination from the Book of Common Prayer, such matters as auricular confession, prayers for the dead, exorcism, anointing with oil and the use of bright-colored robes.
But Bucer was most unhappy in England. He spoke English with great difficulty, and his wife was entirely ignorant of the language. His intercourse with his English friends was limited to the learned people, and this was carried on in Latin. He could not adjust himself to the English climate, and the mode of living, too, failed to agree with him. His health began to fail steadily. He died at the age of sixty-one years, on February 28, 1551.

In the public square just in front of the Parliament House in Edinburgh is a pavement in which a stone is placed which bears the simple initials "J. K." Here there was once a church-yard, and the inscribed stone is believed to mark the grave of John Knox, the father and founder of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. What Knox founded was in reality a genuinely Calvinistic church in the fullest sense of the term; far more Calvinistic than the Reformed churches of either Geneva, France or Holland. Calvin's doctrines and type of church government were accepted and followed to the letter. It might almost be said that in those days a veritable re-incarnation of John Calvin's spirit had taken place,--his sternness, his logical propensities, his ideals of theocracy and its corollary, yes, even his very personal character. All this was due to that strange personality of John Knox, who had so completely copied his master that he has frequently been called "another Calvin." The Reformed church of the continent, it will be
remembered, was derived from these three distinctive sources: Zurich, Geneva, and the Palatinate. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland, however, derived its doctrine and its government from Geneva alone. It has always been recognized as a Reformed Church, yet it has ever been in a special sense, the church of Calvin.

The great Scotish reformer's birth was in 1505, four years before that of Calvin. The place of his birth seems to be uncertain. He attended school at Haddington and at St. Andrews. Bad as the schools of that day were, young Knox was an apt student. So promising was he that he entered the priesthood under age. Like many other Reformers it was the reading of the works of Augustine that led him to a study of the Gospel. While the scales fell from his eyes in 1530, it was not until as late as 1541 that he made a public profession of his faith. He violently denounced the papacy. In consequence, when a French fleet came to assist the regent, he was taken prisoner and carried to France where for nineteen months he was a galley-slave, fastened with huge chains and exposed to all manner of indignity. Upon his release, he went to England to become the chaplain of King Edward VI. He declined a bishopric. Upon the enthronement of Queen Mary in 1554, he fled to Geneva where, for the first time
he met John Calvin. The city and its great preacher and leading spirit, thrilled him greatly. Though nearly fifty years of age, Knox enrolled as a student in Calvin's school, and with humility he studied the ancient languages in the company of mere boys in their teens. While a student, he preached to a little group of English refugees who were able to pay him but a pitiful stipend toward his support. He made occasional journeys to Scotland, but each time he returned to Geneva saying that Scotland was not yet ripe. But in 1559, he exclaimed, "Now Scotland is ripe!" He returned to his native land to become the leader of the Protestant movement, and in the brief period of one year, the cause was as good as gained. The very next year, 1560, Parliament went on record to declare the abrogation of the Romish system, and in the same year, it formally adopted the Scotch Confession.

When Mary Stuart came to Scotland in 1561 as the widow of the French King, for the purpose of taking over the government of her kingdom, her grace and beauty charmed the entire nation. Upon her assumption of the throne, she promised tolerance but it was not long before she availed herself of every power to re-establish the old papal system. John Knox was the special object of her aversion. Several times she attempted to bring about his condemnation under various pretenses; but he succeeded in defending
himself in her presence with such energy and eloquence that she was moved to tears. His popularity spared him from every attempt of the queen upon his life. It soon became evident that John Knox possessed greater influence and power in the land than did the Queen herself. The tragic story of Mary Stuart, the unsavoury details of her life, her marriage to Darnley, the murder of her Italian secretary, David Rizzio, her favor to Lord Bothwell, her foolish flight to England, her eighteen year imprisonment and her subsequent execution by Elizabeth are too well known to necessitate recapitulation. What is of importance to us here is the fact that John Knox remained the most influential man in the church of Scotland and that he succeeded in permanently molding it to his own ideal. Knox was instrumental in such reforms as stripping the churches of every ornament, forbidding the kneeling in worship, disallowing prayers for the dead. The Scriptures were expounded daily in the churches, holidays were banned, but the Christian Sabbath was observed with a degree of remarkable strictness. The people were thoroughly indoctrinated and Knox took a personal interest in all things that pertained to the church. Stern and strict as the Scottish Church may have become, yet the fact remains that it produced marvelous examples of a deep and earnest piety. Attempts on the part of English monarchs ever
since the union of England and Scotland to introduce the Episcopal form of government, served to do but one thing, namely to intensify and solidify the peculiarities of the Church of Scotland. Faith and not polity was, to this great church, the thing of overwhelming importance.
CHAPTER SIX

The Reformation must not be represented as having the exclusive work of one party. The Roman theologians have allegiance in speaking of it as a system that was reluctantly imposed by the nobility and humbly accepted by the common people. The story, however, is that the affirmation and rejection of the great truths mean this, though they may not have participated openly in the great conflict, yet those who were ready to suffer and die for the great cause of the Reformation, the story of the Reformers. Their story tells a thrilling story of the loyal devotion of the women of Geneva and of the women of the west of Holland. In arduous times the heroes of the faith were uncounted by the self-sacrificing women of the west of Holland, who by their implicit obedience did as much for the cause of the Reformed church.

In the case of several of the Reformed who played as prominent a part in their early history of the Reformed church, but in contradiction we would name several women of Switzerland who made that for the cause of Christ as well as for themselves.

Anna Heldwein

Anna was a beautiful girl coming from an humble Swiss family.
CHAPTER SIX

SOME WOMEN OF THE REFORMED CHURCH

The Reformation must not be represented as being the exclusive work of men merely. The Roman theologians have delighted in speaking of it as a system that was ruthlessly imposed by the nobility and humbly accepted by the common people. The truth, however, is that the enthusiasm and devotion of a great host of women who, though they may not have participated openly in the great conflict, yet did prove themselves ready to suffer and die for the great cause of the Reformation. The story of the Reformed church tells a thrilling story of the loyal devotion of the women of Geneva and of the heroism of the women of Holland. In critical times the heroes of the faith were undergirded by the self-sacrificing consecration of the women of their households, who by their silent ministrations did so much for the cause of the Reformed church.

We propose, therefore, in this chapter to write of the wives of several of the reformers who played so prominent a part in the early history of the Reformed church, and in conclusion we would name several women of exalted station who made fame for the cause of Christ as well as for themselves.

(1) Anna Reinhard

Anna was a beautiful girl coming from an humble Swiss family.
At an early age she married John Meyer von Knobau, a young nobleman. The proud family of von Knobau disapproved the union and the young husband was forced to enter military service in foreign lands. He died in 1515, leaving his widow and their three children in penniless circumstances. The maternal father made some provision for the destitute family and developed an especial affection for the son named Gerold. It was the admiration for this beautiful boy that directed Zwingli's attention to the widow who was no longer in the bloom of youth but was by now, a woman of dignity in manner and everywhere highly esteemed. Particulars of the courtship of Zwingli and the widow are lacking, but certain it is that the marriage was at first kept secret because it was dangerous for a priest to marry, and it would be uncertain what the outcome of the young reformer's program as to the Reformation might be. But it is certain that Anna made him a model wife who appreciated the grandeur of his work, taking quiet charge of the household and sparing her husband as much as possible from those daily rigorous cares which might have interfered with his literary achievements. During such strenuous controversies such as the one at Baden, where it is said of Zwingli that he did not see a bed for six weeks, Anna was ready at any hour to provide refreshment not only for her husband but also for the couriers
who usually arrived with messages at midnight. The family life was of necessity solemn, but frequently Zwingli played his flute to the merriment of wife and children. Yet there was little opportunity for domestic happiness and for the cultivation of social life. The struggle for the cause constantly increased in intensity and at last, in the terrible catastrophe at Capel in a single battle, Anna lost not only her husband and her son Gerald, but a brother, a son-in-law, besides many other relatives. A mournful ballad, "Frau Zwingli's Lament", tells the story of her great grief. Anna lived seven years after the death of her husband. She was humble, modest and uncomplaining and has become no less a martyr to the great cause of the Reformation than was her distinguished husband.

(2) Idelette de Bures

John Calvin was twenty-nine years old and nearly at the zenith of his fame before entertained the idea of matrimony. Idelette de Bures, upon whom his choice fell, like Zwingli's wife, was a widow, and that of an Anabaptist whom Calvin had converted. She was a woman of high culture, refinement and high standing, and yet hers was a modest and retiring disposition. Audin, a Roman Catholic writer said that Calvin wanted his wife to be a secretary, a nurse, a cook and a manager. But although Calvin's domestic life was very obscure, and he himself according to his
own admission was not "one of the passionate kind," He gave sufficient evidence that he appreciated the sanctity of marriage and selected for himself a wife who possessed these lovelier and loftier qualities. Seven years after her death, in an hour of his own great affliction, he speaks of his wife as an example of all that is beautiful in women.

(3) Jeanne D'Albret

Already reference has been made to Margaret of Navarre and the splendid influence she exerted for the cause of the French Reformation. The name of her daughter, Jeanne D'Albret, forever remains upon history's record as that of an outstanding heroine in the Huguenot cause. Already as a young girl, her father, the king, severely abused her for her sympathetic attitude toward Protestantism. She became the wife of Antoine of Bourbon and the mother of Henry IV of France. When her husband became frightened because of the fierce Roman resentment for the Huguenots and subsequently sought to make terms with them, it was Jeanne, his wife, who with the characteristic courage of her race, rode about her kingdom levying troops, fortifying cities, and challenging the people to make heroic and self-sacrificing defence. Her famous edict formally introducing the Reformed religion and her founding in a time of war of schools for the training of Reformed ministers,
make her out as one of the outstanding women in the Reformed Church. She will forever be known as "the good Queen of Navarre". At the time of her death in Paris, although surrounded at that solemn moment by greatly bigotted Romanists, she made this beautiful confession, "I believe that Christ is my only Savior and Mediator, and I expect salvation from no other."

4. Charlotte de Bourbon

She was the daughter of the Duke of Montpensier, one of the outstanding champions of the Roman cause. Upon discovering that she was inclined toward Protestantism, her father compelled her to enter the convent of Jouarre of which she even became abbess. Being a woman of high rank, she was privileged even here to enjoy the luxuries and refinements. But she loathed the whole system and escaped in disguise to find shelter with the elector of the Palatinate. It was here that she met the illustrious Prince of Orange, who later took this faithful protagonist of the Reformed Church to be his bride. In an hour of his unutterable persecution by the Catholics, his household afforded him his chief consolation.

5. Catharina Belgica of Hanau

This illustrious lady was the daughter of the Prince of Orange and Charlotte de Bourbon. In her eighteenth year she was married to Count Philip Ludwig II of Hanau. After sixteen years of happy married life, Ludwig died, and his widow ably administered his
affairs of state until their son was old enough to take over the government. She founded the famous literary schools of Hanau. Her court was always a house of refuge for oppressed Hugenots.

6. Gertrude von Bentheim

She was married to the thirty-eight year old, weak-kneed Count Ernst Wilhelm of Westphalian principality of Bentheim. His family frowned upon this marriage because Gertrude was not of equal rank with her husband. Asking the aid of the Catholic bishop of Munster, the bishop glad for the opportunity, interceded with the emperor and succeeded in securing a decree by which the countess was exalted to her husband's rank. The compensation which the bishop claimed, however, was that the family should become Catholic. This the princess declined to do. Watching his opportunity, he seized the count and after having him imprisoned, induced him to renounce Protestantism. Then seizing the castle of Bentheim, he took the countess prisoner and carried her to Munster. After many bitter trials, she managed to escape to Holland whither she had already sent her children and where she continued to live in retirement. Her husband embraced Catholicism, secured a divorce and married the Countess of Limburg. Hearing of her
husband's action, she could no longer bear the weight of her sorrow and in three days succumbed of a broken heart. But the populace of Bentheim sympathized with their countess. They held frequent meetings and pledged allegiance to the Reformed faith. It is interesting to note that the Classes of Bentheim adopted a seal which represented the Saviour in a ship in the storm on the lake of Galilee, with the Latin inscription, "Lord, save us; we perish." (1)

7. Louisa Henrietta of Brandenburg

Still another illustrious woman of the Reformed church was the celebrated poetess, Louisa Henrietta of Brandenburg, born in 1627 at the Hague in Holland. She was the eldest daughter of Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, and the grand daughter of the distinguished Coligni, Grand Admiral of France, who gave his life for the Reformed cause at the St. Bartholomew massacre. She was of pious parentage and received a most excellent education. At nineteen years of age, she was married to Frederick William of Brandenburg, known in history as "The Great Elector," and as the real founder of the kingdom of Prussia. Louisa's marriage occurred near the close of the Thirty Year's War when Germany was almost ruined by the contending armies. Louisa was kindly disposed toward her impoverished subjects. She induced some of the best Dutch farmers to settle in Germany and establish model farms.

(1) Matthew 8:25
At the beginning of her reign, her popularity reached such proportions that almost every female child born in those years was given the name of "Louisa."

The electress and her husband labored earnestly for the reconciliation of the two evangelical churches and for this reason refused to promulgate the decrees of the Synod of Dortrecht, believing them to be the main object of discord.

The electress, a very pious and benevolent minded woman, died in 1667, soon after the birth of her sixth child, Prince Louis of Cleves. Some of her death-bed sentences are note-worthy: "I am drawing near the harbor! I see the pinnacles of the celestial city! If I should get well, it would throw me back into the stormy sea!" Another was: "I have passed with Elijah through the storm, the earthquake and the fire. Now I am waiting for the still, small voice." At the moment of her demise, she whispered, "I hear the still small voice!"

Louisa of Brandenburg is perhaps best remembered as the writer of a number of hymns, the best known and most famous of which are "Jesus, meine Zuversicht," a hymn which was always sung at the burial of Prussian royalty, and "Ich will von meiner Missenthat."
CHAPTER SEVEN
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

To the Netherlanders must be given the credit of having been the pioneers in establishing the Reformed Church on the American soil. There is every reason to believe that religious services were held on the site of the present city of New York soon after the first settlement of New Amsterdam in 1614. Historians agree that the Heidelberg Catechism was taught in America before the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock. It was the Reverend Jonas Michaelius who arrived at New Amsterdam from the West Indies in 1628 and organized a congregation of over fifty communicants. He was succeeded in 1633 by the Reverend Everardus Bogardus, whose fierce conflicts with the early Dutch governors had added to our American history.

There were Germans among the inhabitants of New York from the earliest settlement. These acquired the language of the early colonists among whom they lived and connected themselves with the Dutch churches. As time passed, the number of the German emigrants increased and these organized German churches. The history of these churches is very uncertain. Some of them affiliated themselves with the German Reformed churches of Pennsylvania and others held a type of filial relation with the Dutch Coetus, while the greater majority remained independent.
There were some who, like Pastor Gebhard of Cloverack, and others who preached alternately in German and Dutch. At the last, the major part of this German constituency passed quite naturally into the Dutch Reformed Church. It has been generally agreed that at least one third of the Dutch denomination were of German descent. The story of the German element in the Reformed Dutch Church has never yet been fully written.

A German Reformed Fore-runner

In 1638, some forty-four years before the arrival of William Penn, the first permanent settlement on the west bank of the Delaware river was founded by a Swedish colony. It was that same year that two vessels, the "Bird Griffin" and the "Key of Culivar," sailed up the Delaware and formally claimed the hitherto unoccupied territory on its western bank in the name of the Swedish crown.

It was Peter Minuit, a former governor of New Netherlands, who commanded the expedition. All that is known of him is that he was born in Germany and is believed to have been of Hugenot descent. But it is recorded that he had been a deacon in the Reformed church at Wesel. (1)

Peter Minuit is deserving of a higher position than is usually allowed him. He was the instigator of the policy of fair dealing with the Indians, which was later continued and developed

(1) Kapp - History of Immigration
by William Penn. It was Minuit who purchased from the Indians all the land between Cape Henlopen and the falls of Trenton, a treaty which was never broken. William Penn may have purchased land from the Indianas, but he had no occasion for obtaining possession in this way of the land on which he founded the city of Philadelphia. It had already been included in the original Swedish purchase, and though property rights were granted him by the British government, he bought the land from the Swedes who had first occupied it.

Peter Minuit may be regarded as the earliest pioneer of the German Reformed Church in the United States. Though the Swedish colony which he headed was Lutheran, yet there were many Germans and Netherlanders in the New World before it came under the rule of the British Crown. These are said to have intermarried with the Swedes and these, in the course of time, became one religious organization. But even at the time of William Penn's arrival, there was still a Dutch Reformed place of worship at New Castle.

It is interesting to note that the mother of William Penn was, in her youth, a member of the Reformed Church. She was a daughter of a merchant of Rotterdam whose name was Jasper. She was a woman of great mental strength. After her marriage, she
became a member of the Church of England. Her son, William, felt inclined because of the cold formality of the church, to desert the Anglican Church and to affiliate himself with a sect that held the opposite position, though he always gratefully acknowledged his indebtedness to his mother's early training. While a young man, he visited France and came under the instruction of the eminent Reformed theologian, Moses Mayrault. Penn was known for views that were much more liberal than those of the founders of the sect with which he became affiliated. This was due, without a doubt, to the early training to which we just alluded.

**Pioneer Reformed Ministers in America**

It has long been held that either the Reverend George Michael Weiss or the Reverend John Philip Boehm was the earliest German Reformed minister in America. But recent research has given the priority to Boehm. These two men were the first Reformed ministers in Pennsylvania, and without doubt they laid the ground work for the Reformed church in the United States. But there were two other ministers with very similar surnames, who labored even earlier, the one to the north of Pennsylvania, and the other to the south. Their names were John Frederick Hager and Henry Hoeger.

John Frederick Hager, a Palatinate Reformed minister, accompanied a group of 2,138 citizens of the Palatinate, who in
May, 1709 halted in London on their way to the New World. They were sent to New York by Queen Anne, and Hager ministered to the Reformed members at the East and West Camp while John Joshua Kocherthal ministered to the Lutheran constituents. He also ministered to the Reformed people who moved to the Schoharie and the Mohawk settlements. It is rather certain that he established the Reformed Church at Schoharie.

Henry Hoeger, a minister of the Reformed Church, is believed to have accompanied De Graffenried's Swiss colony, which in 1710 settled at New Berne, North Carolina when the Tuscarora Indians dispersed the settlement. Hoeger directed the fifty odd survivors to Virginia where Governor Spottiswoode employed them. An old historical document relates this interesting story: "There went out with the first twelve families, one minister named Henry Hoeger, a very sober, honest man of about 75 years of age. But he being likely to be past service in a short time, they empowered Mr. Jacob Christofle Zollikoffer of St. Gall in Switzerland, to go to Europe there to obtain, if possible, some contributions from the pious and charitable Christians, toward the building of the church and the bringing over with him of a young German minister to assist the aforesaid Hoeger in the ministry of religion, and to assist him when he shall die, and to get him ordained in England by the Right Reverend Bishop of London, and to bring over
with him the Liturgy of the Church of England, translated into High Dutch, which they were desirous to use in the public services. They also desired the support of a minister from the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. " (1)

It seems that the first mentioned Reverend John Frederick Hager was also ordained by this same Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

(1) Perry, Historical Collections
CHAPTER EIGHT

To write the history of the Germans in Pennsylvania is no mean task. The English colonists were comprised by a large extent, of unenlightened people, and German society was composed of a more refined society to which they wished to return and where they could speak their own language. They migrated to the New World not as colonists, but rather on the chance to escape from oppression and misery and the wish for an opportunity of earning an honest livelihood. Wise Governor Logan expressed his appreciation that the German settlers brought Pennsylvania law and language, and Archbishop Breyden expressed his desire that these settlers become worthy citizens, by taking some eight years with the French on the Ohio, solve the English side of the colony, there they nearly encouraged their ignorance of those early settlers, not realizing that these Germans were Belpans because of the inhabitants among themselves.

To gain a better understanding of conditions of the early period, we must not be content with the fact that these settlers had a loose distinction between German and English. The entire that had pre-empted the field were such as the Moravians, the Palatines, and the Catholics, which have since become English.
CHAPTER EIGHT

PENNSYLVANIA PIONEERS

To write the history of the Germans in Pennsylvania is by no means an easy task. The English colonies were comprised to a large extent, of companies whose ideologies were homogeneous, who occupied extensive areas which they governed to suit themselves. This was not true of the Germans who had nothing in common except their language. They emigrated to the New World not as colonists, but rather as individuals who sought refuge from oppression and misery and who wished only an opportunity of earning an honest livelihood. When Governor Gordon expressed his apprehension that the Germans might give Pennsylvania law and language, and Archbishop Herrnng expressed his fear that these German immigrants might, by making common cause with the French on the Ohio, drive the English out of the colony, there they merely expressed their ignorance of these early settlers, not realizing that these Germans were helpless because of the divisions among themselves.

To gain a better understanding of conditions of this early period, we must not be unmindful of the fact that there existed then a broad distinction between churches and sects. The sects that had pre-empted the field were such as the Mennonites, the Schwenkenfelders and the Dunkers, which have since become extinct.
John Greenleaf Whittier immortalized Frances D. Pastorius in his poem, "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim" who is generally recognized as the pioneer German emigrant to the New World. In Germany he was known as a mystic and in America he was a Quaker.

The Reformed and the Lutheran Churches made their appearance at a later date. They came from wide-spread regions and ideologies and it took centuries before they developed into a homogenous people and amalgamated with other races.

It is very difficult, if not almost impossible, to decide with any degree of accuracy when the first German Reformed church was organized in Pennsylvania. The truth of the whole matter is that people in various localities met and organized congregations without waiting for regular ministers to make their appearance upon the scene. There has always been a great dearth of ministers in the early history of the Reformed church, and when none could be imported from either Switzerland, Germany or Holland, those in America were finally compelled to train their own clergy. In the meantime, much ground and time had been lost. It was usually the most intelligent man in the community who was selected to conduct the services and the congregational life was lead by them, as is still the case in the western section of the Reformed Church where congregations are scattered and too feeble
to employ a full-time pastor. The services generally consisted of the reading of prayers from a European book of liturgy and a sermon read by a layman from some approved collection of sermons. Krummacher’s sermons were the great favorite with most congregations.

It is generally believed that the Skippack church in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, which no longer exists, is the oldest Reformed church in the new world, though some contend that the church in Philadelphia is entitled to this distinction. The records have it that the Reverend Paulus Van Vleck visited the Skippack church on May 29, 1710, and baptized ten children, but nothing is said as to whether this church was an organized church or not. It is definitely known that the Philadelphia church on Race Street, below Fourth Street, was organized in either the year 1726 or 1727. The first elders elected were Peter Lecolie, Johann Wilhelm Roerig, Heinrich Weller and Georg Peter Hillengass. However, recent records seem to indicate that the organization of this church was effected even earlier than the date given. From a memorial addressed to the Classes of Amsterdam by the Reformed Church in 1728 at Falkner Swamp, Skippack and Whitemarsh, we glean the following information: that the Reverend John Philip Boehm began preaching in these communities as early as 1720 and possibly
even before that year. Within a decade of that period nearly a dozen churches were founded. But it is difficult to ascribe priority to any particular one of them.

**EARLY PIONEER MINISTERS OF THE REFORMED CHURCH**

A word should now be said as to the career of some of the Reformed ministers who were the first on the field, who may be regarded as pioneers of the Reformed church.

(1) John Philip Boehm

Boehm had been a school teacher in the historic old city of Worms. He was persecuted by the Roman Catholics and came to America not later than 1720. In the memorial to which reference has already been made, mention is given that he had not long been in America before he was appointed as "Reader" and that he served in that capacity for a number of years. Then he was challenged to assume the place of pastor, a call which he accepted. There was a great dearth of ministers at the time and certainly no one was better qualified for such an office than was he. Even though such a procedure was irregular, yet in the existent emergency, this step was expedient for the early church in the new world. Boehm served the three churches at Falkner Swamp, Skippack and Whitemarsh for the period of three years.

In the meantime, the Reverend George Michael Weiss had come from Germany. He was recognized as a regularly ordained minister
and the coming of this regularly ordained minister created a schism in the new church. Some of the people clung to their beloved leader, Boehm, while others felt that he had no authority to exercise ministerial duties. Boehm himself felt that there was an irregularity in his course, and subsequently his three congregations requested that the Dutch Reformed Churches of New York ordain him. The issue was referred to the Classis of Amsterdam, which, after some delay, granted the request. So Boehm was at last ordained in New York on November 23, 1729, by a committee consisting of the Reverend Henricus Boel and Reverend Gualterius De Bois. From that day forth the strained relations were overcome and Weiss stood by Boehm's side as a faithful coadjutor. Boehm continued his ministry in Montgomery County and is said to have preached in his own residence. The congregation he served became known as "Boehm's Church." Boehm made many missionary journeys and also preached in Philadelphia where he became involved in a controversy with Count Zinzendorf during which he published several brochures.

Boehm, though not highly educated, was by no means stupid. He displayed brilliance and extraordinary energy and his influence with the civil and political authorities was extensive and everywhere recognized. Through the rapid increase of land values, Boehm became very wealthy, but this in no way interfered with his
zeal in extending the work of the church. Schlatter, who shortly came upon the scene, always referred to him with profound respect.

This great pioneer preacher of the Reformed church died suddenly on May 1, 1749, after having previously administered the Holy Communion to the church at Egypt, Pennsylvania.

(2)

George Michael Weiss

Weiss was born about the year 1700 in the little village of Stebbback lying in the beautiful valley near the Neckar river in Germany. Educated in the University of Heidelberg, he came to America as an ordained minister at the age of twenty-seven years, in company with some four hundred German colonists, most of whom were members of the Reformed Church, and settled in Philadelphia where he organized a Reformed congregation. Another of his preaching stations was at Skippack.

In the year 1729, Weiss in company with an elder by the name of Jacob Reiff, was commissioned to go to Germany to collect money and good religious books for the Reformed churches at Philadelphia and Skippack. There was some doubt in Weiss' mind about his returning to America. A power of attorney was given Reiff not only to receive money but also to carry out the mission to his best judgment. Upon his return to America, Reiff delayed settlement, and this involved a protracted suit in chancery over the famous "Reiff case." The
case remained in the courts until the arrival of Schlatter who succeeded in gaining a settlement whereby Reiff paid over the sum of six hundred and fifty dollars, after which Schlatter published a statement expressing his confidence in the honesty of Reiff. Reiff may have been careless in keeping his records but there was no evidence of dishonesty. The money gathered was perhaps imprudently invested by him in merchandise which he thought could be sold to advantage for the benefit of the churches. But it seems that these goods were detained in British customs for some years as a result of the litigation and were to be surrendered only upon payment of a large sum for duty and storage. The definite amount of the collections was never known; however, Reiff was never charged with having received more than approximately $2000.00. Inasmuch as the churches had agreed to defray all the expenses of the commission, Reiff claimed credit for one hundred and fifty pounds, which he had advanced toward the building of the Skippack church. It is evident that after these deductions had been made, the sum remaining could not have been very large. But the fact was that the litigations and the rumors it involved were not without damaging effect to the newly born church.

Weiss returned to America two years later, leaving Reiff
in Germany to return a year later. Weiss settled among the Germans in the state of New York and labored chiefly in the counties of Schlarie and Dutchess. In 1746, the Indians drove him out and he fled to Pennsylvania where he took charge of the congregations located at Old and New Goshenhoppen and Great Swamp, where the Reformed church is still strong to the present day.

(3) John Henry Goetschius

Goetschius was a native of Zurich, Switzerland, and his personal history remains obscure. He was the pastor at New Goshenhoppen. He was careful to provide the churches he served with accurate congregational records. On the title page of the record of this church in which his own name has been preserved, are the names of the congregations he simultaneously served, namely Skippack, Old and New Goshenhoppen, Swamp, Saucon, Egypt, Macedonia, Mosilem, Oley, Bern and Tulpehocken. This enormous territory is today occupied by more than fifty Reformed ministers, a fact that indicates to us the enormity of the size of his diocese.

(4) John Bartholomew Rieger.

Reiger was born in the Palatinate in 1707, and was an educated physician, trained at Heidelberg. Though the time and place of his ordination remain unknown, he was one of the earliest ministers at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He was present at the organiza-
tion of the first German Reformed Synod in America. He was founder of many of the Reformed congregations in Lancaster and Lebanon counties. Little is known of his personal life and career.

(5) Peter Henry Dorstius

Dorstius was not a member of the German Reformed group, but of the Dutch Reformed church serving a Dutch church in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Because of his proximity to the German Churches, he was authorized to exercise supervision over them and to report their condition to the Church of Holland. In September of 1740 he visited the Lower Saucon church and baptized several children of members of the Egypt congregation.

It is noteworthy that in the year 1743 Dorstius was delegated to convey a most important letter from the Synods of Holland to the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia inquiring as to the practicability of consolidating the Presbyterian, the Dutch Reformed and the German Reformed churches of America into a single body. The Presbyterians declined to enter into such a union but expressed their willingness to unite with the Reformed groups in all efforts to promote the common interests of religion. This perhaps the first effort made at organic church union in America.

(6) John Peter Miller

Miller, born in Lautern in the Palatinate in 1710, received his education at Heidelberg University where Weis and Reiger were
his fellow students. In 1730 he came to America under the direction of the church authorities of Heidelberg. He was too young to receive ordination. Since there was no ecclesiastical body in the Reformed church to confer this rite, he was ordained soon after his arrival by the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia. The Reverend Jedidiah Andrews, who was a member of this body, gave expression of Miller's extraordinary scholarship in his statement, "He speaks Latin as we do our vernacular tongue."

Miller became pastor of the Reformed church at Tulpehocken in 1731, an isolated community whose citizens had come from the north instead of the east. They were people who, desiring to build homes, had because of their ignorance of the language and customs of the country, been victims of dishonest men who on the pretext of some irregularity deprived them of a great part of the lands they had made fertile by their hard labor. Governor Keith of Pennsylvania had persuaded them to re-establish themselves in his state, in consequence of which a company of them had braved the wilderness in search of their future home. Upon reaching the Susquehanna river, they built rafts and floated down the river as far as the mouth of the Swatara river. Ascending this stream, they reached the fertile country known as Tulpehocken, so named by the Indians. Here Miller ministered successfully among the Reformed people for about four years.
In the meanwhile a mystical brotherhood had established itself at Ephrata, which offered peace to all who renounced the world to serve the Lord in silence and hope. These "Ephrata Brethren" as they were known, voluntarily renounced every worldly ambition and submitted themselves to a monastic life which for strictness could hardly find a greater counterpart in Roman monasticism.

Miller was attracted to these "Ephrata Brethren" by an influence so irresistible, that he, renouncing his useful career, determined to unite with their order and enter their monastery. He became known as "Brother Jabez." To Miller, who later became the head of the order, must be given the credit for the extraordinary activity demonstrated by its members. Many trades were practiced. The order also owned and operated several gristmills, a saw-mill, a paper mill, an oil well, a fulling mill and also a type foundry. Their literary accomplishments were remarkable; many books were published, which are today regarded as some of the rarest publications of the American press. The most celebrated among these is the "Martyr book" which after passing through several translations, was by far the largest volume printed before the American revolution.

Miller gained a wide acquaintance with many public and colonial authorities. During the Revolution, he interceded with General Washington to spare the life and secure the pardon of a bitter
enemy who had given comfort to the British.

There is at Ephrata, Pennsylvania, today a tombstone wherein is a partially obliterated German inscription, the translation of which is "Here lies buried Peter Miller, born in the Electoral Palatinate; came to America as a Reformed preacher in the year 1730; was baptized by the community at Ephrata in the year 1735, and named Brother Jabez; he was afterwards a teacher to his end. He fell asleep on the 25th day of September, 1796, at the age of 86 years and nine months."

Peter Miller was perhaps the most brilliant and energetic minister in the Reformed church of his day. Had he remained loyal to his church, he might have been privileged to organize the Reformed church of this country, and possibly also to direct the course of its subsequent history. Despite all his marvellous learning, he must have been a weak and spineless character. But flight is ever the refuge of a coward. Otherwise Miller would neither have become a servant of a religious charlatan as was his spiritual director, Conrad Beissel, who as is well known, was also at first a promising leader in the Reformed church; neither would he have exchanged the unadulterated doctrines of the Reformed church for the vague and obscure mysticism of a fanatical dreamer.

The reasons for the early decline and downfall of the brotherhood is obvious. The European sources of the organization dried
up, celibacy, prevented a young generation from displacing those who had died, and the society segregated itself from the general life of the church. Having an abundance of foliage, but lacking the soil in which roots could find deep anchor, the branch separated from the stem and soon withered and died.

7. Michael Schlatter

The coming of Michael Schlatter to America on the first day of August, 1746, was the most notable event of the Reformed Church in the new world. The religious condition of its people was most deplorable. The wildest forms of fanaticism were rampant, and the great body of people, destitute of proper religious instruction, were disgusted by these extravagances and began rapidly to fall into a condition of hopeless unbelief and irreligion. The scattered Reformed congregations were in great confusion and needed a strong man to lead them. For this hour of confusion, Schlatter's coming was a god-send.

Born in St. Gall, Switzerland, in 1685, Schlatter enjoyed splendid educational advantages which fitted him who was born not to be a scholastic recluse, but rather a pioneer and a church leader. Completing his work in the university, he engaged for a time in teaching in Holland. Upon his ordination to the ministry, he served as an assistant pastor in various churches of his country. When the Synods of Holland sought for a successor to Dorstius and
Weis to serve as a Superintendent of Missions in Pennsylvania, it was but natural that the gifted young Swiss minister appeared to them to be so well suited to this work. Responding to the challenge, young Schlatter sailed from Amsterdam on the first of June, 1746, for his new field of labor. After a journey of exactly two months on which he narrowly escaped shipwreck, he arrived at Boston. After spending a few days with the Dutch Reformed brethren in New York where he was well received, he hurried on to Philadelphia where the Reformed people welcomed him with great rejoicing. He was induced to accept a call from the Philadelphia and the Germantown Reformed Churches. He declined to receive any salary for the first year, in order that he might convince the people that he did not serve them merely for the sake of his daily bread.

During these early years, Schlatter made extensive journeys to the widely scattered congregations in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia. The work was difficult and the journeys hazardous and could only have been undertaken by a person of his indomitable courage and perseverance. Following rude bridle paths he made his way through the deep wild forests from one settlement to another, enduring dangers and privations of which we have no idea. Everywhere he called people together, preached the Gospel.
to them, and induced them to pledge specific amounts to the support of a resident minister. Undaunted and unwearied by the difficulties which he faced on every hand, Schlatter succeeded in organizing the scattered congregations into pastoral charges, and in more than one instance their territory was so great in extent that today it furnishes room for an entire classis.
CHAPTER NINE

The Secession Movement led to the formation of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The new church was established in 1819, and its first General Assembly met in New York in 1820.

The first regular meeting of the General Assembly was held in the Old Dutch Church in New York on December 13th, 1820. The assembly met at thirty-one members, including the elders. The actions and proceedings of the General Assembly were reported to the Synods of Kentucky, the Synod of Tennessee, and the Synod of Texas, but did not become final until the Synods of Pennsylvania, approved them and reported to the General Assembly.
CHAPTER NINE

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST COETUS

The Reformed Church of Holland had instructed Schlatter upon his coming to America to prepare the way for the establishment of a Coetus, or Synod, at his earliest convenience. The term "Coetus" as applied to an ecclesiastical body, it should be noted here, is derived from John de Lasky, who established the Coetus of Emden in the year 1544. A Coetus differs from a Synod mainly in this, that it is purely an advisory body which is amenable to the larger administrative body called the Synod, which at this period of the history of the Reformed Church in the United States was the Reformed Synod of Holland. It was a Synod with limited powers. As early as 1738, such an organization was attempted in New York. The preliminary meeting for the Coetus was held in Philadelphia in October 12th, 1746. The meeting was attended by Schlatter, Boehm, Weiss and Rieger.

The first regular meeting of the Coetus was held in the old Arch Street Church in Philadelphia on September 29th, 1747, and was attended by thirty-one members inclusive of the elders. The actions and proceedings of the Coetus were reported to the Synods of Holland, but did not become final until the Synods of Holland approved them and so reported to the Coetus of America.
Boehm was the patriarch of the meeting and also served as its clerk. Schlatter was the most prominent member and served as the president. One of the elders, Casper Spengler, had come from a great distance, from Yorktown, beyond the Susquehanna, which at that time, was the very border of the Indian wilderness. Others had come from the frontier settlements of Tulpehocken and Egypt, where the Indians still roamed. Most of them were plain countryside folk, farmers, artisans and storekeepers, men who loved their Heidelberg Catechism and their Reformed Church, or they would never have traveled such a great distance under such difficult circumstances to assist in the organizing of the first Coetus.

Reverend John B. Rieger opened the Coetus by preaching a sermon on Psalm 133. He could hardly have selected a more timely text. "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." This evidently was the dominant note of the first Coetus.

The chief business items of that first session consisted of the approval of the instructions of the Holland deputies to Schlatter, endorsement of his organization of the congregations into charges and his efforts to discover what salaries they would pay the pastors, the commissioning of Schlatter to write in their behalf to Holland requesting ministers to fill vacant charges, the appoint-
ment of a committee to consider the case of Lischy who wanted to return from the Moravian to the Reformed fold, a request Shlatter favored by earnest conviction, but which Boehm disapproving, ordering the funds gathered by Boehm for his Skippack church, now defunct, to be given Witpeh; and last of all the adoption of a resolution that the general Coetus be held annually on Michael's Day and be convened by the President then in office, whereupon the Coetus was adjourned after holding six sessions.

The minister and elders returned home very happy and greatly encouraged because they were able to report to their congregations that now the Lord would provide the help they had long needed so sorely.

From this time on, except for several years when the Revolutionary war was in progress, the meetings of the Coetus were held regularly.

Pursuant to the request of the Coetus, Schlatter sailed for Europe in 1751 to present the cause of the destitute German churches in America. He received a very acceptable hearing, especially in Holland were 12,000 pounds were collected and invested for the benefit of the fund, other countries also sending gifts, even the poor Palatinate making a contribution of some three hundred dollars. Schlatter's European mission was a complete success, for
he not only gathered a substantial amount of money but returned the following year with six young ministers and a shipment of seven hundred Bibles to be distributed among churches and families. The names of the ministers who accompanied Schlatter to America were Otterbein, Stoy, Waldsmid, Frankenfeld, Wissler and Rubel.

The success which had attended Schlatter's visit to Holland and Germany, suggested to the Reformed ministers an educational movement in behalf of the Germans residing in Pennsylvania. A large sum of money said to have amounted to twenty thousand pounds, was placed in the hands of trustees for the establishment of so called "charity schools" among the Germans, of which Schlatter was to become superintendent. The Germans suspected that this was a movement toward the establishment of the church of England. The trustees, who consisted mainly of the colonial aristocracy, made no secret of their desire to use the schools as a means of breaking the alliance which had hitherto existed between the Germans and the Quakers. No wonder that the charity schools were looked upon with suspicion and were doomed to utter failure.

Thoroughly disheartened with the affairs of the church, Schlatter became chaplain of the British army and was present
at the siege of Louisburg in 1757. However, during the Revolution, his sympathies were with the Americans. The British sensing this, imprisoned him for a time and wantonly destroyed much of his property.

Had Schlatter's versatility and extraordinary talents been recognized by his contemporaries, he would no doubt have achieved a gigantic work for his people. But he was rejected by his generation and he died in obscurity and poverty in October, 1790. Too late the church learned to do justice to his memory and his name will never be forgotten.

If Schlatter had been able to continue and extend his missionary labors, the Reformed church might have succeeded in being established in nearly every one of the colonies, for there were far more German settlements in America than is now supposed. The Hugenots of France, who for so long had found shelter in Germany, and those also of the southern colonies, would have been glad to have affiliated themselves with the Reformed church. Even as far north as Nova Scotia, there was found a large German settlement. These Germans had been brought here in 1753, and although they were at first discouraged by the ruggedness of the climate and the sterility of the soil, yet they finally prospered and built the town of Lunenburg. They appealed to the Coetus in 1770 to send them a minister and when the Coetus had none to send, they finally selected a pious fisher-
man, Bruin Romcas Comingoe, who was ordained by the ministers of the Church of Scotland. This church was finally lost to the Presbyterians.

Even in Maine there was, as early as 1739, a settlement of Germans, Lutherans and Reformed peoples. German services were maintained until 1850, but the younger generation grew up English, and the entire congregation finally was lost to the Congregationalists. Many other towns in Maine and in Massachusetts were founded by Germans. Even in New England, by earnest missionary efforts, the Reformed church might have been securely established had it not been for the great dearth of Reformed leadership. In the colony of New York, there were many Reformed churches in those early days, many of which passed over into the Reformed Dutch church. In New Jersey, too, there was a large German Reformed element. So strong it was that it suggested to the Synods of Holland to send over more ministers and to organize a Coetus. Had this been done, there is no doubt but what the Reformed church would have been the leading denomination of that entire area.

There is perhaps no part of the country where the Reformed Church has suffered more than in the so called "Old Dominion" of Virginia. But here, too, the church lost greatly by neglecting its early opportunities. There was even at one time a great stream of German
immigration into the Shenandoah valley. Yet, the scarcity of Reformed leadership induced these people to be absorbed almost immediately by the Episcopalian Church.

Even farther south, as far as North and South Carolina in 1710, there were Reformed German and Swiss settlers. The Reformed Church still has a classis in North Carolina; however, it is no longer holding its earliest settlements, while today in South Carolina and Georgia there is not a single congregation to be found. The last South Carolina congregation was lost to the Reformed Church some hundred years ago. The most important reason for the decline which almost immediately succeeded the establishment of the church in this country, was the lack of ministers and the neglect of endowment for good literary and theological schools. This particular era of the Reformed Church is known in Reformed church history as "the era of the Lost Churches."
CHAPTER TEN
CHAPTER TEN

THE REFORMED CHURCH AND THE REVOLUTION

The War of the Revolution is perhaps the most fascinating of our entire American national history. Patriotism demands that reverence be given the memory of the men who achieved our national independence. The prominence of the German Reformed element in the revolutionary struggle can hardly be called into question. Though there were German regiments in the Continental army, there were even generals in "the line" who derived their lineage from the Reformed Church. Though there were several who appear to have been of Reformed descent, there was at least one celebrated general who was a faithful member of the Reformed Church, namely Baron Steuben.

Frederick William, Baron von Steuben, born in Madgeburg, Germany in 1730, was the son of a distinguished military officer who took his son early to war, so that already at the age of fourteen, he became an army cadet.

Steuben spent his early years in the service of Frederick the Great, who lifted Prussia to the rank of one of the great powers of Europe. He had fought in the Seven Years' War and later became Grand Marshal at the Court of one of the princes. But Steuben was a Protestant and his prince was a Roman Catholic, so he tactfully retired before his relations with his prince became too
strained. Paying a visit to Paris, he chanced to meet Benjamin Franklin and Deane, the American commissioners who prevailed upon him to accept a commission to America to serve as drill-master of the ill-managed continental army. Steuben felt irresistibly drawn toward the cause of the struggling colonists. The vessel in which he and his retinue sailed was full of contraband of war. It experienced a long and perilous journey. Three times the vessel with gun powder in its hold, was on fire and once the crew mutinied, and upon landing at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the baron and his party were obliged to proceed horseback the long distance to York, Pennsylvania, where congress was in session at the time. Here he was received with open arms. His recommendations were accepted by Congress and he was ordered to proceed to Valley Forge where Washington in those gloomy days appointed him Inspector General over an army that was ill-clad, hungry and disgruntled. Steuben transformed the chaotic condition of the army into one of excellent discipline and orderliness which did itself bravely in the war for independence, and finally personally directed the trenches at the siege of Yorktown. It was long before he received any compensation for his services because of the impoverished condition of the national treasury. Individual states gave him grants of wild land while the government granted him an annuity of 2500 dollars. Baron
Steuben was a ruling elder of the German Reformed Church on
Nassau Street in New York of which the Reverend Doctor Gros
was the pastor. The Reformed church and the nation owe an
unforgettable debt to the memory of Baron Steuben.

The ministers of the German Reformed Church, connected with
the Coetus were zealous advocates for the cause of independence.
In their correspondence with Holland it is to be noted that
they spoke of the British as "the enemy." Days of fasting and
prayer were appointed for the cause of the colonists. Many of
the ministers were either prosecuted or imprisoned for spon-
soring the cause of the Revolution. Among them were Reverend
John H. Weikel, pastor of Boehm's Church, Montgomery, Pa., Rev-
erend C. D. Weyberg of the Race Street Church, Philadelphia,
whose church was occupied by British soldiers, and who almost
succeeded in causing the Hessian mercenaries to desert the
British cause; Michael Schlatter, John Conrad Bucher, J. A.
Heffenstein, who on one occasion preached to the captive Hess-
ians on the text from Isaiah 52:3: "For thus saith the Lord, Ye
have sold yourselves for nought and ye shall be redeemed with-
out money," and who on another occasion preached to the American
soldiers on their departure for the scene of battle on the text
"If God be for us, who can be against us." (Romans 8:31)
In 1789 the Coetus, in session in Philadelphia, addressed a communication to General Washington in which it felicitated him upon his election to the Presidency, and expressed its sentiments in terms of highest patriotism. The General replied that he was extremely gratified by this expression of good will and expressed to the Coetus his most cordial good wishes for the success of the Reformed Churches.

It might also be mentioned that in 1793, when yellow fever was raging in Philadelphia, Washington took up his domicile with the family of a Reverend Dr. F. L. Herman, then pastor of the Germantown Reformed Church. Upon the great General's death, the memorial address was given before the Society of Cincinnati, consisting of officers of the Revolution in the Race Street Church, Philadelphia, by Major William Jackson, then Secretary of the Convention which drafted the Constitution of the United States.

HOW THE LIBERTY BELL WAS SAVED FROM CAPTURE

Of all the tours of the famous old Liberty Bell, none can compare in exciting thrills with its first trip from its home in Independence Hall during the trying days of the Revolution. The prospects for the success of the cause of the American Patriots were far from auspicious in 1777. The battle of Brandywine had been lost by the Americans, and the British, under Howe, had Philadelphia, the revolutionary capital, at their mercy, and were fast
closing in on the city. The American government was in flight and members of Congress, with a price set on their heads were setting up the civil machinery of the Rebellion in York, Pa. The Committee on Public Safety was determined, notwithstanding, that the Liberty Bell, already so endeared to the hearts of the American people, should not fall as spoils of war into the hands of the British to be melted over into cannon and bullets. It was suggested that with the bells of other churches, it be sunk into the Delaware river, but some feared that a spy would mark the spot and reveal the hiding place to the enemy. At last it was decided to convey it to some distant town and there seclude it until Philadelphia was evacuated by the British. After considerable deliberation the choice of a hiding place fell upon Allentown, Pennsylvania, then known as Northampton, where the patriotism of the citizenry was known to be beyond suspicion.

But prompt action was necessary, for the enemy was fast closing in on the capital, the outposts already being near the city limits. The Lehigh Valley was then, as now, a rich farming community, and out of the abundant harvests a large part of the produce was marketed in Philadelphia. The farmers of that district took great wagon loads of a large variety of produce to Philadelphia where it found a ready sale. One of these Lehigh Valley farmers was John Jacob Mickley, an elder in the Reformed Church.
For mutual protection in perilous times these farmers were accustomed to travel together. They had brought their farm produce to the city and were about to return home. Tradition tells us how on this summer day of September, 1777, Mickley and his neighbors had brought a great load of potatoes, and were preparing for the return trip. Here was the opportunity for which the officials of the Safety Committee had been looking. Under cover of darkness, the bells were hastily loaded into the wagons, and Mr. Mickley was then asked to undertake the task of transporting the bell to safe quarters, to which he readily assented.

The nights were dark, spies were everywhere, and the city was poorly lighted; the fact that many large farm wagons were packed in the vicinity of Independence Hall aroused no suspicion. Farmers were accustomed to leaving at all hours of the night for the long trips home. But inside the hall behind locked doors and in the dim candle light, carefully shaded from outside observation, a crew of patriots were busy preparing the bell for its journey. Rapidly and noiselessly the men toiled in silence. At last the task was done and the bell rested in one of the wagons. Straw and potato sacks were piled on top of it, and as the first signs of dawn were breaking in the east, the wagon train was ready to start out. From the clearing darkness, came lumbering down the streets other wagons containing the bells from
St. Peter's church and the chimes and bells from Christ's Church, all of them similarly hidden from the eyes of the curious spies, and all of them bound for the same destination.

It was full time that they were off. They had to pass a scouting party of British soldiers who stopped them for information, and whose commandant was disgusted that these Pennsylvania Dutch could not understand English. They let them pass with jeers as harmless country yokels, never suspecting that under the straw and potato sacks was a cargo they would have given much to seize.

The journey continued without further mishap until they reached Bethlehem, September 25, when the wagon carrying the Liberty Bell broke down, a hopeless wreck. The bell was transferred to the wagon of Frederick Leasar, in which it continued its journey to Northampton, (Allentown.) Sending messengers to summon the pastor of the Reformed Church, Reverend Abraham Blumer, and the members of the Church Board, Peter Rhoads, John Griesemer, Nicholas Fox, John Miller and Michal Kalb - permission was given to remove a part of the stone floor of the Zion Reformed Church and hide the bells beneath, which was decided was the safest place. The citizens of Northampton, sleeping peacefully through the night, knew nothing of the happening which was to make their town known throughout the centuries to come and Zion Reformed church of Allentown, famous among the churches of America. (1)

(1) Reverend Simon Sipple, History of Zion Reformed Church of Allentown, Pa.
The old bell rested there securely until Philadelphia was evacuated by the British in 1778. Many of the sick and wounded from Washington's army were cared for in Bethlehem and Allentown. Of the many hospitals established, one was in Zion Reformed. So for seven months, the building that hid the Liberty Bell also sheltered the sick and dying soldiers. The bells were silent, but in the room above them unconscious of their presence, were many who voiced their ills in English, German or French, and all were understood and comforted by the faithful pastor who spoke the three languages equally well, and who took comfort in the secret fact that under that very stone of the floors, was the Liberty Bell, prized not only as metal but most of all because of its prophetic slogan, -- "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all inhabitants thereof." The present pulpit of Zion Church is built over the very spot where the Liberty Bell was hidden.

The years intervening between the close of the Revolution and the adoption of the Federal Constitution, furnish few materials for the history of Church or State. The states being practically independent, hardly recognized the authority of Congress. It is not surprising, then, that the Reformed Church should manifest but few signs of vigorous activity in this gloomy period. The most important event of this period was the settlement in 1785, of the Reverend John William Weber, as pastor of several congregations organized in Westmoreland County, Pa. Weber was the first
minister of any Protestant denomination who preached regularly in Pittsburgh. He is regarded as the pioneer of the Reformed Church west of the Alleghanies.

The Founding of Franklin College

The year 1787 was a year considered to be auspicious for the founding of a college, the country having to some degree recovered from the Revolution, and was to adopt a Federal Constitution. It was in February, 1788, that the Legislative Assembly passed an act for the vesting of the public storehouse and two lots of ground in the borough and county of Lancaster, Pa., in the trustees of Franklin, for the use of that college. Ten thousand acres of land surrounding Lancaster had previously been granted for such a college. The laying of the corner stone was performed by Benjamin Franklin and was one of his latest official acts. Franklin, at the time, was governor of Pennsylvania. The Reformed Coetus, which was then holding its annual meeting in Lancaster, attended this service in a body. The first board of trustees of Franklin College was a most extraordinary one, intelligent and distinguished, consisting of foremost clergymen of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, a number of eminent Revolutionary officers and four of the officers of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence. The school was well patronized from the very start. In 1788, there were 125 students of whom more than twenty studied the ancient languages.
The Synod of the German Reformed Church

It was on April 27, 1793, that the Synod of the Reformed Church convened for the first time in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The entire number of Reformed ministers at the time was twenty-two, of whom thirteen attended the meeting. The separation from the Synods of Holland became effective by the adoption of a resolution to substitute a cordial letter for the customary annual report of acts and proceedings, and the body which had been known until now as "The Coetus of Pennsylvania," was henceforth to be known as "The Synod of the German Reformed Church in the United States of America." It was not many years after that the name "The Reformed Church in the United States," became the official title of the denomination. The most important action, however, of the first Synod was the adoption of the Rules of Synod, many of which are still to be found in the Constitution of the Reformed Church.

The Palatinate Liturgy was employed in all the churches, a practice which obtained even to the last century. As a symbol of faith, the Heidelberg Catechism maintained its position from the very beginning, the first American edition in the German language of which we have any knowledge, being printed by Christopher Sauer in 1752. The first English edition was printed by Starck and Lange of Hanover, Pennsylvania, in 1810.
The hymn book most frequently used during the colonial era was known as that of "Marburg," from the place where it was first published. In 1793 the Synod found it necessary to appoint a committee to prepare a new hymn book, the old book having been made scarce because of the confiscation of Saur's publishing house by the Tories during the Revolution. The new collection, entitled "Neues und Verbessertes Gesangbuch," was printed by Steiner and Kammer, Philadelphia, in 1797. It was re-printed in numerous editions for many years by Michael Billmeyer of Germantown, Pa. A handsome edition of the hymnal was printed as recently as 1850. The present official "Hymnal of the Reformed Church," was published in 1920 by the Central Publishing House, Cleveland, Ohio.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Doctrine

Though there have been some very great schools in the history of the Reformed Church that have departed from the doctrines of Scripture and tradition, yet the church has been true to the great beliefs that were presented to her leaders in the sixteenth century. The very way of her name and connection with the Reformation itself, some have objected that the Reformed Church adheres too plausibly to its exegetical peculiarities. They may be true in this and yet the church prides herself in that truth, for her own historical periodization, unlike a single sect or any sect of all others, but she has ever endeavored to make the Word of God preeminent truth in harmonious proportion. For the second part of the century that made of the Reformation great while shaping also the church are of more recent origin, yet have not failed ever the model she had designed long before in the manner of order and discipline and call.

This reference to particularly American Reformed Church in the United States under "Newly" and "Widely" of the 1800 and 1850.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

DOCTRINE, DISCIPLINE AND CULTUS

1. Doctrine

Though there have been many theological schools in the history of the Reformed Church which may have varied in their modes of expression and intonations of the doctrines, yet the church has been true to the great tenets which were promulgated by her leaders in the sixteenth century and for which so many of her sons and daughters suffered persecution and even death itself. Some have objected that the Reformed Church has but few distinctive peculiarities. That may be true in a sense, and the church prides herself in that fact, but she does not, in any sectarian fashion, exalt a single doctrine at the expense of all the others, but she has ever endeavored to hold the entire evangelical truth in harmonious proportion. Nor must the fact be overlooked that most of the denominational groups which closely resemble the Reformed Church are of more recent origin and have patterned after the model she had designed long before in the matter of doctrine, discipline and cultus.

With reference to doctrinal standards, the Reformed Church in the United States holds "that the Holy Scripture of the Old and New
Testament, which are called canonical scriptures, are genuine, authentic, inspired and therefore divine scriptures; that they contain all things which are related to the faith, the practice and the hope of the righteous, and are the only rule of faith and practice in the Church of God; that consequently no traditions, as they are called, and no mere conclusions of reason, which are contrary to the clear testimony of these scriptures, can be received as rules of faith or of life. (1)

A teacher of theology, before he enters upon the duties of his office, is required by the constitution to solemnly affirm this declaration: "You acknowledge, further, that the doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism is in accordance with the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. You declare sincerely, that in the office you are about to assume, you will make the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the truth of the doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, the basis of all your instructions." (2)

The Catechism, according to its own statement in Question 22, rests upon the Apostles Creed. It contains "all things which are necessary for a Christian to Believe." (3)

The Heidelberg Catechism stresses with all vigor that Jesus Christ alone is the source of redemption and salvation. It holds

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(1) Constitution of the Reformed Church of the United States, Article 27
(2) Ibid - p.16
(3) Heidelberg Catechism, Question 22
to the Augustinian doctrine of natural depravity and salvation
by the free grace of God, doctrines which were embraced not only
by Calvin, but by all of the great reformers. It repudiates the
doctrine of reprobation, but rather directs attention to the work
and merits of Jesus Christ. The church allows freedom for the
more moderate views on the matter of predestination than are cus-
tomary in the more strictly Calvinistic Reformed Churches. The
Pelagian and the Arminian views are repudiated.

As to the Lord's Supper, in accordance with the Catechism,
the Reformed Church affirms the view of the spiritual real pres-
ence of the body and blood in the elements for believers only.
It does not hold the Zwinglian position that the sacrament is a
mere memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, nor does it
accept the Lutheran view that Christ is "in, with and under the
visible elements." By the working of the Holy Spirit, who dwells
both in Christ and in us," believers become by faith "partakers of
the true body and blood of Christ." (1)

Children of Christian parents are regarded by the Reformed
Church as belonging "to the Covenant and people of God and both
redemption from sin and the Holy Ghost, who works faith, are
through the blood of Christ promised to them no less than to
their parents; and they are also by baptism, as a sign of the

(1) Heidelberg Catechism, Question #79
Covenant, to be ingrafted into the Christian Church, and distin-
guished from the children of unbelievers, as was done in the Old
Testament by Circumcision." (1) The ministers of the Reformed Church are commissioned to in-
struct the youth in the teachings of the Bible and the catechism
as the best means of preparing them for confirmation and admis-
sion to the Lord's Table. While Confirmation is considered a sol-
earn and sacred rite, it is not, however, considered a sacrament,
and when members are received by certificate from denominations
in which the rite is not practiced, it has not been uncommon to
require them to receive confirmation. While the Church does lay
stress on the value of Christian experience, yet it regards faith-
ful instruction in the truths of God's Word as a most effective
means in leading to this end.

2. Discipline

The Reformed Churches of Europe have always emphasized the
matter of the purity of doctrine and placed the matter of organ-
ization and ritual in second place. Calvin and Bullinger advised
members of the Reformed Church to maintain the truths of the
Gospel at all hazards even with their life's blood, but in mat-
ters of external organization to adjust themselves to the policy
of the government. The ground for this counsel was that while
the Scriptures emphatically taught the necessity of order and
discipline, yet they nowhere prescribed a particular form of church government. That every Christian minister is a bishop in the sense of the New Testament was universally acknowledged. In the beginning the Reformed people had great difficulty in attaining to complete organization. In many countries, they were compelled to worship secretly; but whenever possible they held synods consisting of ministers and lay representatives from isolated churches under the cross. The Swiss system of government, which was representative, was elaborated upon by Calvin, and was finally adopted by most of the Reformed Churches. In some countries where the relations of the Church and the civil power were more intimate than elsewhere, the government of the Church became practically the function of the civil power.

In accordance with their free and democratic government, the Reformed Churches hold that all ministers are equal in office, and elect and institute elders and deacons who represent the people, and are at the same time partakers in some degree of the ministerial functions.

The Reformed congregations of America naturally followed in the main the pattern provided for them by the churches of Holland and the Palatinate. More than a century passed before the Reformed Church, as a whole formally adopted a Constitution. The Church
had adopted a "synodalordnung," a series of rules of order for the government of Synod. There was a provisional "Discipline" although adopted by the Synod in 1828, yet it was never formally adopted by the church. It was not until 1845 that the Constitution was adopted. Years of study have been taken in study for its revision. The official Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States was approved by the General Synod of Allentown in May, 1905, and was declared adopted by the General Synod of York, May, 1908, and since that time the General Synod has from time to time modified many of its articles and by-laws.

The elders and deacons are elected for a term of years. The minister and the elders constitute the spiritual counsel, which exercises a general supervision of the spiritual interest of the congregation. To the deacons is given the charge of the more material interests of the church. In some congregations a Board of Trustees holds the property in the name of the congregation. The minister and one elder from each pastoral charge within a certain area constitute the classis. A certain number of delegates, clerical and lay, from each classis within a specified district, constitute a particular Synod which meets annually. The General Synod which meets bi-annually, and is a court of the last resort in judicial cases, consists of a delegate minister and elders elected to represent each particular Synod.
3. Cultus

(1) Hymnbooks

The gradual awakening of church-consciousness aroused an earnest desire for improvement in cultus, or worship. The "Neues und Verbesertes Gesangbuch" became obsolete. Congregational singing almost became a lost art. In many churches it was the custom that after the reading of the entire hymn by the minister each line was announced and sung separately, and frequently the minister and organist were the only ones who joined auditorily in singing. Subsequently, the Synod appointed a committee in 1841 to prepare a German hymnbook. This hymnal, published in 1842 as the "Sammlung Evangelischer Lieder," but more commonly known as "The Chambersburg Hymnbook," was unfortunately hastily prepared without proper consideration for the principles of hymnology and for that reason failed to gain for itself a permanent place in the affections of the church. Another German hymnal adopted by the Synod of the United States soon supplanted it. It was at first issued as a private enterprise in 1859 by the Reverend Dr. Philip Schaff, who made the collection. But in 1861, it was properly adopted by the two Synods of the Reformed Church and it was generally considered as a collection of outstanding order.

In the English Reformed Churches, the hymnal of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church was generally used; but in 1830 the Synod adopted a collection known as "Psalms and Hymns" compiled by the
committee on hymnology of the Maryland Classis. About the middle
of the nineteenth century this hymnal was superseded by the books
"Hymns of the Reformed Church" and "Reformed Church Hymnal," which
were prepared after careful study of hymnologic sources.

In 1917, the General Synod formally adopted "The Hymnal of
The Reformed Church," which was compiled with the collaboration of
the Hymnal Committee of the Reformed Church in America. This was
and is still recognized as the standard hymnal of both denoamina-
tions and is fully accomplishing the purpose of promoting the de-
votion of the people of the church.

(2) Liturgies

Although the Reformed Church has shown a marked preference for
the simple and unpretentious forms of worship, yet she insisted that
there be quiet orderliness and dignity in the order of worship. A
careful study of the liturgical orders of services substantiates
this opinion. In all of its history, the church has carefully fol-
lowed the general order of the church year, placing emphasis upon
all of the festival days of Christendom. Her oldest liturgies date
from the time of the early reformers. In various European countries
the orders of worship had a wide variance, but the desirability of
having such officer for the direction of the church in matters of
worship was never questioned. In the matter of the administration
of the sacraments and other rites of the church, it was always deemed to be vitally important that the form be determined by the church itself. It has always been recognized that the divine ordinances, because of their very nature, cannot be left to the individual tastes of the officiating minister.

In America the Palatinate Liturgy which had been familiar to the immigrants from Europe, was used at the beginning of the early history of the Reformed Church. But there came a time of great confusion in the ordering of the public worship, because of the old liturgies being in dire need of revision. A general looseness resulted concerning the ceremonial observances, and ministers began to employ the liturgies of various European countries.

In 1841, an attempt was made to remedy the existing evil, and the Reverend Dr. Lewis Meyer was appointed by the Eastern Synod as chairman of a committee to prepare a Liturgy. But this liturgy failed to meet the requirements, because it was too didactic. In 1848, the general desire of the church for a new liturgy was again formally brought to the attention of the Eastern Synod by a request from the Classis of East Pennsylvania. In 1849, the "Provisional Liturgy", a work of high order from a literary point of view, made its appearance, but it soon became evident that despite all of its literary excellencies; it failed to meet the wants of the Church. It pre-
cipitated the great liturgical controversy, which contributed nothing to the welfare of the Reformed Church; it rather agitated the doctrinal controversies then in progress. It cannot be disputed that although the Liturgical controversy was unfortunate, in many respects, yet it produced a high degree of literary activity in the Church at that time. It was a momentous era in the history of the Church, for the publications on the subject of Christian cultus of that day have left for us a very rich and fascinating study.

At the very first meeting in 1863, the General Synod authorized the Synod of Ohio to prepare a liturgy, and it likewise recommended the Eastern Synod to continue its study of the revision of the "Provisional Liturgy." In 1866, the "Order of Worship," made its appearance, and in the following year the "Western Liturgy," was presented, both of which were in the German language. Finally in the year 1878, the General Synod committed the entire controversial matter to a special "Peace Commission," which in answer to the prayers of thousands all over the church, became instrumental in restoring peace to the long troubled church. Its fruit was the "Directory of Worship," which was approved by the General Synod held in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1884. This liturgy was supplanted by "The Book of Worship for the Reformed Church in the United
States," which was by action of the General Synod at Philadel-
phia, Pennsylvania, 1926, finally adopted and recommended for
voluntary use by the congregations and has since been the auth-
orized book of worship of the Reformed Church.

Thus the church continued to hold the position it set up for
itself in the very beginning, namely, that it will value and use
its liturgy, but will in no manner surrender the liberty which is
the sacred heritage of its pastors and congregations. The Litur-
gical Controversy was unfortunate, but it in no wise weakened the
denomination during its season of trial; it rather strengthened
it in its struggle upward to higher levels of spiritual life.
CHAPTER TWELVE

The Reformed Church in the West

Between the years 1800 and 1820, congregations were being organized in Ohio and the pioneers were already making their way into Indiana. In 1820, the congregations were organized into six Gin-Clashe, including fifty congregations, about 1500 members and five ministers. In 1826, the Gin-Clashe declared itself independent from the mother Synod and named itself "The High German Evangelical Reformed Synod of Ohio." The organization was affected in the nearly court house and jail at New Philadelphia, Ohio. By that time it numbered eleven ministers, seventy congregations and about 2200 members.

The reasons for the taking of this step were given at the refusal of the mother Synod to allow the Ohio Clashe to ordain its own ministers; the time and expense involved in traveling as far as one hundred miles by stagecoach, horseback and foot to attend the meetings of Synod; the crying need in Ohio; the feeling that every spirit in traveling could be used to better advantage; and the conviction that the work of the church in the west could be managed as a whole, as well here as in the East.

By 1860, the Reformed Church was firmly established in Ohio, and her members began pushing into Indiana, Illinois, and even as far as
CHAPTER TWELVE

THE WESTWARD TREK

(1) The Reformed Church in the West

Between the years 1800 and 1825, congregations were being organized in Ohio and the pioneers were already making their way into Indiana. In 1819, the congregations were organized into an Ohio Classis, numbering fifty congregations, about 1800 members and five ministers. In 1824, the Classis declared itself independent from the mother Synod and named itself, "The High German Evangelical Reformed Synod of Ohio." The organization was effected in the county court house and jail at New Philadelphia, Ohio. By that time it numbered eleven ministers, seventy congregations and about 2500 members.

The reasons for the taking of this step were given as: The refusal of the mother Synod to allow the Ohio Classis to ordain its own ministers; the time and expense involved in traveling as far as six hundred miles by stagecoach, horseback and on foot to attend the meetings of Synod; the crying need in Ohio; the feeling that money spent in traveling could be used to better advantage; and the conviction that the work of the church in the west could be managed as a whole, as well here as in the East.

By 1850, the Reformed Church was firmly established in Ohio, and her members began pushing into Indiana, Illinois, and even as far as
Wisconsin and Iowa. A Board of Home Missions had been created in the Eastern Synod in 1826 and a similar Board was founded in the Ohio Synod in 1844. This marked the beginning of a systematic home mission enterprise in this section of the Church. It was said that the necessity for it was as clear as day and pitiful cries and conditions were everywhere and help from the East was slow in coming.

Members of the Reformed Church using the German language, had been thrusting their way into the area known as the "Western Wilderness," in great numbers. In the church reports of those days, the term "Western Wilderness" was constantly used as a convenient designation for that great area west of the state of Ohio. Earnest pleas for ministers were directed to the Classes and Synods in the East, but in vain; there were none to be had. At this time of great need, the Synods began sending "Exploring Missionaries" to the Western section of the church, ministers or theological students who volunteered to spend from a few weeks to several months, visiting the scattered communities and ministering to their spiritual wants. Reverend Daniel Kolnight should be mentioned as one of these, who for example, spent one hundred and twenty eight days in southern Michigan, organizing several congregations and laying the ground work for the former St. Joseph Classis.

The historical records of the pioneer congregations in Indiana are rather vague and incomplete. Many of them existed for years before
they were formally organized and before they were entered upon the roll of a Classis. Up to that time they were independent, and dotted the entire state of Indiana, especially the northern and central part. However, about the year 1847, it seems the earliest congregations came into existence. The lure of free homesteads, cheap lands, financial opportunity, and religious independence, drew them to America, and thence ever westward. From Ohio westward to the Pacific Coast, every state received them by the thousands. It is estimated that during that particular century, no less than seven million German immigrants reached our shores. Mission work among these German pioneers was so fruitful that by 1859 all but four of the twenty-one missions supported by the Eastern Board of Home missions were German and these missions were located in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois and Wisconsin. The committee on missions of the Ohio Synod about the year 1880 made this significant statement in its report: "West of Tiffin (Ohio) there is not a township in the state of Ohio in which there is not abundant material for the organization of a German congregation, if only we had the German ministers to send among them."(1)

So rapidly did these German congregations grow that the twenty-five German mission churches located in this area in 1875, went to self-support within ten years time.

Many of these German immigrants had been members of the Reformed Church in the mother country. They vainly besought the mother church for aid in building modest church edifices. These were years of unprecedented opportunities, but scarcity of ministers and money thwarted the advance of the trek. In Wisconsin in those early days, a group of Reformed people had organized themselves into a Reformed Congregation and they wrote to the Mercersburg Seminary to send them a German minister. The reply was that there was no German minister available, and that they had better unite with some other denomination. Fortunately, the Reformed Church consciousness was much too strong to yield to this temptation. Such a spirit of loyalty to the Reformed Church prevailed in the territory in eastern Wisconsin, where Sheboygan Classis was organized in 1854 with four ministers and four congregations, and which in a single decade increased to forty-four congregations, twenty-two ministers and more than 1700 communicants. These ministers came to realize that if they were to have men to man the field, they must set themselves to the task of training their own. It was thus that the Mission House Theological Seminary came to be founded in 1861, in those very trying years when the nation found itself in the throes of a great civil war.
(2) The Reformed Church in Indiana

The greatest stronghold of the Reformed Church in Ohio is found in Summit, Stark and Tuscarawas counties, centering in such cities as Canton, Alliance, New Philadelphia and Akron. A hundred years ago, when these Reformed pioneers came from Philadelphia, they found deep forests stretching in almost unbroken continuity from over that vast expanse. One-room cabins were found everywhere. These early settlers with few exceptions, were Germans, Reverend John Peter Mahnenschmidt was the first Reformed minister to visit this area. He came in either 1806 or 1807, and preached in homes, schools, log-cabins, barns and even under the trees in the forests. Later, having moved to Ohio to live, he made regular preaching trips through this district. He reports the people to have been without any religious opportunities. "Wild and uncultivated as was the country itself, so were also the inhabitants, especially the youth. There were many sinful habits at the time, Sabbath desecration, shameful profanity, drunkenness, dancing and constant fighting prevailed. These things caused me many a silent tear as I rode along in meditation."\(^{(1)}\)

The early history would reveal similar experiences in Indiana as well. Reverend Peter Herbruch, father of a long line of able sons

in the Reformed Church, and pastor of the First Reformed Church, Canton, Ohio, (1832-1886) was the first Reformed minister to visit that part of Indiana where our church is now strong, - Fort Wayne, Huntington, Vera Cruz, Bluffton, Berne, Magley and Decatur. Great forests of hardwoods, maple, walnut, hickory and oak covered that great area. The hardy and thrifty pioneer Swiss and Germans felled these great hardwood trees, dragged them into huge piles, and burned them to clear a few acres for their crops. The Limber-lost Swamp, made famous by the novels of Gene Stratton Porter, was located in the very heart of this great pioneer Reformed community.

An abbreviated narrative written by the Reverend Mr. Herbruck describes a missionary journey made by him in 1840 in a letter, "In the year 1840, I received an invitation to visit Miami County, Indiana. A number of families lived there who had been members of one of my churches. For several years they had heard no sermon. Nor had they been able to receive the Lord's supper. So that summer, I started out with a member of the Canton congregation. We went on foot to Massillon. From there we rode by canal boat to Cleveland, and then across the lake to Toledo. As the canal was not yet completed from Toledo to Defiance, we had to hire an Irishman with two horses and a spring wagon to take us to Defiance. Night overtook us in the midst of the woods, and we found lodging for a few hours in a little log cabin. By one o'clock in the morning, the journey was resumed. It was very dark in the woods. The
road was new, many stumps still stood in the wagon tracks, and mud holes were a plenty. To keep us awake, the Irishman sang a song and forgot about his driving. Suddenly he upset us into a bottomless mudhole. I was sticking in the mud where it was deepest, and the wagonbox lay on top of me. When I crawled out, looking like a mud-turtle, my companions had a good laugh. The wagon was not broken, so we turned it right side up and drove on. ****

By noon we were in Defiance, and from there traveled on the canal to Fort Wayne. The next day we traveled by canal to Huntington which at that time was a village of about eighteen houses. I looked up some of my former parishioners living there in the neighborhood. In the second house the father greeted me with tears, saying that the mother had been buried four weeks before, but that no minister had been obtainable to conduct a service. So I conducted a funeral service in a school house before a reverent congregation. In Huntington, I also preached and conducted another funeral service. A farmer loaned us two horses and we drove to Miami County. I preached several times there, conducted the Lord's Supper, and baptized the children. No Reformed minister had ever visited this community before. (1)

Today the forests have disappeared, the swamps are drained, and great fields of grain of every kind crown the summer landscape. However

(1) T. P. Bollinger, D. D. - "Westward Expansion of the Reformed Church"
a richer harvest has come from that group of five congregations located within about fifteen miles of one another, where more than a score and a half of Reformed ministers have gone forth to do valiant service for God. Long since these early pioneer days, these German churches, without exception, have forsaken the mother tongue and have become English.

(3) The Reformed Church in Indianapolis

In the year 1861, when the first attempt was being made to light the capitol, pipes were laid for gas, and a few street lamps were placed on Washington Street, and Indianapolis was making her early feeble struggle out of darkness, the Board of Domestic Missions at Philadelphia sent Reverend George Lang as a missionary to the gathered Reformed people of Indianapolis, to organize a congregation. He preached his first sermon in a room in the Court House, January 18, 1862, and thereafter every Sunday, and soon he gathered a permanent congregation. Steps were taken to organize a congregation, and fifteen persons assembled in the house of George D. Pfeiffer, on February 5th, to nominate candidates for the first consistory, and at a worship service on February 15th, the following men were elected to act as consistory of the First Reformed Church of Indianapolis: Elders George D. Pfeiffer and Christian Stoelting; Deacons, William Beckman and William Stoelting. Formal organization was completed on February 22nd, when seventeen names were signed as charter members of the First Reformed Church of Indianapolis.
The building of a church came under immediate consideration, and Christian Stoelting gave a lot near the southeast corner of East Market and North Alabama Streets. J. W. Brown gave $500.00 and said that when the amount for the church building had been raised, he would give an adjoining lot and the brick house upon it, for a parsonage.

The corner stone for the church was laid June 24th, 1862, and dedication services for the building were held December 6, 1862, with Reverend C. Huz of Louisville officiating. Comparative values with present-day salaries are of note. The first minister received an annual salary of $127.00 a year, while the janitor received $1.00 per month. Indianapolis at the time was but a struggling little village which presented itself with only a house here and there. Washington Street at Illinois Street at the time, was the main business center, with rows of inelegant "gardner's stands" and groceries spilling their commodities across the sidewalk, with barrels of fresh vegetables and kegs of fish.

Under the direction of Reverend M. G. Stern, Reverend Lang's successor, a Sunday School was organized on April 4th, 1853, with George Stumph as the first superintendent. A Ladies Aid Society was organized in 1857, with twelve members. The Woman's Missionary Society was started about the same time, with a charter member, Mrs. Johanna Brinker as president, a position which she held for twenty-six years.
In these early years, a German Y.M.C.A. was formed by a group of young men who met in a hall in Washington Street between Alabama and New Jersey Streets for games, gymnastics, reading and educational privileges. A church school was also established for religious instruction and for the teaching of English. North of the church, which had been a landmark for the city for generations, stood the select school of Mrs. Sarah A. Smith, while to the south stood a most famous gambling house. Mr. Brown, who served as Sunday School Superintendent for twenty five years, was in the baking business and in the civil war supplied bread for the soldiers in Camps Morton and Harrison. A Christian Endeavor Society was begun in 1882. The adoption of the constitution for the society and formal organization, occurred in January, 1882.

A change of location became necessary and the church building and the parsonage were sold in 1889 to Dr. Robert Long, and he gave the property to the State Medical Association. It became a nucleus for the fund raised to build the Robert Long Hospital. The congregation bought property at Ohio and Noble Streets, and on September 1, 1889, this newly acquired church was dedicated and in 1893 a beautiful modern manse was built. The property is still owned by the church.

A third change of location came in 1902, when due to the need for larger quarters, property at East New York Street and Temple Avenue was bought with the aid of the Church Erection Board fund from the
Evangelical Association.

The last change was made on June 21, 1926, when by the authority of Indianapolis Classis, the First Reformed Church and Butler Memorial Reformed Church, were merged. The newly-organized congregation voted to retain the name "First Reformed Church" and to use the property of the Butler Memorial Church, located at the corner of East Tenth Street and North Oakland Avenue as their permanent place of worship. The Reverend C. J. G. Russom was called from the Milton Avenue Reformed Church at Louisville, Kentucky, to be the first pastor of the newly organized church, October 15th, 1925 and at the time this is written, still serves the congregation.

The following resume includes the history of the Butler Memorial Reformed Church. It was organized July 25th, 1886, under the name of "Die Hoffnungs Gemeinde" by the Reverend Ulrich Rene. Fourteen communicants constituted the membership roll. It was affiliated for a brief time then with the Haughville Reformed charge, now St. Paul's Reformed Church. The first church building was bought from the city board of education and was removed to the lot on East Tenth Street and Oakland Avenue and remodeled for worship purposes. Reverend W. Barth became the second Pastor, and Reverend J. H. Grämel was the third pastor. Under the leadership of the fourth pastor, Reverend Julius F. Grämel, a new church edifice was built, and in 1907, the church was re-named in memory of Mrs. Mary Buttler.
During the year 1928, under the leadership of Reverend Russom, the entire exterior and interior of the church edifice was remodeled and refurnished with new pews and pulpit furniture, including an organ, the floor levelled and the seating re-arranged and furnished with stained oak, the chancel furnished with choir loft, lecturn and a hexagon pulpit added. Four Gothic triple windows on each wall shed radiant light through the stained cathedral glass.

A modern three story educational building was also constructed in 1928, with all modern appointments and including a large dining room and assembly room, a wide deep stage and a commodious kitchen in the basement, and thirty-six rooms for various departments and classes of the Church school on the first and second floors. The remodeled church edifice together with its modern and well-equipped educational building, represents an investment of more than $125,000.00.
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

AMONG WITH THE EVANGELICAL RIZED OF NORTH AMERICA

The era following the Civil War harbored many important developments in the Middle West which greatly affected the social, economic, and religious life of the expanding moving families. Among the many factors was the development of the railroad, which speedily disqualified the schooner as a means of transportation and made it possible for pioneers to move out into the vast expanses of the country that had been reached by navigation. If the newly established communities were followed by the founding of many new congregations and the rapid development of denominations, together with their missionary and educational institutions.

In 1890, the Reformed Church Northern circuit was located at Viroqua, Wisconsin, near the location of the Wisconsin River College, and the Evangelical Church Northern circuit was located at Benoni, Illinois, and later at Washington, Missouri. Thus, year by year, the expansion continued to advance until the work in California was begun at Los Angeles in 1882, and that in Seattle, Washington, was established in 1889.

It was Dr. Philip Jacob, theologian, biblical scholar, this leader and church historian of independent recognition, who
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

MERGER WITH THE EVANGELICAL SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA

The era following the Civil War hurried many important developments in the Middle West which greatly affected the social, economic and religious life of the westward moving immigrants. Among the many factors was the development of the railroad, which speedily disqualified the steamboat as a means of transportation and made it possible for pioneers to move out into the vast expanses of the country that could not be reached by navigation. The newly established communities were followed by the founding of many new congregations and the rapid development of denominations, together with their missionary and educational institutions.

In 1866, the Reformed church farthest north was located at Town Rhine, Wisconsin, near the location of the Mission House College, and the Evangelical churches farthest west were those at Council Bluffs, Iowa and Kansas City, Missouri. Thus, year by year, the expansion continued to advance until the work in California was begun at Los Angeles in 1883, and that in Seattle, Washington was established in 1903.

It was Dr. Phillip Schaff, theologian, Biblical scholar, able leader and church historian of international reputation, who
became one of the founders of the Evangelical Alliance, which was organized in London in 1846, for the purpose of promoting Christian correspondence between the various Protestant groups, and more effective cooperation in Christian work. It was in 1891, the Brotherhood of ANDREW AND PHILIP, founded by our own Reverend Rufus W. Miller, D. D. of the Reformed Church in the United States, who was the first secretary of the Board of Sunday Schools, proposed the organization of a "Federal Council of Churches," whose members were to be officially appointed by the highest judicatures of their various executive councils for denominational brotherhoods. At a meeting held in New York in 1905, and in Philadelphia in 1908, the organization of Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, both the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America were represented and took a very active part in the organization of the Federal Council. It is agreed with one accord that the organization of the Federal Council is one of the great historical landmarks of the Protestants in America. It has ever been a great influence in the matter of uniting the denominations in such a way as to enable them to speak with a united voice on matters in general, moral, social and religious.

In the process of this westward trend, the eighteenth century pioneers from the Eastern states westward, had been so fully occupied with
gaining a foothold and making a livelihood, that they were rather indifferent to what was happening in the homeland, nor had their long association with the church affairs in Reformed Holland left much interest in religious conditions in Lutheran Germany. In the new world these pioneers were chiefly interested in a new area, where land was cheap and the opportunity to grow with the country more enticing. And then, too, the English language had already gained so much pre-eminence in the older East, that fresh emigrants from Germany preferred the trek westward where all life could begin anew. Thus it was that the Reformed people in Pennsylvania and the Evangelical group in Missouri and Illinois remained almost ignorant of the presence of the other.

However, a spiritual relationship was already evident, although personal contacts were as yet conspicuously absent. It was in 1847 that Professor John W. Nevin, professor at the Reformed Theological Seminary at Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, published his famous little booklet, "History and the Genius of the Heidelberg Catechism," the last chapter of which bearing the title "Church Spirit of the Catechism," set forth some striking statements to the effect that the Heidelberg Catechism had always been closely related in origin and constitution to the Lutheran Confessions, and that it was only in the German church that the two great divisions of the Protestant evangelical faith have seemed able to understand one another in
their principle differences so as to preserve clearly either their
own contradiction in its true ground. He contended that, the Upper
Rhine country and in the other German provinces that embraced the
Reformed faith, everything hinged more or less on the eucharistic
problem, and as far as this was concerned rather on the mode than
on the fact of Christ's real presence in the sacrament. His con-
tention was that the Heidelberg Catechism was designated to in-
terpret rather than contradict the Augsburgian Confession. The
end of the contention was a formal union of the two confessions,
not only in Prussia, but in all Protestant Europe generally. Mel-
anchthon had explained the Augsburg Confession, and Calvin also had
added his own signature because he felt it to be abundantly broad
for both Catechisms.

It cannot be disputed that the Federal Council of Churches of
Christ in America gave opportunity for a better understanding and
mutual acquaintance of the two groups which were happily received.
It might also be added that the World War helped to speed up the
use of the English language in many Evangelical churches where the
German mother tongue had prevailed and conditions far reaching for
fraternizing and cooperation, became more enhanced.

It was especially to the sainted Dr. Philip Vollmer of the
Central Theological Seminary at Dayton, Ohio, that very definite
friendly contacts between the two groups were established. His
acquaintance with the European backgrounds of both groups excep-
ally well qualified him to interpret the Reformed tradition to the Evangelical fellowship. A call to a professorship at Eden Theological Seminary in 1922, afforded him a very welcome opportunity for the developing of close acquaintance and friendly relations. His fraternal spirit, his scholarship and his fluency in the German and English, made him popular with the clergy. Needless to say, he rendered very valuable service, toward a better understanding of the social implications of the Gospel. It was a letter from Dr. A. R. Bartholomew, then President of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in session in September, 1929, in the First Church of Indianapolis, Reverend C. J. G. Russom, pastor, that set in motion the negotiations which finally culminated in the organic union of that ecclesiastical body with that of the Evangelical Synod of North America.

At the General Conference in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1925, as a direct result of the Stockholm Conference, the relationship of the Synod to other church bodies, both at home and abroad, had been strongly emphasized, and the exchange of fraternal delegates with kindred bodies in Europe and the United States was encouraged by a resolution authorizing the appointment of a Commission on Closer Relations with other church bodies. During the years that followed, however, the attention of the Evangelical congregations and their leaders was necessarily centered on the task of prepar-
ing a new Constitution, so that the matter of cultivating closer relations with other church bodies remained temporarily in the background. After the Extraordinary General Conference at Chicago, in October, 1927, had completed this internal task, the time had come for taking steps toward carrying out the mandate of 1925, and to begin work on the larger external project." (1)

In response to the letter from Dr. A. R. Bartholomew, Dr. John Baltzer, President of the Evangelical Synod, designated a Commission on Closer Relations with Other Church Bodies, composed of Drs. F. Frankenfeld, L. W. Goebel, J. H. Horstmann and H. R. Wiebuhr, together with himself as ex-officio member. This Commission met informally in 1928, and Dr. Bartholomew's letter which expressed the feeling that the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States would look with favor upon the receipt of any communication from the Evangelical Synod toward the development of the spirit of closer fellowship. After careful study of the ideals of those kindred bodies, it was now agreed that for the present, the Commission should limit its efforts toward closer relations between the Reformed Church in the United States, the Evangelical Synod and the Moravian Church.

In April, this Committee met with Dr. George W. Richards, a leading spirit in this matter of closer union, and chairman of the Commission on Closer Union of the Churches of the Reformed Church,

(1) Horstmann and Wernecke, "Through Four Centuries," Eden Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.
and suggested that both groups meet again to consider the possibility of even a larger and more effective work for the Kingdom. Both commissions of the Reformed and the Evangelical groups, were enlarged. The request from the Commission on Closer Relations was cordially received by the Commission of the Reformed Church which was negotiating at the time with a similar Commission from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, which also for some time had been negotiating with representatives of the Evangelical Association.

Several meetings of the Commissions of the four church bodies were held to consider the report of the sub-committees. The representatives of the Evangelical Synod were inclined to accept the Plan of Union as a basis for their further negotiations, and agreed to continue to participate in them. But those of the Evangelical church were not inclined to accept this basis, and later definitely withdrew. The remaining three, however, adopted the Plan of Union, in Dayton, Ohio, on February 7th, 1929. The United Brethren group made the provision at a General Conference at Lancaster in May of that year, that a committee of twenty study the Plan of Union and then be authorized to call a General Conference for the express purpose of either approving or disapproving the Plan.
The General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States meeting in May, 1929, at the First Church in Indianapolis, took like action, authorizing a special meeting of the General Synod, when two-thirds of its classis had expressed approval, in anticipation of the General Conferences of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Synod of North America meeting at the same time and place, for the purpose of completing the negotiations.

The General Conference of the Evangelical Synod, meeting at Rochester, New York, in October, welcomed the closer contacts and voted to approve the Plan of Union. The United Brethren took similar action at its General Conferences in 1930. The Reformed Churches reaction was not so favorable, which halted all negotiations for the time being.

While these negotiations were being carried on, the churches of the Presbyterian-Reformed family were invited to a meeting for considering a union among themselves, urging the Evangelical Synod to join them in the Conference. But while the latter Commission was ready to go on with negotiations toward the union of the Reformed and the Evangelical Synod, and although it harbored the kindliest of feeling for the Presbyterian Churches, it did not possess any mandate respecting the union with the latter fellowship, a fact that will perhaps be regretted for centuries to come. The Commission of the Reformed Church had no other alternative but to continue its
negotiations with the Commission of the Evangelical Synod, though
it is urgently to be hoped that the effort to merge the Presbyterian-
Reformed families will soon resume negotiations.

But with the autumn of 1931, negotiations between the Reformed
Church and the Evangelical Synods were resumed at the request of the
Reformed group. The Plan of Union studied at these various confer-
ences was then submitted to the congregations through the Classis of
the Reformed Church, and through the Districts of the Evangelical.
Of the fifty nine Classis, fifty one adopted the Plan of Union, three
adopted it conditionally, four rejected it, and one declined to act.
Of the Evangelical District Conferences of the Evangelical Synod at
Cincinnati, October 3-10,1933, it was unanimously approved on Oct-
ober 7,1933.

Now it became necessary according to the Plan of Union, for the
Commission on Union of both denominations to request the officers of
their supreme judicatories, to call a special meeting of each judicatory
at the same time and place, and to arrange for the first General Synod
of the new denomination. The invitation for such a joint session
came from the Evangelical and Reformed Churches of Cleveland, which
was promptly accepted. The two church groups met separately on June
26, 1934, those from the Evangelical group meeting in the Zion Evan-
gelical church, while those of the Reformed Church met in the Eighth
Church in the morning and in the nearby Pilgrim Congregational Church
which was located but two blocks from the Zion Evangelical Church.

It was to the writer of this thesis a never-to-be-forgotten experience when the delegates of the Reformed Church proceeded from Pilgrim Church to Zion Church, where the Evangelical delegates waited their coming. Meeting at the church entrance of Zion Church, President Paul Press of the Evangelical group and President Henry J. Christian of the Reformed group, joined hands and entered the great spacious edifice together, followed by the members of the Joint Commission on Church Union, the delegates of both groups, the visitors and church members, two by two. Thus the Reformed Church, with more than four hundred years of heroism and martyrdom, and the Evangelical Church with its more than four hundred years of pioneering and loyalty, became organically united with the formal announcement of the action taken and the organic union of the two bodies ratified by the delegates and declared to be in effect.

With the joint singing of "Now thank we all our God," by the great congregation, by some in English and by others in German, the first joint session of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in the United States came to an end, culminated by a most impressive and awe inspiring celebration of the Lord's Supper. The merger, based upon "A Union of Mind and Heart," the slogan coined by Dr. George W. Richards, President of Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, became a reality. The old and former things had come
and gone and the new had taken their places, the history of which is yet to be written in deed and word by men and women yet unborn. In their splendid little pamphlet, "Through Four Centuries," prepared by Dr. J. H. Horstman and Dr. H. E. Wernecke, there appears this prophetic utterance, "It is a rich and glorious heritage which the four centuries that have passed bequeath to the years that are yet to come. May all those who inherit the spiritual wealth that has been won through centuries of religious experiences and aspiration, toil, suffering and sacrifice, guard faithfully what has been committed to them, that old and young may ever abide more fully in the things which they have learned and of what they have been assured, giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (1)

(1) Horstman and Wernecke - "Through Four Centuries," p.123
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7. Casselman, Dr. A. V. - "The Winnebag Finds a Friend"
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26. Harbaugh, Dr. Henry - The Fathers of the Reformed Church,
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27. Heroes of the Reformation Series:-

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29. Kapp, - History of Immigration


32. Minutes of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States for the years: 1929, 1932, 1936, 1938


34. Report of the Committee on Constitution and Charter to the General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, June 22 to 29, 1938 - Columbus, Indiana

35. Richards, Dr. George W. - Studies in the Heidelberg Catechism, Lancaster, Pa.


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(Note - Where either complete names or publishers or dates are not given, such information could not be found. C. J.G.R.)