

# Through Four Centuries

The Story of the Beginnings of  
the Evangelical and Reformed  
Church, in the Old World and  
the New, from the Sixteenth  
to the Twentieth Century.



By

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## FOREWORD

It is hoped that the publication of this little volume at this time will not only be an effective help in spreading important historical information but will also promote and strengthen the process of organic union into which the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America entered so auspiciously four years ago. The knowledge of our common history and of the religious heritage and experiences which are our common property should go far toward fostering that "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" which is so vitally important in solving the various practical problems which the merger has created.

We have sought to meet an immediate need in a direct and simple manner, and to tell, in popular fashion, the essential facts in the development of the two groups, so that the general reader may easily understand why the organic union was so natural and logical. Much that might have been included had to remain unsaid, and we feel that much of what is said could be said more effectively. We are humbly conscious of the fact that in this field especially we "know only in part" of the many persons who, all through the years, have struggled and suffered and sacrificed for the sake of building and extending their Church, and that so many who deserve credit must remain unknown.

No attempt was made to deal with theological trends, or to evaluate the leadership given by prominent persons at important periods, nor did we undertake to portray the significance of the educational institutions. There is a real need for a comprehensive and exhaustive history of the united Church that will do justice to these and other important factors in the development of the Church. We hope the questions at the end of each chapter will be helpful where the book is used by study or discussion groups.

We gladly acknowledge our indebtedness to a large variety of source material. Dr. Richards' "Studies in

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the Heidelberg Catechism" has been mentioned in the body of the book, and additional valuable information was obtained from Sweet, "The Story of Religion in America"; Muecke, "Geschichte der Evangelischen Synode von N. A."; "Know Thy Church," by Rev. F. Stoerker; the volumes on Reformed Church History, by Dr. James I. Good; "Evangelical Pioneers," by Rev. John W. Flucke; "The Westward Expansion of the Reformed Church," by Dr. T. P. Bolliger; "Studies in Church History" (Volume IV of the Evangelical Adult Lesson Series), by Rev. Henry Katterjohn and Rev. Otto Press; "Fifty Years of Foreign Missions"; to "The Winnebago Finds a Friend," by Dr. A. V. Casselman, and "Missionary Trails" and "Missionary Horizons," published by the Mission Boards of the Evangelical Synod of North America. We are also most grateful to Rev. Thomas R. Marshall for his critical reading of the manuscript.

We dedicate the little volume to the supremely great purpose of strengthening and promoting a greater measure of cooperation and fellowship within our own communion and, perhaps, beyond. If it proves to be of some use in advancing the cause of Christian unity which meant so much to our Saviour and Lord, our purpose will have been fully accomplished.

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Webster Groves, Mo.  
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## CHAPTER I THE OLD WORLD BACKGROUND

### BEFORE THE REFORMATION

It is one of the great lessons of history that whenever the time is ripe for some forward movement in the Kingdom of God on earth, the way is prepared in a most effective manner. The conquests of Alexander the Great, three centuries before Christ, served to make the Greek language known and understood all over the then known world; thus the most highly developed language of that day, the language which had been used by the world's greatest thinkers and writers, became available for spreading throughout the civilized world the story of Jesus' life and the meaning of His redemption, as we find it in the New Testament. Just before the birth of Christ Julius Caesar built great permanent highways from Rome to all the countries of Europe in order to carry out his military plans, but they were put to far more important use when the messengers of the Gospel carried the Good Tidings literally to the uttermost parts of the earth. In the same remarkable manner the way was prepared many centuries later for an awakening in the Church of Christ at a time when the life and spirit of its Founder seemed almost to have departed from it.

It was during the thirteenth century that Thomas Aquinas, a great theologian of the Church, visited Rome and was shown the magnificent buildings and vast treasures which the Church called her own.

"In our day," said the Pope proudly, "we need no longer say, as in the days of Peter, 'Silver and gold

have I none'; behold, how the wealth of the world has come to Rome."

"Yes," said Thomas thoughtfully, "that is true. But neither can the Church say, as Peter did then, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!'"

During the great struggle for political power in Europe, which began when Charlemagne's vast empire went to pieces, (843), the Church had become deeply entangled in the affairs of the world and had taken advantage of the strife and jealousy which divided kings and princes to claim political power for herself. Each pope claimed a little more power and authority than his predecessor, until at last Innocent III claimed authority over the whole world. "The pope is less than God," he said, "but more than man; the Church is the sun, and the empire the moon, which shines with borrowed light." It was at that time, with such a pope in Rome, and an arrogant, dissolute monarch like King John on the English throne, that the English princes and prelates demanded and obtained their Magna Charta (1215).

It was this same Pope Innocent III who also established the Inquisition, through which the Church could call upon princes, kings and emperors to seek out and punish all those who disagreed with its teachings or undertook to resist its authority. And in the same way as pope, archbishop and bishop lorded it over worldly rulers, the priests lorded it over their people, keeping them in fear and ignorance, and substituting the Church and her institutions for Christ and His Gospel. Monasteries had become wealthy land-owners through large bequests from devout persons; in many instances monks became corrupt in idleness, drunkenness and

immorality, and exploited and oppressed their tenants. Thus the common people began to lose confidence in the Church, which, to them, was just another worldly ruler intent on keeping the people down.

However, in the very midst of spiritual darkness and death signs of new life began to appear. The Crusades (1096-1270) had brought to the people the knowledge of other lands, and some bolder spirits undertook journeys and began to explore strange countries. Marco Polo (1254-1324) journeyed overland to China and wrote a book about his travels which was widely read. Petrarch (1304-70), an Italian poet, discovered the beauties of ancient Greek and Roman literature, which until then had been unknown in Europe. Wandering scholars brought the new knowledge to the castles of nobles and princes, and to larger towns and cities. Some of these scholars established themselves at convenient places, where those eager to learn could gather for study and discussion. They enjoyed the support of kings and nobles, and in the course of time the foundations for the great European universities were laid. Thus the new learning spread over Germany, France and England, and with it the reports about the corruption in the Church, which was more and more freely criticized, became more generally known.

In southern France the Albigensians, who were charged with rejecting the Bible and infant baptism, revolted from the Church (1208) and were cruelly suppressed by the Inquisition. At about the same time Peter Waldo, a wealthy layman, was moved to renounce the doctrines, usages and traditions of the Church. He gave all his goods to the poor, condemned the priesthood and clergy and made the Bible alone

the rule for his followers, who were called Waldensians. For centuries afterward they heroically endured the most severe persecutions, but although scattered over France, the Netherlands and England, their congregations have persisted to this very day. Centuries later some of them came to America. The Church sank to her lowest depth, when the Pope came under the power of France, and left Rome to take up his residence at the French town of Avignon. This period has been called the "Babylonian Captivity" of the Church, and it caused great consternation and confusion in the minds of the people.

In England, which was farthest removed from Rome, and had never fully accepted the authority of the Pope, John Wyclif (1324-84) openly attacked the practices of the Church and championed the authority of the king as against that of the pope. He held that the decrees of the pope were not valid unless they were founded on the Scriptures, and even attacked the doctrine of transubstantiation, maintaining that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper were unchanged, although the body and blood of Christ are actually present. He exposed the incompetence of the clergy and their neglect of their parish duties, and sent out lay preachers whom he himself had instructed. These men went from place to place, teaching the truth of the Scriptures, which Wyclif had translated from the Latin into the native tongue. Because Wyclif had the support and respect of the nobles and of Parliament he escaped arrest and punishment during his lifetime; thirty years after his death, however, his teachings were condemned and his body taken from its grave and burned.

In the meantime students from Bohemia, who had heard Wyclif at Oxford, carried his ideas and his writings to their native land. At the University of Prague John Hus (1369-1415) became the leader of a strong party of students and faculty members who were zealous for the purity and honor of the Church. As the preacher in Bethlehem Chapel, which had been specially established that the common people might hear the word of God in their own tongue, Hus condemned the sale of indulgences and exalted the teachings of the Scriptures above the doctrines and ordinances of the Church. He was a clear and fervent preacher, and his words as well as his life showed a heartfelt devotion to practical holiness. Nevertheless he was excommunicated and had to leave the country to escape punishment. When the Council of Constance convened, in 1415, he was invited to appear there to vindicate himself. Although he had been assured safe conduct home by Emperor Sigismund, this promise was not kept, and on July 6, 1415, he was burned at the stake and his ashes cast into the Rhine. Hus combined moral firmness and constancy with a tender spirit and great humility and purity, and his manly fear of God and conscientious devotion to the cause of truth made him a powerful influence in central Europe toward bringing in a new day for the Church, and he has well been called the "morning-star of the Reformation." His teachings spread not only through Bohemia but also over Moravia, and out of the resistance of his followers to the claims and tyranny of Rome there was born the brave and heroic group that calls itself The Unity of the Brethren, also known as Moravians.

John Wessel, of Holland (1420-89), a teacher of theology at Paris and later at Basel, also set forth clearly and earnestly the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, and argued against the infallibility of the Church and the pope.

In Italy, Savonarola (1452-98) exposed the immorality of the clergy and nobles and contended for cleaner living and better government. His eloquence caused the overthrow of the wealthy and powerful Medici family in Florence, which had ruled the city by giving the chief offices to puppets, and restored the republic. For a time he was virtually dictator of the city, but he incurred the enmity of the pope, Alexander VI, whom he had denounced. For this he was arrested and excommunicated, and finally put to death (strangled and then burned) at the instance of the Pope.

Other events of the fifteenth century also helped to prepare the people for a change in the existing order in the Church. The invention of printing from movable type, about 1450, was a tremendous advance over the tedious and expensive method of copying manuscripts by hand. In 1453 the Turks took possession of Constantinople, which for centuries had been a center of Oriental learning. This caused great numbers of scholars who were familiar with Greek and Hebrew, *the original languages of the Bible*, to take refuge in Europe, where this new knowledge was eagerly welcomed and put to good use. John Reuchlin (1465-1522), a great scholar of Tuebingen, published Greek text-books, and the first Hebrew grammar, 1506. Erasmus of Rotterdam (1465-1536), a great classical and theological scholar, who taught chiefly in Basel, brought out the first Greek New Testament, 1516.

For 300 years God had thus once more been preparing the way, slowly but surely, for the awakening of His Church to a new life. That there was great and urgent need of such a religious awakening may be seen from the false principles, grave errors and widespread corruption which characterized the life and work of the Church at this time.

*False Principles:* 1. The supreme authority in the Church was not God and His Word, but the Pope, as head of the Church and Vicar of Christ, who demanded absolute obedience. 2. As a result, the reading and study of the Bible was neglected and ignored, in favor of what the Church Fathers had taught, and of the traditions which had grown up through the centuries. 3. God was pictured as wrathful and unapproachable, so that it was necessary to obtain the mediation of the saints, especially of the Virgin Mary, Queen of heaven, and to adore them as heavenly beings. 4. The Gospel of salvation by grace through faith had been supplanted in the minds of the people by the conception of salvation by merit through pilgrimages, fasting, almsgiving, use of the rosary, and remaining unmarried (celibacy).

*The errors of doctrine* generally believed by the people were: 1. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper had become the mass, i. e., a repetition of Christ's sacrifice on the cross rather than a means of grace. 2. The teaching that in the Lord's Supper the bread and wine were changed to the body and blood of Jesus (transubstantiation) was used to justify the withholding of the cup from laymen, and also the adoration of the elements (bread and wine). Instead of the original two sacraments which Jesus had instituted it was

taught that there were seven:—Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders, Penance, and Extreme Unction (the anointing of the body of those about to die with sacred oil).

*The widespread corruption* in the Church was caused  
1. by the life of open shame which many of the popes led, in being guilty of simony (the buying of high positions in the Church, Acts 8: 9-24), drunkenness, unchastity, unbelief, and even murder. 2. The example thus set was quickly followed by many of the clergy in the parishes. 3. "Like priests, like people"; the people in the congregations speedily followed in the footsteps of the priests, so that the Christian religion, instead of being the way of holiness became for very many a way of living in sin. 4. The priests in the parishes neglected their sacred duties, so that ignorance and superstition prevailed among the great mass of church members.

The picture of the Church of that period was not all dark, however. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) was the greatest religious force of his age, and one of the greatest preachers of all ages. In Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) medieval piety had its highest and most inspiring representative, while Raymond Lull (1235-1315), martyr missionary to the Mohammedans, demonstrated the true missionary spirit.

In the fullness of time God brought forward the men who were to expose the false principles, grave errors and serious corruption in the Church, and who would lead as many as would accept their leadership back again to the clear, bright light of Gospel truth.

#### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. How did the rule of Pope Innocent III make necessary a reformation?
2. What influence did the Crusades have towards bringing on the Reformation?
3. Name the influences in southern France, England, Bohemia and Holland that led towards reform and describe each briefly.
4. What four false principles did the medieval church hold?
5. Indicate the errors of doctrine of the medieval church and state the position of our Church on these points.

## CHAPTER II THE OLD WORLD BACKGROUND

### THE REFORMATION

During the closing years of the fifteenth century there were growing up, unbeknown to each other, two young men who were destined to stir the religious life and thought of Europe to its very depths. One was Martin Luther, born Nov. 10, 1483, at Eisleben in Germany; the other was Huldreich Zwingli, born Jan. 1, 1484, at Wildhaus, Switzerland.

Martin Luther, a miner's son, came from a home of poverty, and his early life was spent amid many hardships. He was a bright lad, however, and his parents realized the value of an education. So the boy went to school at Eisenach, paying for his schooling by singing at the doors of well-to-do citizens, and later attended the University at Erfurt, where he studied law and philosophy. Religion was to him a matter of fear and anxiety, and the finding of a Latin Bible in the library of the University, the first he had ever seen, caused him to think more deeply than ever about God, truth and the meaning of life.

In 1505, against his father's wishes, he abandoned his studies and entered an Augustinian convent, seeking in vain for peace of mind and forgiveness of sins by fastings, vigils, penances, self-denial and even cruel self-torture. At last he found light and peace through the spiritual guidance of Staupitz, his superior in the order. Through deep spiritual struggles he learned that "the just shall live by faith," a conviction which grew on him as he visited Rome and saw with his own eyes the almost unbelievable corruption in the Church.

In 1508 he was made preacher at Wittenberg, and also professor at the university there, which had been recently founded by the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise. Here he boldly preached the Gospel of salvation through grace by faith alone, and hosts of students and throngs of people listened eagerly to the new teaching. And when the vulgar, blatant Tetzels came into the vicinity to sell for money the papal indulgences, i. e., the remission of all penalties for sin, including the pains of purgatory, Luther protested vigorously and his 95 theses on the door of the castle church at Wittenberg, Oct. 31, 1517, represent the trumpet blast that awakened Europe to a new religious day.

Huldreich Zwingli's early life was very different. He had the advantage of a comfortable home and a liberal education, under the guidance of an uncle who was a priest, and it was taken for granted that Huldreich would enter the priesthood. At the University of Basel he showed remarkable ability in his studies, which he continued at Berne and Vienna. At the age of 18 he returned to Basel to teach, at the same time pursuing further studies at the University. Under the guidance of the devout and learned Wytttenbach he saw the light of the Gospel and came to recognize the supremacy of the Scripture over the traditions of the Church; he also came to understand that sins are forgiven not through the Virgin Mary but through the death of Christ, and that the sale of indulgences was a fraud.

By 1506 Zwingli was a priest at Glarus, where he began his study of Greek, a rare accomplishment in those days. Three visits to Italy at this time, as chaplain to Swiss troops in the employ of foreign powers,



also opened his eyes to the great corruption of the papacy. His opposition to the system of hiring out Swiss mercenaries to foreign rulers, a species of graft practiced by many of the most prominent families in the land, aroused resentment, and in 1516 we find him at Einsiedeln, where a famous shrine to the Virgin Mary attracted multitudes of pilgrims. His freedom from parish duties at this place gave him much time for study of the New Testament, which he copied almost entirely in the Greek text, even committing large portions to memory.

When Luther published his 95 theses Zwingli also was already emphasizing the heart of evangelical teaching, that sins are forgiven only through the ransom of Christ. It required unusual courage to preach such a message at a place like Einsiedeln, where the words: "Here sins are forgiven by the Virgin Mary," were inscribed over the door, and where pilgrims came to worship the "Queen of Heaven." But the pilgrims carried his message far and wide through Europe. In 1518 he was called to become head priest at the Cathedral at Zurich, the chief city in northern Switzerland, a distinction which his ability and eloquence had gained for him.

Returning again to Germany, we wish there were space to tell how the voice of the bold monk Martin Luther aroused the people in that country, and in other lands; how Pope Leo X sought in vain to silence him; how he was cast out of the Church, and how he then boldly destroyed the bridges behind him by burning the document which declared his excommunication; how he was put under the ban of the empire, but braved the authority of both the Church and the em-

pire, at Worms, in 1521, with his simple, dramatic statement: "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me! Amen." His friends spirited him away to the Wartburg and safety, where he translated the New Testament, out of the original Greek into popular German, and then labored ceaselessly to establish and defend evangelical teaching in all parts of Germany.

The chief means by which he accomplished this end were his hymns and his catechisms, and it is not easy to say which had the greater influence with the masses of the people. Luther's catechisms grew out of his convictions, as early as the posting of his 95 Theses, that the people needed to be more fully informed about the teachings of the Bible. During the years that followed, therefore, he published various short explanations of the Ten Commandments, directions on how to confess one's sins; also explanations of the Apostolic Creed and the Lord's Prayer, as well as of the Sacrament of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The political disturbances that led to the Peasants' War (1524-25), and the visitation of the churches of Saxony, in 1528, revealed the need of such material in permanent and more extensive form, and in 1529 there appeared the *Small Catechism*, intended for children, and somewhat later the *Large Catechism*, for the guidance of pastors and intelligent laymen.

In this connection the *Augsburg Confession*, so called because it was presented at the Imperial Diet held in the city of Augsburg, in June, 1530, must also be mentioned. The Diet had been called with a view to settling peacefully, if possible, the religious dissensions which had stirred Germany since 1517. The emperor had therefore called upon Luther and his friend Philip

Melanchthon (of whom we shall learn more later), to prepare a brief summary of the teachings in which they differed from the Catholic Church. Such a document was therefore formally laid before the emperor in the private chapel of the episcopal palace, where the Diet met. The summary had been prepared in Latin and German, but Luther and his friends never saw either copy again.

From the nature of the historical situation it is quite evident that this document was not intended as a final and infallible standard for the people who were called Lutherans. It was meant to be merely a dispassionate statement in vindication of Luther's teachings before the Roman Catholic world, in which everything which might arouse too greatly the anger of the Romanists was carefully avoided. The Augsburg Confession, as we have it today (a new edition prepared by Melanchthon nearly a year afterward) passes by in silence the fundamentally evangelical teaching that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and conduct, in which Luther firmly believed, and it ignores the Romish system of indulgences, purgatory and the primacy of the pope, all of which he rejected.

In order to complete the picture of the religious situation in Germany, mention must be made of the Diet of Spires, 1529, at which the Elector of Saxony and other princes protested an edict which forbade the progress of the Reformation in the states which had not accepted it. This protest gave the name *Protestant* to the Lutheran party.

The outstanding event in the later years of Luther's life was the completion of his translation of the whole Old Testament, from the original Hebrew, in 1534.

During the years that followed the Reformation continued to spread over nearly all parts of Germany, in spite of various efforts on the part of the emperor and the Catholic party to stop and destroy it. Luther's health began to give way, and the divisions among his followers, as well as political feuds and jealousies among Protestant princes caused him much anxiety, until his death, Feb. 18, 1546.

At Zurich Zwingli had, in the meantime stirred up no little excitement by his preaching of the Gospel, which began to spread over the entire canton. While recovering from an attack of the plague, sustained as a result of faithful pastoral work during the epidemic which swept the city, his religious life was greatly deepened, and thus he was prepared all the better for the work that lay before him. When a certain Samson came to Zurich to sell indulgences Zwingli preached against him so forcefully that he was obliged to leave, and nothing of that sort was again attempted in all Switzerland.

The crisis came in 1522, when the Bishop of Constance, in whose diocese Zurich was situated, complained to the city council about Zwingli's activities. Zwingli betook himself to prayer, and the council decided against the Bishop. When this decision was appealed to the Diet, a decree against Zwingli was passed, but the reforms in Zurich went on nevertheless. When Zwingli resigned his position, the council accepted the resignation but requested him to continue preaching. Thus the Gospel continued to spread, in spite of stubborn opposition, in the course of which Zwingli's life was often threatened, and by 1525 all the churches of the city had accepted the reforms.

Why was there no protest made from Rome against Zwingli's preaching? There was no Roman Catholic monarch in Switzerland whom the pope could influence; the pope himself also needed Swiss soldiers to protect and defend his temporal domain, and therefore he did not wish to antagonize the Swiss people, especially as there was already so much opposition to sending soldiers out of the country to fight for foreign rulers. Thus it came about that the spirited, freedom-loving people of Switzerland were never made to feel the strong arm of the Church.

Zwingli's success at Zurich spread his fame abroad, and finally brought him in touch with Martin Luther, who attacked his view of the Lord's Supper. While both men rejected the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, Zwingli, especially at first, held that the Lord's Supper was primarily a memorial of Christ's suffering on the cross. Luther on the other hand, held that the real body and blood of Christ was present with the bread and wine. Neither one could quite understand the other, and the controversy became more and more heated.

Landgrave Philip of Hessa, one of the leading princes of Germany, was anxious to bring Luther and Zwingli together, so that Protestants might present a united front to Rome, the common enemy. He therefore arranged for a conference between the two men, at Marburg, in western Germany, where the two great leaders met, Oct. 1, 1529. For two days they debated, especially regarding the Lord's Supper. A sickness broke out in the town, thus breaking off the conference. Before they separated, however, the Landgrave had them draw up fifteen articles of faith, in which it ap-

peared that they agreed on all articles except on that about the Lord's Supper. Luther refused to recognize the Swiss as brethren, saying: "You have a different spirit from ours." Thus, at a time when Protestants most needed to be united against Rome there came into being the unfortunate division between Lutherans and Reformed, as the followers of Zwingli later came to be called.

As the new teachings spread over Switzerland bitter strife arose between those cantons which had accepted Zwingli's reforms, and those which remained Roman Catholic. The latter were in the majority, and the strife soon developed into a civil war. Zwingli considered it his duty to go out as chaplain with the unorganized men of Zurich, against three times that number on the other side, and in a battle on Oct. 11, 1531, he lost his life. This disaster checked the progress of the Reformation in Switzerland, but Zwingli had succeeded in putting the movement on so sound a basis that it was able to withstand the trials that came later.

#### A NEW LEADER

When Zwingli died on the battlefield God was already training the man who was to take up his task. It was John Calvin, who was born July 10, 1509, at Noyon, in northern France. His father's position and influence secured him a careful education, and he early distinguished himself by his uncommon intellectual powers and his serious disposition. At first destined for the priesthood, he later changed his plans and devoted himself to the law. At the same time his attention was called to the Scriptures, which he began to study with great diligence. After the death of his

father, 1531, he devoted himself chiefly to the classics studying Greek and Hebrew in Paris. Here he became familiar with the teachings of Luther and Zwingli, through a group of earnest seekers, sponsored by the sister of the king, and decided to leave the Roman Catholic Church. He was forced to flee, and after wandering from place to place for some time he began to hold religious meetings with groups of people who had embraced the new teachings and secretly celebrated the Lord's Supper with them. As France became too dangerous for him, we find him, at the beginning of 1535, in Strassburg, from where he went to Basel. Here he published his famous "Institutes of Theology," which revealed him as a theological genius. This work was the completed fruit of his conversion and gave him great fame among the Protestants of that day.

On his journeys in Italy, Switzerland and France, he came to Geneva, one day, late in July, 1536, and it was here that he unexpectedly found his life-work. William Farel (1489-1565) had already preached the Gospel in Geneva with great zeal, and when he heard that Calvin was in the city he immediately called upon him and begged him to stay. But Calvin preferred to continue his studies, and was not inclined to stay. Finally Farel, overcome by the great need of helpers in his work, said with a voice of thunder: "May God curse your studies if in our great need you do not come to our aid!" Calvin was awed; he trembled like a leaf, and asked to be allowed to think and pray over the matter until morning. When the morning came he had decided to stay.

A great deal could be said about Calvin's work at Geneva, where he threw himself with heart and soul

into the task of preaching and teaching the Gospel and making it effective in the lives of the people; of his flight after two years, because the people were embittered at the strictness with which he attempted to regulate their conduct; of his three years at Strassburg, where he became better acquainted with the work of Luther and Melancthon; of his marriage, and of the call by the city council of Geneva, where a change of government had taken place, and of the new order of things which he now introduced in the city. He laid great stress on preaching as a means of reform, insisted on careful religious instruction and first introduced congregational singing into the Church at Geneva, the first songs being his own metrical renderings of the Psalms.

Calvin's aims in the Reformation were practical rather than theological, and he sought above all to combat the lax view of sin and grace which the Roman Church inculcated. He was also the great organizer of the Reformation. Instead of leaving church organization to the princes, as Luther had done, he carefully laid the foundations of the presbyterial form of church government, thus founding a new democratic and representative church polity. It was his idea that religion is a real living force to be expressed in a life of duty lived to the glory of God. His interpretation of the Christian Gospel has had a great influence on modern thought in all European countries, and especially in our own country, in support of public morality and civil liberties. He died May 27, 1564.

The story of how Luther, Zwingli and Calvin awakened the Church of their day and gave it new life and vigor through their preaching and teaching of the

Gospel would be incomplete without giving due attention to Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), a splendidly gifted student and one of the outstanding scholars of the day. At the age of 20 he had calls from several universities, and the next year accepted one from the University of Wittenberg, because Luther taught there, and the two immediately became life-friends. In 1521 Melanchthon published his most important work, called "Loci Communes," which was the first systematic presentation of evangelical teaching. During the years that followed he was a great help to Luther in his translation of the Bible, and it has been well said that, while the vigor of expression was Luther's, the accuracy and beauty were Melanchthon's. Because Luther was still an outlaw when the Diet convened at Augsburg, in 1530, Melanchthon acted as his representative, and it was he who was chiefly responsible for the Confession presented there. He was the scribe and scholar where Luther was the leader and fighter. With a mind progressive far beyond his age, he combined a judicial and conciliatory spirit, and earnestly sought to bring about a unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace among the followers of Luther.

Unfortunately, his influence could not prevent the division, during the last years of Luther's life, of the latter's followers into two groups, a strictly Lutheran, somewhat fanatical group, which claimed to be "orthodox," and another, consisting of Melanchthon's own followers as well as the followers of Zwingli in Germany, especially in the Palatinate, the southern portion of Germany, bordering on Switzerland and France. In order to heal the breach between the Lutheran and Zwinglian Protestants, Melanchthon undertook to mod-

ify the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in new editions of the Augsburg Confession, particularly in that of 1540, which has become known as the *Variata*, i. e., amended, or revised. As Dr. Richards has pointed out in his *Studies on the Heidelberg Catechism*, (p. 37), the Reformation in the Palatinate was under the influence of Melanchthon, who was a native of Bretten and who, since 1545, was the confidential adviser of the electors in matters of reform. When, therefore, the Augsburg Confession was accepted by the Palatinate Church, it was the Confession as altered by Melanchthon. . . . The amended form was an approach toward the Calvinistic theory of the Sacrament, . . . a preparation for a transition to Calvinism or the doctrines of the Reformed Church.

When Frederick III, called the Pious, became Elector of the Palatinate he was moderately Lutheran, and with Melanchthon desired to end the bitter controversy among the Lutherans by adopting a statement in regard to the Lord's Supper on which all could agree. While he defended the Augsburg Confession, as modified by Melanchthon in 1540, he inclined more and more toward what became known as the Reformed point of view, as distinguished from the Lutheran, because of the emphasis on the Scriptures as the only guide for faith and life. He was repelled by the bigotry and intolerance of the "ultra-Lutherans," and earnestly sought a means of promoting the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace among his subjects.

Very early in the reign of the Elector there came to the University of Heidelberg two young men who seemed to him well prepared to undertake the writing of a Catechism for the people, "in order that not only

the youth in the churches and schools may be piously instructed in such Christian doctrine (according to the word of God) and be thoroughly trained therein, but also that the Pastors and Schoolmasters themselves may be provided with a fixed form and model, by which to regulate the instruction of youth, and not, at their option, adopt daily changes, or introduce erroneous doctrine." . . . . (Richards, *Studies on the Heidelberg Catechism*, Part III, p. 195; from the Elector's introduction to the first edition).

The two young theologians who were intrusted with this important task were Zacharias Ursinus (1534-83), and Casper Olevianus (1536-87). The former was a native of Breslau, in East Germany, and a pupil of Melancthon, whom he greatly admired; the latter came from Treves, in West Germany, and was a pupil and follower of Calvin. Both worked together so successfully that when the new Catechism appeared, in 1563, it soon became one of the important creeds of the Reformed Church. It became known as the *Heidelberg Catechism*, and it combined in a remarkable manner the conciliatory spirit of Melancthon, the friend and assistant of Luther, and the practical spirit of Zwingli and Calvin.

The story of Martin Luther, Huldreich Zwingli, John Calvin and Philip Melancthon is of the greatest importance to the members of the Evangelical and Reformed Church because the teaching of that Church is based on the combined labors of these brave, earnest and learned men, as they have come down to us in Luther's Catechism, the Augsburg Confession, and the Heidelberg Catechism.

In closing our study for this period we must not

omit mentioning some of the men who continued Zwingli's work in Switzerland: Leo Juda (1482-1542), who was to Zwingli what Melancthon was to Luther; John Ecolampadius (1482-1531), the pioneer and leader of the Reformation at Basel; Joachim Vadian (1484-1551), the Reformer of St. Gall; Berthold Haller (1492-1536), the Reformer of Bern; Henry Bullinger (1504-75), Zwingli's successor at Zurich, great as a preacher, pastor and theologian, whose influence was felt far beyond the borders of Switzerland, especially in Italy, and also in England, and Martin Bucer (1491-1551), the mediator between Luther and Zwingli, whose concern was for union over against doctrinal divisions.

The Reformation also found its way into Holland and Belgium, which formed one country at that time, known as the Netherlands. Here the first influences came from Germany; for a time the influences of the Anabaptists, fanatical and licentious communist sectarians, predominated. The Dutch mind, however, seemed especially favorable to the stern teachings of Calvin, which were introduced by a number of French Calvinists, who came to Belgium, where French was also spoken; from here the new teachings spread rapidly northward into Holland. The most prominent evangelical preacher in the Netherlands was Guy de Bres (1522-67), author of the Belgic Confession, who was executed for his loyalty to the Protestant faith.

When the Duke of Alva, in the name of King Philip II of Spain, who had inherited the Netherlands from his father Charles V, introduced the Inquisition, in order to crush Protestantism, Prince William of Orange (1533-84), arose to defend the liberties of the

people. In a desperate struggle he succeeded in establishing the freedom of the country, after having publicly professed the Reformed faith, 1573. At the height of his career, however, he was assassinated by a fanatical Catholic. But he had saved the Netherlands from Spain and the Inquisition, and had laid the foundations for the future greatness of Holland, which later became the leading Protestant nation of Europe. As such, two centuries later, it was able to exercise a protectorate over the Reformed churches growing up in the New World.

#### THE NEXT THREE CENTURIES

During the first century following the Reformation, 1517-1617, the differences of opinion existing between the great Reformers, particularly as regards the Lord's Supper, were magnified and exaggerated to such an extent by partisans on both sides, but chiefly by Lutherans, that Protestantism was divided into two hostile camps, each doing its best to vilify and condemn the other. The horrors of the Thirty Years' War, which began in 1618, immediately after the first centenary of the Reformation, was brought on by this deplorable division, and by Roman Catholic effort to destroy the divided enemy by force of arms.

Although the Peace of Westphalia, 1648, which concluded the Thirty Years' War, formally recognized the legal equality of Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Reformed, bitterness and hostility still persisted. But the chastenings of war, combined with the influence of men like Johann Arndt (1555-1620); Johann Gerhard (1582-1637); Valentin Andreae (1586-1654), and finally Philip Jakob Spener (1633-1705), all of whom emphasized the supreme importance of sincere and

consecrated personal Christian living, as against pure doctrine, gradually brought about a great change in the character of German Protestantism. The work of these men gave birth to Pietism, with its evangelistic earnestness and missionary enthusiasm, which was rounded out and strengthened by the educational and philanthropic work of August Hermann Francke (1663-1727).

The year 1717, the second centenary of the Reformation, therefore found German Protestants nearer together than ever before. Protestantism had become a real power in the land, a fact which is best evidenced in the practical work of Francke's schools and orphanages, and in the fact that Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau, pioneer missionaries to India, had already begun their work nearly a decade before.

But Deism in England, and Rationalism in Germany were already undermining the gains that had been made. The word of God and faith in Jesus Christ, Son of God, and Saviour and Lord of men, were being set aside and ignored, and reason had been set up as the only norm of faith. The churches became mere lecture rooms; the hymns sung by the people were gradually emptied of Christian thought, and sermons became mere moral treatises on the general utility of things. The sacraments lost their meaning and confirmation was degraded into a mere promise of virtue. On the other hand, Zinzendorf, a religious genius, richly endowed with gifts of head and heart, exerted a widespread influence among the people in the direction of personal sanctification, evangelism and missionary effort. The Pietistic movement of Spener, and the Moravian revival of Zinzendorf also played an important

part in the Anglo-American revival of the Wesleys and Whitefield, founders of Methodism.

The agnosticism and atheism which followed in the wake of Rationalism helped to bring on the French Revolution, which was followed by the political upheaval in Europe under Napoleon I, just before the third centenary of the Reformation. The negative contribution of Rationalism and Revolution was their demonstration of the need of cooperation on the part of the two great divisions of Protestantism against a common enemy; the positive contribution was a new consciousness of the rich heritage which both had in common. The time was ripe for a further step forward in the realization of Jesus' great ideal "That they may all be one," and in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, which will be studied at the proper place in our story.

#### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. How did the early life of Luther differ from that of Zwingli?
2. In what specific manner did the Reformation under Luther begin in Germany? Under Zwingli in Switzerland?
3. Name the main events in John Calvin's work as a reformer.
4. What differences did Melancthon and Frederick III try to conciliate, and through what means, respectively?
5. Of what nature was the Reformation in Holland, and who were the leading men connected with it?
6. Mention three important new religious developments in the three centuries following the Reformation.

### CHAPTER III IN THE NEW WORLD

None of the developments in Europe during the fifteenth century (see pages 4-6) which helped to awaken the Church had so great an influence on the history of mankind as the discovery of America, in 1492. A new epoch in world history began when Columbus, thinking he had reached the East Indies, set his foot on the shores of San Salvador.

As we look back on the history of North America since that far-off event we can understand something of the divine wisdom and providence which kept the New World hidden from the Old until, at a most critical period in the history of Europe and of the Christian Church a new beginning had to be made in the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

While Protestantism was being born in Europe during the 50 years that followed the discovery of America, the European nations which controlled the destiny of the New World were still Roman Catholic. But the Roman Catholic Church that came to the New World was not the same that had broken down in the Old. Realizing that thoroughgoing reforms had to be made, the Pope had called a great Council of the Church (the Council of Trent, 1545-63) which did away with some of the worst abuses and undertook to work in a new way. The most important development, as far as the New World was concerned, was the organization of a new religious order, the Society of Jesus, also called the Jesuits, in 1534. It was founded by Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), a Spanish knight who, after a



deep religious experience while recovering from a wound, gave all his possessions to the Church and devoted himself entirely to promoting the "greater glory of God" through missionary and educational work. He succeeded in a remarkable manner in arousing the Church to a new sense of missionary responsibility, so that many young priests became willing to be sent to the New World as missionaries. By the end of the sixteenth century several Spanish missions had been established along the coast of what is now Florida and the Carolinas, and French Jesuits were at work in 32 Indian villages in Canada.

#### MISSIONARY WORK AMONG INDIANS

Thus, from the very beginning, the Christian religion played an important part in the history of the New World, particularly in North America, and it is interesting to note how, for more than 200 years, missionary work among the Indians, by Roman Catholics as well as by Protestants, was an integral part of every attempt to establish settlements in North America. At the time of the War for American Independence there were about 15,000 Indians in the Spanish missions in what is now Texas, New Mexico and California.

The French Jesuit fathers sought out the Indians in their villages, learned their languages and customs, lived with them, and thus won their confidence and friendship, so that they became inclined to accept the Christian religion. Under orders from their superiors they also explored the country and sought to extend French influence and possessions.

The best known example of missionary zeal and heroism among the French Jesuits is *Jacques Marquette*

(1637-73), who labored in what is now northern Michigan and Wisconsin, and who spent several years at Madeline Island, now one of our own home mission outposts. He was ordered to accompany Joliet in the effort to discover and explore the Mississippi river, and the party followed the course of that mighty stream from the mouth of the Wisconsin to that of the Arkansas. Marquette established a mission station at Kaskaskia, Illinois, but, exhausted from the hardships of his journey down the Mississippi, was obliged to give up, and on the way back to Michigan he died.

Long before Marquette began his labors *Roger Williams* (1600-84), pioneer of religious liberty and founder of Rhode Island, undertook Protestant work among the Indians of Massachusetts. *John Eliot* (1604-90) began missionary work among the Indians with the support of the General Court of Massachusetts. He gathered the Christian Indians into villages of their own, which were democratically governed, and taught them useful trades, as well as reading and writing. Friends in England supported the work (Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge). When King Philip's War (1675) broke out there were some 3,000 Christian Indians, with 24 native preachers. *Samson Occum* (1723-92), a full-blooded Indian, was an ordained Presbyterian minister and teacher, who visited England to collect money for a missionary training school (now Dartmouth College) where Indian students would be welcome.

*David Brainerd* (1723-47), in spite of poor health, chose missionary work among the Indians rather than a comfortable living in a regular parish. He labored at

Easton, Pa., Crosswicks, N. J., and in the wilderness of New York. His utter devotion to the cause and his great personal consecration as revealed in his autobiography has been an inspiration to many Christian leaders and workers.

*David Zeisberger (1721-1808)*, a Moravian, came to Pennsylvania from Georgia in 1740, and was the last great missionary to the Indians. When the French and Indian war made his work in Pennsylvania difficult he came to Ohio with a group of Christian Indians, and founded Schoenbrunn, 1772, the first town, church and school in that territory. No liquor was allowed in the settlement, and the Indians living there would not go to war. During the War for Independence they were driven from one place to another and suffered greatly from famine and exposure. In 1782 most of them were treacherously massacred by American militiamen. Zeisberger was a thorough scholar in English and German, had mastered several Indian dialects, and left an Indian grammar, dictionary and lexicon.

It was the tragedy of this early work among the Indians that it was hindered and finally destroyed, not by the resistance or evil spirit of the Indians themselves but by the ruthless greed of the white man who called himself a Christian, but who not only robbed the red man of his land, but demoralized him by the sale of liquor and deliberately entangled him in wars of conquest.

#### PIONEERS OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

In glaring contrast to the massacre of the Indians at Schoenbrunn and Gnadenhuetten stands Wm. Penn's

"Holy Experiment," as he delighted to call it. His kindness toward the "Red Men" is so well known that it merely needs to be mentioned here. Less well known is the fact that it was the tolerant spirit and the assurance of civil and religious liberty on the part of this noted Quaker toward the oppressed and persecuted of Europe that caused Pennsylvania to become the "Cradle of the Reformed Church."

True, there was a Palatine settlement as early as 1709 at Germantown, N. Y., south of the Catskills, and in 1712 some 50 families settled at Schoharie, followed in 1713 by another 100 families. There was also a Swiss emigration to the Carolinas in 1710, and another in 1730. But when the suffering of the Palatines in New York became known among their friends in Germany, it turned them against this colony and for many years they avoided it. Conflicts with the Indian tribes at New Berne, N. C. in 1711 resulted in the slaughter of 130 settlers. It is not surprising then that the warm welcome and favorable conditions of Pennsylvania made it a haven of refuge for thousands.

When the German Reformed immigrants arrived, others had already taken possession of the best lands around Philadelphia. In 1683 the city of Philadelphia consisted of three or four little cottages, but two years later it contained some six hundred houses, and the schoolmaster and the printing press had begun their work. As many as 7,000 settlers are said to have arrived in one year. By 1700 the colonists numbered more than 20,000 and Philadelphia had become a thriving town.

Since the Reformed people arrived mainly after 1700, they were compelled to go very largely toward

what was then the wilderness, the section now known as Montgomery and Bucks counties. Then they began settling up the Perkiomen Valley and northward along the Schuylkill Valley to Falkner Swamp (near Pottstown). When these were pretty well settled, they pushed out farther into the Indian wilderness, settling south of Blue Mountain, from Egypt on the east to Tulpehocken on the west, and down into the Conestoga district in Lancaster County.

Three main causes lie back of this emigration from the Palatinate (the section of Germany from Bingen on the Rhine southward to Strassburg, with Heidelberg as its capital). The first cause was war. In the war of 1688-89, the brutal policy of Louis XIV of France resulted in the burning of 1,200 towns and villages, known as "The Ravage of the Palatinate." Again in 1707 the land was reduced to a wilderness, "not leaving the Reformed people so much as a house to hide their heads in nor clothes to cover their nakedness." This condition led to the second cause, poverty. After armies had lived off the country and repeatedly wrought devastation, it is no wonder that such destitution caused thousands to seek better opportunities in the New World. Not less significant was the third factor, religious persecution. The Palatinate had been a Reformed country, but in 1685 the scepter passed into the hands of a Catholic line of princes, resulting not merely in friction but in the French oppressing them as heretics and taking away their churches. It is not surprising that there was a regular exodus from such conditions, and that thousands sought civil liberty, better economic opportunities and freedom of conscience in the land beyond the Atlantic.

So this early German emigration was a religious emigration. The immigrants brought with them their Bibles, their catechisms and their hymn books. In the pioneer settlements they set up their houses of worship. When able to do so, they employed a parochial schoolmaster to teach their children and to hold a religious service consisting of prayer, the reading of a sermon and singing. But they missed the baptizing of their children and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Some few went to communion with the Presbyterians in Philadelphia and had their children baptized there also. But many could not afford the journey nor understand the English service.

#### JOHN PHILIP BOEHM ORGANIZES THE FIRST CONGREGATION

Thus, in the course of time those living in the Schuylkill Valley north of Philadelphia prevailed on John Philip Boehm, a schoolmaster, to become their minister. Though refusing at first because he had not been ordained, he finally accepted "protesting before God that he could not justify his refusal of so necessary a work." He was ordained in 1729 by a committee of Dutch Reformed ministers in New York under the authority of the Classis of Amsterdam of North Holland. By force of circumstances, however, the schoolmaster had already become the minister. In 1725 he organized the Reformed people north of Philadelphia into three congregations and administered the communion at Falkner Swamp (the oldest German Reformed congregation still in existence) on October 15 to 40 members; at Skippack in November to 37 members; and at White Marsh in December to 24 members. Thus

John Philip Boehm became the founder of the Reformed Church in the United States.

In his report to the Synods of Holland, to which he was related through ordination, advice and aid, he lists eight congregations with a total of 386 communicants, suggesting that they could be served by four ministers: "by one minister, Philadelphia and Germantown, which are six English miles apart; by the second minister, Falkner Swamp and Skippack, which are about 12 English miles apart; by the third minister, Conestoga and Tulpehocken, some 10 English miles from Philadelphia; and a fourth minister would be greatly needed at Goshenhoppen, 36 miles from Philadelphia." Again quoting Boehm, as to the need of ministers, "It is indeed true that three young ministers have been here, namely, Mr. George Michael Weiss, Mr. Peter Miller and Mr. Bartholomew Rieger, coming from the Palatinate, but for what they have done here I wish that God may forgive them, because after they had disturbed the congregations for a long time, even those entrusted to my care, they again left and abandoned the sheep misled by their shepherds." As these quotations indicate, in these first decades there were many false teachers and hireling shepherds and but little church order. The picture is one of great poverty and spiritual destitution; of much work to be done, but few laborers; of constant conflict between church regularity and an independent, irresponsible ministry.

In giving Boehm the place indicated above, we are not forgetting that the first Reformed minister in Pennsylvania was Samuel Guldin, who seems to have come before 1718; he preached as occasion offered but never attempted to organize the Reformed congrega-

tions. Nor are we losing sight of the fact that the Rev. George Michael Weiss, a man of considerable influence, arrived at Philadelphia, September 21, 1727 with a colony of Germans, became pastor of the first German Reformed Church of Philadelphia and four years later left Pennsylvania to settle at Rhinebeck, N. Y., leaving Boehm almost alone to minister to the Pennsylvania churches for 15 years. A few ministers arrived to aid him—Goetschy, Dorstius and Rieger—but the major responsibility of the widening territory rested on Boehm's shoulders. He was the overseer of the vast territory extending from Egypt, near Allentown, west to Tulpehocken and Lancaster and south to Philadelphia. As early as 1734 Boehm made the following interesting statistical report to the Synods in Holland—

<i>Congregations</i>	<i>Communicants</i>
At Falkner Swamp were found Sept. 22, 1734.....	63
At Skippack were found Sept. 29, 1734.....	41
At Whitemarsh were found Oct. 6, 1734.....	22
At Philadelphia were found Sept. 14, 1734.....	88
At Germantown were found (according to the statement of two elders, named Minck and Bentzel) in the month of September, 1734.....	30
At Conestoga were found May 31, 1730.....	75
At Tulpehocken were found June 28, 1728.....	27
At Goshenhoppen (according to the statement of some members) about.....	40
	386

Besides these eight congregations he calls attention to certain preaching points such as Oley, Saucon, Macungie, Maxatawny and Great Swamp.

## THE LUTHERANS, THE REFORMED AND THE MORAVIANS

In addition to the arduous duties as founder of the German Reformed congregations in Pennsylvania, Boehm also had to serve as their defender in the controversy related to the Congregation of God in the Spirit. This was an attempt to unite the diverse religious elements of Pennsylvania, particularly the Lutheran, the Reformed and the Moravians. The movement was begun by Henry Antes, "the pious Reformed elder of Falkner Swamp," and received a great impetus through the coming of Count Zinzendorf (1741) who deserves to be remembered for the founding of Herrnhut as a place of refuge for persecuted Moravians, and for his missionary leadership. It failed, however, because of the prevalence of inspirationist, mystical tendencies among the Moravians. It was against these extreme tendencies that Boehm published his "True Letter of Warning," August 23, 1742, addressed to the Reformed congregations of Pennsylvania. The coming of Henry Melchior Muehlenberg in 1742, the "Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America," brought order into the chaotic conditions of the scattered Lutherans. With the Lutherans reacting against the movement and Boehm taking the position indicated, these objectionable tendencies gradually faded out, some of the more mystically inclined members being absorbed into the Moravian Church.

## SCHLATTER ORGANIZES THE CHURCH

The coming of the Rev. Michael Schlatter in 1746, authorized by the Reformed Church of Holland, marks a real forward step towards a more orderly growth of the churches and a more effective cooperation. For

some time the North and South Holland Synods had taken a kindly interest in the Pennsylvania churches by way of supervising them, helping them secure ministers from Germany and Switzerland, and aiding with liberal gifts. In Schlatter they had found a capable man and they delegated to him the task of organizing the German Reformed churches.

As soon as he arrived, Sept. 6, he began his missionary journeys, proceeding from Philadelphia the next day, some 16 miles, to visit Boehm, and the following day eight miles further to meet a Mr. Reiff, in order to close the latter's accounts with the Reformed authorities about the money he had collected for them in Europe some sixteen years before. On September 25 we find him in the pulpit of the Tulpehocken church, together with the Revs. Boehm and Weiss. "The people wept at the sight of three Reformed ministers together in the pulpit,—a sight they had not seen since they left the Fatherland." Throughout the fall, Mr. Schlatter was active in organizing that congregation and the one at Germantown. But as soon as spring opened, he started out again, and by the end of April, in response to many letters, he journeyed southward. Regarding one journey he writes, "On May 10, after we had gone 20 miles farther, we took our dinner in Fredericktown, in Virginia. On this road we met a fearful rattlesnake, seven or eight feet long and five inches thick across the back. This is one of the most dangerous kinds but warns the traveler by rattling when he is even 20 steps off, so that he has time to avoid it. On May 15 I preached at Fredericktown, in a new church which is not yet finished, standing behind a table upon which had been placed the holy covenant seals of Baptism and

the Lord's Supper. When I was preparing myself for the first prayer and saw the tears of the spiritually hungry souls roll down their cheeks, my heart was singularly moved and enkindled with love, so that I fell on my knees, in which the whole congregation followed me, and with much love and holy desire I commended the house and the congregation to the Triune God and wrestled for a blessing from the Lord upon them."

Though an informal conference had been held the year before, the first official meeting in which ministers and elders came together to promote the united welfare of all the congregations was the Coetus of September 29, 1747. The term *coetus* originated in Holland, where it was applied to a conference of ministers serving as an advisory body. There were present four ministers and 27 elders representing 12 congregations. Heretofore the congregations had been chiefly concerned about individual self-existence, now they began to live for each other.

After the opening sermon on Psalm 133, "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," the first item of business was the formal reading of Mr. Schlatter's instructions from the Synods of Holland. After these had been approved he read his journal, in which he reported on his travels and the results of his attempts to organize the various charges. The Coetus appointed Mr. Schlatter to correspond with the Synods of Holland regarding the general work of the churches and especially to ask for more ministers. With only a few exceptions, annual meetings were held from 1747-1792, so that the inter-

ests which the congregations had in common could be dealt with effectively.

In 1751 Schlatter was requested by the Coetus to go to Europe to obtain money and ministers for the Pennsylvania congregations. He visited Holland, Germany and Switzerland and aroused a warm interest for the churches. He reported that there were some 30,000 Reformed people in Pennsylvania and 46 congregations, with only six ministers to serve them. So splendid was the response that \$60,000 was collected and invested, the interest being paid to the churches in need. Even the poor Palatinate Reformed Church, though struggling for its very existence under a Catholic ruler, raised \$300 for the fund. But, most important of all, Mr. Schlatter was able to secure six young ministers for America, among them the gifted Philip Wm. Otterbein, who later became the founder of the denomination known today as The United Brethren in Christ. It now seemed as though the German churches were to have a firmer footing, but a well-intended project planned to aid them turned out to their serious injury.

#### THE CHARITY SCHOOLS

Mr. Schlatter's trip to Europe created such an interest, in Holland particularly, that the Rev. Wm. Thompson, pastor of the English Reformed congregation at Amsterdam, went to England and Scotland, and with others, raised \$100,000 to establish charity schools among the Germans here. Through misunderstanding, which led to distrust, the project was soon strongly opposed, especially by Saur, the publisher at Germantown. Some thought the English circular describing

the plan cast serious reflections on the Germans as to illiteracy, poverty and heathenism. Others, since English was to be taught in the schools, saw in the plan a scheme to rob them of the German language. Still others looked upon it as an effort to introduce the Anglican Church among the Germans. The Rev. Mr. Schlatter, by request of the trustees, became the superintendent of these schools.

The plan provided for 25 schools, each to be governed by six to eleven local trustees, composed of Reformed, Lutherans and English. Though the Reformed Coetus was at the beginning favorably disposed to the movement, it reacted against Schlatter when the opposition became strong, and made him unpopular with the Germans. When, in addition, some criticism of him arose in the Coetus, he felt constrained to withdraw, a severe loss for the infant Church that was so greatly in need of his organizing ability.

During the ten years that he was in the Coetus, he labored diligently not fearing dangers nor inconvenience. Bravely he toiled on, traveling on horseback as many as 80 miles a day, preaching one day after another. In all he traveled some 8,000 miles, not counting his travels to Europe and back. Unfortunately, instead of waiting for the storm of criticism to blow over, he withdrew and lived some 33 years at Germantown. For some time he served as chaplain in the British army, in which capacity he was at the siege of Louisburg, Nova Scotia, in 1757. After his return he lived at Chestnut Hill, near Germantown. During the Revolution his home was attacked and plundered by the British, who still looked upon him as a chaplain of their army and were angry with him for his sympathy

with the American cause. He died in 1790, universally respected, and having among his acquaintances many of the leading men of the state.

#### THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

When the American Revolution broke out, the Coetus had spread its territory beyond the Blue Mountains on the north and westward down the Cumberland Valley to Frederick, Hagerstown and Baltimore. Although there were a few Tories among them, the Germans very largely were in sympathy with the Americans against England, some taking a firm stand as outspoken patriots. Rev. Weyberg, of Philadelphia, preached so eloquently to the Hessians in the British army that they were inclined to desert. His church was used by them as a hospital, and after their departure, when it was reopened for worship, he preached on Ps. 79: 1, "O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance—" Less courageous was the position of a Rev. Stahlschmidt who wrote, "I acted with extreme caution, so as not to give offense to the Royalists in my congregation (near York), but where such a party spirit reigns, it is impossible for a minister's political sentiments to remain concealed.—Those who vented their rage against the Congress were dissatisfied with me, especially one Royalist, who went about among the congregation and stirred them against me. The confusion increasing to the highest pitch, I perceived it best to resign my charge."

The effect of the War on the Church was a hard blow. Some of the congregations, as Germantown and Skippack, were overrun by armies. The attention of the people was diverted from sacred things and prac-

tically no ministers were raised up for the Church. Those serving, frequently were not paid, or paid in continental money, which was almost worthless. So one minister writes, "Thousands of dollars were due me on my salary, but as sixty or seventy paper dollars are equivalent to one silver one, I would scarcely be able to procure a new coat for all this money." Nine miles west of Reading is one of the oldest Reformed churches in Pennsylvania, now known as Hain's Church (near Wernersville). When it was built in 1766, over its door the inscription was placed, "All who go in and out must be true to God and the King." After the war the words "and the King" were removed, so that this mutilated inscription remains a silent witness to the patriotism of those people.

After the war was over, the Coetus sent a letter of congratulation to President Washington, assuring him of their prayers, to which he graciously replied as follows:

"I am happy in concurring with you in the sentiments of gratitude and piety towards Almighty God which are expressed with such fervency of devotion in your address, and in believing that I shall always find in you and the German Reformed congregations in the United States a conduct correspondent to such worthy and pious expressions. . . . Be pleased, also to accept my acknowledgments for the interest you so kindly take in the prosperity of my person, family and administration. May your devotions before the throne of grace be prevalent in calling down the blessings of Heaven upon yourselves and your country."

(Signed) George Washington.

#### SEPARATION FROM THE HOLLAND SYNOD

We have noted that Boehm was ordained in New York by authority of the Reformed Church of Holland; that the Holland Synods patiently supervised the churches in Pennsylvania, sent many ministers

and generously contributed towards their support as well as to the support of many schoolmasters for several years. Since the Reformed Church of Germany was too poor and weak as a result of war and persecution, this sister-church very graciously aided the infant Church in Pennsylvania from 1729 to 1793. The final separation was not due to ingratitude to the mother Church but rather to circumstances that had made joint planning increasingly difficult. As a general rule it took about a year for the American churches to get a reply from Holland, and often longer. Since letters were at times lost through shipwreck or through carelessness, the Coetus was asked to send duplicate copies by different vessels.

A second difficulty was the difference of language. It meant frequently the translation from German into Dutch and from Dutch into German, while at times the Latin was used as a language which a few individuals had in common. Possibly the determining factor in the change was the insistence of the Pennsylvania churches on the right to educate and train their own ministers, indicated in the action of the Coetus in 1791, "That the Coetus has the right at all times to examine and ordain those who offer themselves as candidates for the ministry, without asking or waiting for permission to do so from the fathers in Holland." The following year definite plans were made for a constitution, which was adopted in 1793, thus changing the Coetus into a Synod, independent of Holland.

By this time the Church had grown to 178 congregations and 15,000 communicants. During the period of the Coetus, 1747-1792, 64 ministers were members



of this organization. Of these 29 were educated in Pennsylvania and 35, educated in Germany and Switzerland, were sent by the Church of Holland. Besides these, some 50 independent Reformed ministers served for a time. Of Reformed congregations 203 are mentioned: two in New York, ten in New Jersey, 12 in Maryland, 14 in Virginia and over 100 in Pennsylvania. In the sphere of education, we have noted the Charity School experiment, and in a later chapter we shall deal more fully with the establishment of Franklin College at Lancaster in 1787, the oldest school in our denomination, now known as Franklin and Marshall College.

#### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Indicate the indirect influence of the Reformation on the kind of Catholicism that came to America through Spanish and French missionaries.
2. Name four Protestant missionaries to the Indians and indicate the sphere and nature of their labors.
3. Describe the condition of the early German Reformed immigration in Pennsylvania on the basis of the causes that induced them to leave their mother-country.
4. Indicate the approximate date and nature of the labors of John Philip Boehm.
5. Name three outstanding contributions of Michael Schlatter to the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania.
6. For what things was the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania indebted to the Reformed Church of Holland? What caused the final separation?

## CHAPTER IV IN PENNSYLVANIA AND BEYOND

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By the adoption of the Synodical constitution at Lancaster in 1793, the Coetus of the Reformed Churches of Pennsylvania became "The Synod of the Reformed (High) German Church in the United States of America." Having thrown off the yoke of dependence upon the Church across the ocean, the Synod only slowly awoke to a consciousness of its mission as a denomination in this country.

#### FRANKLIN AND MARSHALL COLLEGE

For years the lack of ministers had been keenly felt. Again and again the members of the Coetus had requested their patrons in Holland to establish an academy in Pennsylvania which would prepare its ministers. But "the fathers" would neither aid in the establishing of an American institution of learning nor grant to the American churches the authority to ordain their own pastors. The need was felt so keenly, however, that in 1787 the Coetus determined to unite with the Lutheran Church in an effort to establish an institution for the training of ministers for the German churches in America. The country had recovered somewhat from the Revolution and there was a kindly feeling towards the Germans for their patriotism during the war of independence.

The sympathy and cooperation of eminent men were sought. Benjamin Franklin, after whom the College was named, had for many years been intimately associated with the Germans, publishing many of their books and claiming to be in a special sense their patron

and defender. The charter of Franklin College was granted by the legislature of Pennsylvania on March 10, 1787. It provided for a Board of Trustees to consist of fifteen Lutherans, fifteen Reformed, and the remaining fifteen "to be chosen from any other society of Christians." The school was an immediate but only a temporary success. In 1788 there were 125 students in attendance, of whom about 20 received instruction in the higher branches. With low tuition rates, practically no endowment, buildings in need of repair, the salaries of the professors could not be paid. Almost at the beginning it was found necessary to establish an English as well as a German department. A correspondent of the Lancaster *Unpartheyische Zeitung* of October 5, 1787, says, "The English and German never can work together. The one says Shibboleth, the other Sibbóleth."

When the "Fathers" in Holland addressed some rather sharp inquiries to the Coetus concerning the project, they received the reply (in 1790), "The high-school in Lancaster has already failed (a year ago) because on account of the general hard times the professors failed to receive their salaries." That the college had failed in not fulfilling its original purpose was true, but it was not closed. Its patronage was mainly local and it functioned for some time as an academy rather than as a regular college. When the lands originally granted to the institution by the Legislature gradually increased in value, it became possible to develop a school of higher grade. A significant step in this direction was the union with Marshall College of Mercersburg, approved by the Legislature in 1850 and consummated in 1853. At this

time the Lutheran interest in Franklin College was purchased by the Reformed Church and the institution has since been known as Franklin and Marshall College.

#### FOUNDING OF THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS

As early as 1806 a Sunday school was established in the Reformed church of Philadelphia. Within a few years similar schools were founded in many towns and villages. Though considerable prejudice against them existed for a time because of their supposed antagonism to the catechetical system, they soon gained popular favor. Remembering that Robert Raikes pioneered in the Sunday school movement only at the end of the former century, the early development among our churches is all the more remarkable.

#### THE LANGUAGE QUESTION

It was quite natural, after the English language had been adopted as the official language of the Government, that the ancient German customs which the fathers had loved were but lightly regarded by their children. So it is not surprising that English services were demanded early in the nineteenth century. In the Reformed Church at Philadelphia the language question became intense in 1804, resulting in the withdrawal of the English party, who founded another church. By 1817 another English party had grown up and, in fact, secured the majority, so that the German group withdrew and founded a new congregation.

What was happening here, occurred later all over the Church, especially in the cities and larger towns. In country churches the change was more gradual but it is certain that thousands of members were lost

through a lack of sympathetic cooperation in solving the language question.

Since the distinctive language and customs were so rapidly disappearing, the question of maintaining and developing the German Reformed Church as a separate body became a serious one. Very little of a denominational consciousness had developed as yet. For some years the advisability of union with some other denomination was considered in earnest. Because of its associations with the Reformed Church of Holland and contacts with the Dutch Reformed at New York, the latter was quite naturally thought of. The difference of language weighed heavier, however, than historical relationships. Aside from differences between the German and the Dutch languages, the fact that the "Low Dutch," as they were generally called, had already become English to a great extent, caused the German pastors to fear that organic union would but hasten the transition into the English which many of them so greatly dreaded.

Union with the Lutheran Church for a time seemed more probable. The two groups used the same language and faced practically the same problem of transition into the English. In many cases Lutheran and Reformed congregations worshipped in the same buildings, the so-called Union Church, the pastors alternating from week to week, generally preaching at two or more points in a charge. In 1817 the Lutheran Ministerium invited the Reformed Synod to unite in the common celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Reformation, and in the following year proposed a plan for a joint theological seminary in connection with Franklin College. The Reformed Synod

recommended Dr. Helmuth's *Evangelisches Magazin* (Lutheran). A union hymnbook, entitled "Gemeinschaftliches Gesangbuch," was used quite widely in both churches. In spite of these apparently favorable circumstances the union movement definitely failed in 1824 on the ground that not nearly all the churches would unite, and the result would merely be the addition of another denomination rather than decreasing the number already in existence.

#### TRAINING OUR OWN MINISTERS

The problem of securing pastors for the congregations became increasingly acute. Unable to secure pastors of their own denomination who could preach acceptably in English, congregations invited ministers of other denominations to supply their pulpits. Some few candidates for the ministry received instruction from older ministers. Many congregations became the prey of the sects for which Pennsylvania had become a haven of refuge. Only in 1820, practically a century after Boehm organized the Falkner Swamp congregation, the Synod, convened in Hagerstown, resolved to establish a theological seminary. This long delay undoubtedly was the most serious single cause of the slow, halting development of the Reformed Church during the first hundred years.

Nor did even this resolution bring immediate results. Differences of opinion as to location; the two years of indecision of a professor-elect and the final declining of the call; the personal animosities aroused resulting in the Rev. John Winebrenner establishing a new denomination, The Church of God; and the formation of the Free Synod in 1822 (Synod of Penn-

sylvania and Adjacent States)—these served to delay the actual opening until March 11, 1825, when Prof. Lewis Mayer, in cooperation with Dickinson College, a Presbyterian institution at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, began instructing a class of five students. From this small beginning, moving to York in 1829, to Mercersburg in 1837, and to Lancaster in 1871, the oldest of our theological seminaries has rendered a most significant service to the denomination. It was here that the noted church historian, Dr. Philip Schaff, served the Reformed Church a number of years.

#### IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Though the Home Mission Board was not formally organized until 1826, the Church had gradually pushed westward through Pennsylvania and southward into Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas. To the wild district of western Pennsylvania, Rev. J. W. Weber went as the pioneer missionary in 1782. He is said to have preached in Pittsburgh from 1782-1812. A property was bought in 1788 and the church dedicated in 1834. His labors extended over Somerset, Westmoreland, Fayette, Armstrong, Venango, Butler and Crawford counties, while that country was a wilderness, where people went to church with rifles on their shoulders, and a sentinel was placed at the door for fear of the Indians. Of Rev. Koch, who labored in this section of the state in 1819 and later, we read that he preached in cabins in winter and in the woods in summer. On one occasion he leaped from ice-cake to ice-cake across the Allegheny River to reach his family in winter, two miles from any neighbor. One of his parishioners describes conditions in this brief sentence, "We did

not deem it too far to go twelve miles to church with guns in our hands." Though a number of other pioneer missionaries served in the section in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the work of Rev. Weber evidently became the nucleus of the Church beyond the Alleghenies.

#### THE SOUTH

There had been congregations in Virginia very early, the oldest Reformed congregation having been founded there by Rev. Mr. Haeger in 1714 at Germana Ford, in the Rapidan. During the period of the Coetus, ministers made long tours through the state, preaching and performing ministerial acts. The father of the Virginia churches was Rev. John Brown, who began his labors in 1800. He traveled and preached in six counties and visited other counties as often as he could, once or twice a year. He published in 1818 "A Circular Letter to the Germans of Rockingham, Augusta and Neighboring Counties," which deals with a number of subjects but is of special interest because it is the first published discussion of slavery by any one in the Reformed Church. Other pioneers were equally faithful, though covering less extensive a territory, thus founding the churches largely included in recent times in our Virginia Classis.

The North Carolina churches, like the Virginia churches, were established early. As early as 1759 a Swiss pastor by the name of Martin preached there. The first minister to go south after the Synod was organized was Samuel Weyberg in 1795. He preached to the congregations in Burke, Lincoln, Rowan and Cabarras counties. He partly educated George Boger

(1782-1865) who, as his successor, held the churches in North Carolina together. In 1798 the Rev. Jacob Christman was ordained and at the petition of six congregations, sent to North Carolina, where he served till 1803, when he went west as Weyberg had done.

In 1813 calls came to the Pennsylvania Synod from various parts of North Carolina. As a result Rev. James Ross Reily was appointed missionary at a salary of \$30 a month for traveling expenses, and the money raised by the congregations. A description of one of his adventures throws light on the conditions he faced. Traveling on horseback, as night overtook him, he stayed at a cabin over night. After supper he ascended the ladder in the corner to the rudely furnished room just beneath the roof. About midnight he was awakened by two men entering the cabin who soon crept up the ladder and tried the latch. Finding it locked, they demanded entrance. Reily refused, but told them he was ready. He opened the door and the men saw by the dim light of the moon that he was standing in the middle of the room with a pistol in each hand. They turned, hastened down the ladder and left. Though laboring under hardships, we read that in three months he catechized and confirmed 159 and baptized 113 persons. In 1827 a report to Synod estimated the number of members in North and South Carolina as 1,500-1,600. In 1831 North Carolina Classis was organized, consisting of sixteen congregations and five ministers.

Of special interest is its resolution on slavery as early as 1838—

*"Whereas*, There are yet some churches in our bounds without room for colored people in the sanctuary and without pro-

vision for their reception into the communion of the Church; therefore

*Resolved*, That all such churches be recommended to follow the example of their sister Reformed Churches and the churches of other denominations generally in the South in providing room and pews for the colored people in the house of God and in opening the door for their reception into the communion of the Church whenever their knowledge of the truth and personal piety shall render them fit subjects for Christian communion; and, if slaves, by and with the additional requisition of the consent of their masters."

#### PIONEERING IN OHIO

From 1800 - 1825 congregations were organized throughout Ohio. We have noted above that the Rev. Jacob Christman left North Carolina in 1803. In that same year he began to preach at Springboro, in Warren County, Ohio, between Cincinnati and Dayton. In 1805 Jacob Larose came from North Carolina and began preaching in Montgomery, Preble and Warren Counties, becoming pastor later in Columbiana County. In 1809 Thomas Winters became a "circuit-rider" serving Germantown, Beaver Creek, West Alexandria and others in Green, Montgomery, Preble, Warren, Butler and Hamilton Counties as far south as Cincinnati. At approximately the same time, 1806-1807, the Rev. Peter Mahnenschmidt visited the counties of Stark, Summit, and Tuscarawas, centering in the cities of Canton, Akron, Alliance and New Philadelphia. He writes of preaching in houses, schoolhouses, log-cabins, barns and outdoors, "greatly to the joy of the people."

We remember that this is the period of the "westward migration," that the Pennsylvania Reformed were in many cases moving to Ohio, frequently without religious opportunities for decades on the frontier. So we are not surprised that Mahnenschmidt says, "Wild

and uncultivated as was the country itself, so were also the inhabitants, especially the youth. There were many sinful habits at that time: Sabbath desecration, shameful profanity, drunkenness, dancing and constant fighting. These conditions often caused the silent tear to start as I rode along in meditation." For years he served ten congregations regularly, besides preaching occasionally at other outposts. Through the labors of these men and others of similar devotion throughout the state, it was possible in 1819, when the Pennsylvania Synod was divided into Classes, to organize a Classis of Ohio, consisting of five ministers, 50 congregations and 1,800 communicants.

After 1820 growth was more rapid, the number of ministers doubling in four years, and the number of congregations and the membership increasing in an encouraging manner. As ministers were greatly needed, a number were trained privately. Since the Pennsylvania Synod, 1823, refused to grant to Classes the right of ordaining ministers, in spite of the protest by Ohio Classis that they could not afford to send their candidates across the mountains, on June 14, 1824, at New Philadelphia, Ohio, the Classis of Ohio resolved itself into the Ohio Synod and for nearly 40 years remained independent of the parent body. The two Synods worked together with a considerable degree of harmony but remained administratively separate until the organization of the General Synod in 1863.

Several subjects caused considerable friction in the first half of the nineteenth century: the introduction of the English language into German-speaking congregations; the controversy between those who wanted to unite with the Lutherans and those who insisted on

remaining Reformed; the influence of the Second Awakening that caused some of the ministers to substitute revivals in place of instruction in the Heidelberg Catechism; and the question of temperance, between the extremes of Oberlin teetotalism and German tolerance of alcoholic liquors. The Synod of 1844 took very decided action against intemperance and for teetotalism, discouraging the use of liquor, especially by ministers.

One of the most important efforts of the Ohio Synod was its attempt to found a theological seminary. The first action in this direction was taken by the Synod in 1833, but it was only in 1838 that the Rev. J. G. Buettner was inaugurated as professor at Canton. There he was to teach and at the same time he was to serve two congregations, one at Osna burg and one at Massillon. At first only two students applied, and one of these withdrew very soon. By May, 1839, there were no students. So Prof. Buettner resigned and the attempt at theological education in Ohio lay somewhat dormant until 1844.

After further attempts at Columbus in 1846, a provisional plan to locate a theological seminary at Tarlton near Columbus in 1850, Heidelberg College, with the primary aim of theological education, was established in Tiffin, Ohio, in the fall of 1850, with seven students. So successful was the project now that in the first year, 1850-51, the catalog reported 149 students. For 88 years the College has contributed Christian leadership and ideals to the churches and beyond their circles, while the Theological Seminary trained ministers at Tiffin until 1908, having united with Ursinus School of Theology of Philadelphia, continued its ser-

vice to the Church as Central Seminary in Dayton until 1934, when it merged part of its faculty with Eden Theological Seminary at Webster Groves, Mo., thus making a unique contribution toward the training of ministers for the united Church.

It was in connection with Heidelberg College and Heidelberg Theological Seminary that the monthly *Western Missionary* was founded. In 1848 Dr. Jeremiah H. Good issued the first number as a private enterprise, an organ of the school to serve as a means of communication between pastors and congregations in the Western area. In 1868 the paper was renamed the *Christian World*, and in 1898 it was taken over by the Ohio Synod but served far beyond the bounds of this body until its merger with the *Reformed Church Messenger* and the *Evangelical Herald* in 1936.

#### THE REFORMED AND THE EVANGELICALS IN AND NEAR ST. LOUIS

For members and friends of the new Evangelical and Reformed Church it is interesting to note early contacts between the two groups now composing the united body. As early as 1803, the Rev. Samuel Weyberg is said to have preached the first Protestant sermon heard in Missouri, in Cape Girardeau County, about one hundred miles south of St. Louis. He reported that there were Indian towns within ten miles of his settlement, and no civilized inhabitants within forty miles. In 1823 he began preaching at Anna, Illinois, once each year, traveling on horseback over 500 miles. He died in 1833, having given 30 years of service to Cape Girardeau and surrounding counties, and having gathered at least 200 members, baptized

over 1,000 infants, and performed one hundred wedding ceremonies. No successor could be found at the time and that entire district was lost to the Reformed Church.

We have noted above the labors of Rev. J. G. Buettner in connection with the attempt at theological education in Canton, Ohio. This gifted scholar had previously been appointed a missionary among the Germans by the West Pennsylvania Classis in 1835. In this capacity he travelled to St. Louis by way of Cincinnati and Louisville. While doing missionary work in the neighborhood, he was called to be pastor of the German Evangelical Church, in which position he was frequently engaged in conflict with the rationalists (Freidenker) of St. Louis.\* He remained only a brief time, returning east to the meeting of the West Pennsylvania Classis in 1836 and thereafter continuing as missionary among the Germans in Ohio and points further east. In addition to "A Short History of the Reformation," he published a brief history (in German) of the German Reformed Church in the United States (1848) and his "Travels in America" (1844), a book of unique interest for historians today. In spite of his great ability he found it impossible to accommodate himself to the conditions of American life, returning to Europe in 1840.

Aside from these contacts with the field that later became the center of the Evangelical Synod, it is of unique interest to remember that Dr. F. A. Rauch, who served in the eastern Theological Seminary, then located at Mercersburg, until his death in 1841, sug-

\* This group later became Holy Ghost Church, from which what is now St. Mark's and St. Peter's Church separated.

gested that the Reformed Church should declare its adherence to the Church Union of Prussia, and turn over the western field in this country to the *Kirchenverein des Westens*.

#### ORGANIZATION OF HOME (1826) AND FOREIGN (1838) MISSION BOARDS

In the year 1812 the Synod took its first formal action on the subject of missions when it decided to send several ministers to the "western country" and directed each congregation to receive an offering for the work. Another resolution required "that all licentiates before settling in charges should give two or three months to missionary tours under the direction of Synod, and that all pastors must take up collections to pay the traveling expenses of these men." In 1819 the Synod appointed a Missionary Committee "to examine into the fitness of those who wanted to be missionaries, to direct them where to work, to pay their necessary traveling expenses and to give Synod a summary of their reports." In 1821 the Synod ordered "every pastor not only to take up a collection for Missions, but also to explain to the people the object and the necessity of the offering and the duty of every member to give to it." The need for more definite organization became so imperative by 1826 that the Missionary Committee brought in a recommendation that resulted in "The American Missionary Society of the German Reformed Church." Through the years this Board has fostered home missions, church extension, rural work, evangelism and related enterprises that have done much to extend and develop the Church.

Not many years later, in 1838, the Board of Foreign

Missions was organized. At first the work was done in conjunction with the American Board of Foreign Missions, and the Rev. Benjamin Schneider, who was at first a missionary at Broosa in Asia Minor and afterwards at Aintab, in Syria, was mainly supported by the contributions of the Reformed Church. His wife published a volume entitled "Letters from Broosa," which did much to awaken an interest in the cause. In 1865 the Reformed Church withdrew from the American Board, and for some years little was done, except that some of the churches contributed to the support of the missionaries of the German Evangelical Missionary Society at Bistrampur, India. (See pages 83-84). In 1878 the Board selected Japan as a mission field and has since added China and Iraq.

Through the Board of Missions, as early as 1827, *The Magazine of the German Reformed Church* was published monthly in York, Pennsylvania, where the theological seminary was then located. From 1835-63 it was published at Chambersburg as a weekly, under the name of the *Weekly Messenger*. When Chambersburg was burned by the Confederate Army, the publishing office was removed to Philadelphia. In 1868 it became the *Reformed Church Messenger*, which name it retained until the merger with the *Evangelical Herald* and *Christian World* in 1936.



## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. It has been said that two of the major reasons for the slow growth of the church in Pennsylvania were the lack of ministers and the language problem. Compare the two and indicate which was the more serious.
2. Briefly describe the extension of the church into western Pennsylvania and into the South.
3. In what sections of Ohio were Reformed congregations first organized? About when?
4. Discuss the educational institution at Tiffin as to its beginning and indicate significant changes in recent years.

## CHAPTER V

## THE NEW IMMIGRATION

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As the eighteenth century draws to a close, events in Europe again claim our attention. For 20 years after Napoleon I came into power Europe was in a turmoil, and Germany suffered more than any other country. The desperate struggle for freedom completely exhausted the country, and in the wake of war came disease and hard times, together with a widespread depression which, as usual, hit the laboring and agricultural classes hardest. The people were also disappointed in the political developments when, instead of the more democratic government they had expected after the defeat of Napoleon, the absolute monarchies were strengthened and the rights of the people denied. Burdened with excessive taxation, the masses became restless, and, after vain efforts to secure more freedom by revolution, many were ready to leave the country. The political freedom and material success which citizens of the United States enjoyed, and especially the vast stretches of unoccupied and cheap land, attracted them to this country, and great numbers of German emigrants, especially from southern and western Germany, crossed the Atlantic to found new homes in the New World.

In those days a transatlantic voyage was a matter of a month or six weeks, and many unlooked-for hardships had to be endured. Most of the emigrants had little money, so the ship-owners advanced what was needed, in return for written pledges to pay off their debts with labor after their arrival in the United

States. Upon landing they were then "bound out" for longer or shorter periods to any who needed cheap labor. On the voyage the food was poor, and there was not enough to go around. Weakened by undernourishment, and herded together like animals, which caused unsanitary conditions, many thousands died before they reached the land of their dreams.

Large numbers of those who thus came to our shores had no definite destination in view, and were ready to earn a living at almost any task that might come their way. Most of them came to New York or Baltimore, and from there found their way into the interior, to western New York, northern Ohio, or to places along the Ohio River. Others came via New Orleans, from where many made their way up the Mississippi to St. Louis, spreading out eastward into Illinois, or westward into Missouri. In this way scattered German settlements came into being in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, and in the southern portion of Michigan.

It was a new world in the fullest sense of the word into which these people came. Instead of the orderly civilized life they had left behind, they came into a rough, lawless frontier community, where they could not even understand the language. They were willing to work hard and live frugally, but clearing the primeval forest and tilling the virgin soil, and living in rude log cabins under primitive conditions was a severe hardship which exhausted the body and dulled mind and soul. Illness and accidents were common, but doctors were few, and even these were poorly trained, so that the death rate was high. Without friends or relatives, and unable to return to the homeland, the immigrants were very lonesome; letters usually required

months for transit back and forth, and the 25-50 cents postage could be used for many other more practical purposes. The Indians were unfriendly, and raids were not uncommon. There were almost no roads worthy of the name, and ox-wagons were not built for speed.

Worst of all, there were no churches in which their language was spoken, and thousands did not hear a sermon for years. Children grew up unbaptized and as ignorant of the Christian religion as the heathen in distant lands. No German pastors were available for performing marriage ceremonies, often not even a magistrate, so that family life became loose and immorality was common, while many drifted into other wicked ways. But for the Bibles, prayer-books and hymn-books which so many of these emigrants brought with them, ungodliness, worldliness and unbelief would easily have become universal.

We shall be better able to understand religious developments among these pioneers in the Middle West if we briefly survey what happened in Germany just before and after the third centenary of the Reformation.

#### THE EVANGELICAL UNION

We have seen (p. 24-25) how during the eighteenth century both the Lutheran and Reformed churches suffered from the influence of Rationalism, the Lutherans probably more than the Reformed. Both were least injured, however, where the sentiment for union of the two groups was strongest, because there, automatically, the vital and fundamental evangelical doctrines were most strongly emphasized, so that the stronger spiritual life was better able to withstand destructive influences.

When King Frederick III, of Prussia, began his reign in 1797 he was determined to promote the union of the Lutheran and Reformed groups and, if possible, to bring about its consummation. But the troubled condition of his kingdom during the first 15 years of his rule were most unfavorable to such a project. At the same time, the humiliation which his subjects had suffered under Napoleon had turned the hearts of the people more thoroughly than ever toward Him from whom cometh help. They humbled themselves under God's mighty hand, and he exalted them in due time. When therefore, peace had been restored, after the fall of Napoleon, the King determined to act.

The approaching tercentenary of the Reformation furnished a most fitting occasion, and on Sept. 27, 1817, the famous proclamation was issued which gave formal and legal status to the union of the German Lutheran and Reformed Churches, practical plans for which had already been formulated in a number of provinces. This most interesting document sets forth the historical and doctrinal necessity for union and defines the King's purposes. His idea was not that of the absorption of either Church by the other, nor the formation of a third, but the actual and perfect union of both Churches into one Evangelical Church, in the spirit of the Church's Founder and Head. He disclaimed emphatically the purpose of using coercion to establish the union, which was to be not merely an outward, formal procedure but the result of free and voluntary conviction; a religious, not a theological union.

The details of consummation were fittingly left to the ecclesiastical authorities of each province, to be

settled according to local needs and conditions. No attempt was made to formulate a common creed, nor was it the King's purpose to harmonize or adjust any differences; he wished rather to allow whatever differences of belief there were to continue side by side until a broader view and a deeper insight would demonstrate the comparative insignificance of all differences in view of what both groups had in common. The name of the United Church was to be simply Evangelical, thus stating clearly the content of its preaching and teaching.

A large number of the German churches gladly followed the leadership of Prussia in accepting the union, but a minority of strictly Lutheran congregations and leaders refused to acquiesce. Unfortunately, the government later did attempt to force the introduction of a new book of worship, which immediately rekindled the ancient disputes and hostilities. In Germany itself this extreme Lutheran element could wield but little influence, but many of their pastors and members came to the United States, where their presence and their attitude, and their exaggerated and distorted accounts of what had taken place in the Fatherland served to keep alive the old doctrinal controversies and to create discord among the German congregations.

The union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches in nearly all parts of Germany almost immediately became fruitful in a widespread and enthusiastic missionary activity. The Basel Evangelical Missionary Society became the channel through which the missionary spirit of southern Germany found practical expression. The Berlin Society was organized in 1824, and the Gossner Mission Society (1836) owes its origin to the influence of both the first named societies. The

organization of the Rhenish Mission Society (1828), also known as the Barmen Society, is also directly traceable to the increased spirituality and interest in Christian service which followed the Evangelical Union. The Barmen and Basel Societies, as we shall see later, took a deep practical interest in the religious needs of German emigrants that came to the United States.

#### IN MISSOURI

Large numbers of families coming from western Germany made their way into Missouri, because they had read, in a book published by Gottfried Duden, about the beautiful and fertile land to be found in that state. Duden had visited the United States in 1824, for the purpose of finding a suitable place for a German colony. He described the character of the country as so much like their native land that hundreds of families were induced to come with the purpose of settling there. Upon arrival they found, however, that the best land was already occupied, and they soon discovered that, with all the beautiful scenery, it was no easy task to found new homes and make a living amid the densely wooded hills and valleys.

The state of Missouri was part of the great territory which La Salle had claimed for Louis XIV, of France, in 1682, and called Louisiana in his honor. In 1735 the first white settlement in the present state of Missouri was founded at Ste. Genevieve. In 1764 Pierre Laclède Liguist, and Auguste Chouteau, his stepson, came to the place where St. Louis now stands. Pleased with the high ground at this point, which was also convenient to the mouth of the Missouri, they brought 30 families to the place, thus laying the foundations

for the present city, so named in honor of the sainted French king, Louis IX. The little village soon became the center for the fur trade in the whole vast region from the headwaters of the Missouri and Mississippi to the Great Lakes, and was also the headquarters for the political administration of the Upper Louisiana Territory.

One day, in the autumn of 1831, there came to St. Louis four Indians from the Nez Perce, or Flathead country, in what is now Idaho and eastern Oregon. They had heard of the White man's "Book of Heaven," and their tribe had sent them across the mountains that they might bring it back with them. They were cordially welcomed and entertained by William Clark, governor of the Northwest Territory, and superintendent of Indian affairs, who had visited their country 25 years before, on his great journey of exploration, and the Catholic priests sought to teach them the Christian religion. The Indians were greatly disappointed, however, because they could not discover the Great Book they were seeking. Two of them died in St. Louis, and when in the spring the two survivors left again for their far away homes, the farewell address delivered by one of them voiced the whole pathos of their unfulfilled longing.

When the story of these Indians and their futile errand became known among the Protestant churches in the East, the Methodist Episcopal Church sent Rev. Jason Lee (1803-45) as a missionary to the Indians of the Far Northwest. He and Dr. Marcus Whitman (1802-47), a Presbyterian medical missionary, were the pioneers, not only in Protestant missionary work among the Indians of the Oregon country, but also in

opening the Pacific Northwest for settlement by Americans. When the Basel Mission House learned of the visit of the Nez Perce Indians to St. Louis, they sent two men for missionary work among the Indians of the Oregon country, one of whom, instead, became a leader in the organization of what later became the Evangelical Synod of North America.

Such was the historical and political background of the state and the city to which came hundreds of German families during the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century. Many of them remained in the busy, growing town, while large numbers of others preferred to make their new homes in the adjoining counties of St. Charles, Warren and Franklin. Others turned to the east and settled in Madison, St. Clair and Monroe counties, Illinois. These German pioneers were of two types: some were well educated and possessed of some means; others were peasants and laborers who had to earn the money needed for buying a home or a piece of land. The former were mostly indifferent to or opposed to the Church and religion, which they had always known as being in partnership with the autocratic government that had disappointed their political hopes; the latter were sincerely God-fearing people who were most anxious to have Christian worship for themselves and Christian instruction for their children.

Several years after the first of these "Followers of Duden" had come to Warren county, Missouri, to the neighborhood where Daniel Boone (1735-1822) had made his home during the last 20 years of his life, there appeared among them a young man, Hermann Garlich, who, after completing his studies, had also

come under the spell of Duden's book and had come to the United States in search of land, freedom and opportunity. He soon discovered, however, that clearing a piece of land, ploughing it and harvesting the crop was not what he had expected, and was getting ready to return to Germany, when he was persuaded to serve as pastor for the German community on Femme Osage Creek.

This was in the autumn of 1833, and after receiving his ordination in Germany Garlich returned with his bride, and for nearly 10 years ministered to the Femme Osage church and to the communities in the neighborhood. Not the least of the difficulties with which he had to contend was the active and even bitter opposition of the free-thinking element. Nevertheless, in October, 1841, a rock church building was dedicated, and the congregation had been established on a firm and lasting basis. Four years later failing health made it necessary for Pastor Garlich to return to Germany for a period of rest. While stopping in New York on his way back to Missouri, he accepted a call from a German congregation in Brooklyn. Here he also gave much time to editorial and literary work in the interest of the American Tract Society. He died in June, 1865, at the age of only 58 years.

At about the same time that Garlich came to Missouri, the Basel Mission House, in Switzerland, sent to Michigan, at the request of German emigrants from Wuerttemberg, in southern Germany, the Rev. Frederick Schmidt (1807-83), who arrived in Ann Arbor in August, 1833. He organized the church there and, on foot or on horseback, traveled over the country as far north as Saginaw, and as far south as Monroe. He

also undertook missionary work among the Indians. In spite of difficulties of various kinds he performed his far-reaching ministry faithfully until poor health compelled him to resign, in 1871.

In the years that followed other appeals from German settlements came to the Mission House at Basel; in 1834 Johann Gerber and William Metzger were sent to Chillicothe and Liverpool, Ohio, and in 1835 Johann Jacob Riess (1811-55) was sent to a Swiss colony in St. Clair county, Illinois. For about 10 years, handicapped by poor health, and amid much opposition from free-thinking elements, he ministered to numerous groups in that neighborhood, including Centerville, now Millstadt, and Belleville.

In 1836 two other pastors, Joseph Rieger (1811-69), and George Wendelin Wall (1811-67) were sent to the United States from the Basel Mission House, upon the request of American Christians in Hartford, Conn., who pledged some financial support. They spent several months in that city, learning the English language. In the autumn of that year Rieger took up work in Illinois, in the Alton and Beardstown region, where he had many interesting experiences with unbelievers and drunkards. He was a friend of Elijah P. Lovejoy, the martyred abolitionist, and was the first Evangelical pastor to use the English language. Later he served churches at Burlington, Iowa, and Holstein and Jefferson City, Mo.

Wall at once began organizing a congregation in St. Louis, now Holy Ghost Church. The city was still strongly Roman Catholic, and Sunday was a day of hilarity, "wide open," with a large proportion of the Anglo-Americans determined that "The Sabbath should

never cross the Mississippi." In such an atmosphere the free-thinking Germans felt quite at home and did their best to make life miserable for Wall and to interfere with his work. A new church building was nevertheless erected in 1840, but friction between the pastor and the leading spirits in the church soon compelled him to resign. With some faithful followers, however, he organized the German Evangelical congregation of St. Louis. Since the members were scattered throughout the growing city, it was soon decided to build two houses of worship, one in North St. Louis, the other on the South side. The two groups soon became separate congregations, St. Peter's Church, and St. Marcus Church, respectively. Pastor Wall served both congregations until he found it necessary to seek a smaller field, and became pastor of St. John's Church, Gravois Settlement, now Mehlville.

In 1837 Basel Mission House, having heard of the need for missionaries to the Indians in the Far Northwest, sent two men, Nies and Louis E. Nollau (1810-69) to work among the Flathead (Nez Perce) Indians in the Oregon country. While waiting for a covered wagon caravan to make the journey, Nies died in St. Louis, and Nollau was instructed to work among the German immigrants in St. Louis county. In 1838 he accepted the call of the newly founded St. John's Church at Gravois Settlement. It was during his pastorate here that, in response to his invitation, the Pastors Riess, Garlichs, Wall, Daubert and Heyer, joined Nollau in founding the *Kirchenverein des Westens* (sometimes called the Evangelical Church Association of the West), later to become the Evangelical Synod of North America. The doctrinal statement subscribed

to by those present on Oct. 15, 1840, (later also by Rieger and Gerber, who could not be present) represented the spirit of the Evangelical Union, established in Germany 23 years before, and is as follows:

"The German Evangelical Church Society of the West, as a part of the Evangelical Church, defines the term Evangelical Church as denoting that branch of the Christian Church which acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the Word of God, the sole and infallible guide of faith and life, and accepts the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures as given in the symbolic books of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, the most important being the Augsburg Confession and Luther's and the Heidelberg Catechisms, in so far as they agree. Where they disagree the Evangelical Church Society of the West adheres strictly to the passages of Holy Scripture bearing on the subject, and avails itself of the liberty of conscience prevailing in the Evangelical Church."

In later years Nollau played an important part in the development of the young church body, of which, with the exception of several years spent in missionary work in Africa, he was secretary until his death.

As the opportunities for organizing congregations increased, the need for pastors became more urgent, and plans were laid for the establishment of a theological Seminary, in which the *Kirchenverein* could train its own ministers. In 1850 such a seminary was opened near Marthasville, Mo., a few miles from the Evangelical congregation at Femme Osage, organized by Pastor Garlich in 1833. The first and for a time the only teacher was Prof. William Binner (1805-76), who had come to America in 1845, organized St. Paul's Church, Waterloo, Ill., and became pastor of St. Marcus Church, St. Louis, in 1848. As head of the theological seminary he also acted as editor of *Der Friedensbote*, which was first published in 1850.

#### THE LIPPE-DETMOLDERS AND THE SWISS IN WISCONSIN

Seven years after the *Kirchenverein des Westens* was organized, a colony of Lippe-Detmolders was established in the pine forests near Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Because of the significant developments in and through this group, acquaintance with it is essential to understanding that part of the Reformed Church now known as the Synod of the Northwest, reaching from Wisconsin to the Pacific coast and into Canada.

Quoting from the Wisconsin Historical Collections, Vol. XIV, pp. 365ff. we read, "The Lippers who came to Wisconsin belonged to the Reformed faith. Between 1840 and 1850 a religious awakening occurred in the churches of Lippe-Detmold and the people attended meetings outside of their own parishes. This was contrary to official regulations, and while no conflict occurred, the people chafed under legal limitations. Moreover, the old Heidelberg Catechism was changed for one of a more rationalistic character. These events probably gave a greater impulse to emigration." A mere glimpse of these contrasting viewpoints, but a most significant one, the implications of which are traceable to this very day by those who know the history and present emphases in the Northwest section of the Reformed group, is expressed in a satirical poem concerning this catechism.

"Wir wollen ihn nicht haben  
Den Heidelberger Kohl!  
An ihm mag der sich laben,  
Dem Schimmel schmecket wohl!

"Solang das Licht im Innern,  
Bewusstsein und Verstand,  
Vernunft und Geist erinnern,  
Dass wir mit Gott verwandt.

“Was einst war gute Speise,  
In alt vergangner Zeit,  
Auf langer Erdenreise,  
Verschimmelt ist es heut.

“Von angebornem Boesen  
Der Geist zu uns nicht spricht;  
Zum Hasz geschaffne Wesen,  
Gottlob! das sind wir nicht.”

Out of this background a large group came from Langenholzhausen, near Vlotho, a region bordering on the Weser River. About one hundred families, it is thought, came under the leadership of Frederick Reining and others, separating at Milwaukee, some going to Freeport, Illinois and vicinity, while the rest settled in Sheboygan and Manitowoc Counties. Immediately log houses were erected and pioneer life began in earnest. Apart from family devotions, the first gathering for religious services took place in private houses. Sermons or books of devotion were read, prayers offered, and out of the hymn-books brought over the familiar hymns were sung. Baptists, Methodists and even Mormons sought to win over the group, but since they had been deprived of freedom of worship in their fatherland, they were not ready to compromise now.

In 1848 the Town Herman congregation (Immanuel, also known as the Mission House Church) was formed, and soon after Salem-Ebenezer in Town Newton, Manitowoc County, though their dates of organization are slightly later. In 1849 a Reformed minister from Switzerland, Rev. Casper Pluess, served the Town Herman congregation every fourth Sunday. Four years later Rev. H. A. Muehlmeier arrived in Wisconsin, the first representative of the Reformed Church in the United States whom the two struggling little

congregations had seen. In that same year he was stationed in Sheboygan and there, on July 12th, he organized Zion Church. Another Reformed minister who came early was the Rev. H. A. Winter. He had been at St. Louis among the Lippers who had come via New Orleans but was attracted northward by the more healthful Wisconsin climate. He started gathering a church in Milwaukee in 1853 but left the task unfinished and came to Sheboygan County, organizing Sharon congregation in Town Sheboygan Falls.

The four congregations mentioned were organized in July 1854 into the Sheboygan Classis, thus marking the official beginning of the Reformed denomination in the vast territory lying west of a line drawn north and south through Chicago. Within twelve years this Classis of four congregations and four ministers increased to 44 congregations, 22 ministers and 1,700 communicants. This growth was due to two factors, a devoted missionary spirit, and the founding of the Mission House in 1862.

The early ministers were great missionaries, even though they had no board of missions “either to support or to prod them.” On foot they threaded the forests for 20, 30 and more miles from one settlement to another. Salaries were meager, some even less than \$100, supplemented however with “everything that grows on the farm,” the very words having been inserted in the call at times. In 1859 a special meeting was held to discuss the missionary problem. So many calls had come in that some means had to be adopted to educate men for the ministry and provide at least a limited support for the missionaries. A few years later a committee reported,—“We have mission fields



in Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota. We ourselves must support our missionaries, but this support was all too meager. In Giard, Iowa, our missionary is discouraged. We have discovered promising mission fields in Iowa, but have no men to send to them. In Minnesota our missionary has a thousand obstructions to meet. In this state, too, important fields have been found. Oh, if we only had many faithful messengers! Within the last two months 15 requests for ministers have been received. Twenty-five could be placed immediately, if we had the men and the means."

This lack of ministers was felt keenly from the earliest days of this settlement. A request was sent to the Mercersburg Seminary in the East, begging for a German minister. The answer was, "There is no German minister available, there will be no German minister obtainable; you might just as well unite with some other denomination." Appeals to Germany and Switzerland in addition to those made to Pennsylvania, brought no relief. Necessity compelled the establishment of a school for the preparation of ministers. Privately, several of the ministers had given instruction to a few men but the pressing need led the Classis to take steps that resulted in the Mission House, founded on the German "Missionshaus" plan, particularly for the training of home missionaries. Starting from humble pioneer beginnings, this school has sent out hundreds of men into the home and foreign field and continues to emphasize in its Academy and College those courses that prepare specifically for the Theological Seminary, which still is considered the heart of the institution.

To this center of influence the Reformed Church is largely indebted not merely for some eighty congregations and 4,000 members in Wisconsin but for the most potent single influence in the Northwest Synod, extending to Washington and Oregon and up into Canada, and for serving for some time as the major source of ministers for the former synods known as Central Synod (largely in Ohio), the German Synod of the East (centering at Philadelphia) and the Southwest Synod (centering at Louisville, Kentucky).

Independent of the colony at Sheboygan was a group of Swiss Reformed who arrived in 1845, settled in Green County and founded New Glarus. For a period of years the congregation was affiliated with the Reformed Church of Switzerland; for a generation it was an independent Reformed Church, and since 1919 it has been a member of the Milwaukee Classis. Thousands of Swiss settled in southern Wisconsin, devoting themselves largely to dairying. Today 11 congregations are located within a distance of 40 miles of New Glarus, composed largely of Swiss people and their descendants.

#### IN CHICAGO AND DETROIT

German settlers had come to Chicago as early as 1836, and for several years their spiritual needs were cared for by the Rev. Francis A. Hoffmann (1822-1903), of Dunkel's Grove, now Addison, who later became lawyer, banker, editor, and Lieutenant Governor of Illinois during the Civil War. In 1843 St. Paul's Church was organized, the first German congregation of that city, and after eight difficult years the Rev. Joseph Hartmann (1824-87) was called as pastor. His

eminent gifts as preacher and leader soon brought him into prominence in Chicago and vicinity. Through his influence three other congregations, Zion, Salem and St. Peter's, were organized during the first 20 years of his ministry.

In Detroit the Rev. C. W. F. Haass (1825-1913) became pastor of St. John's Church, the second oldest German congregation in Michigan, in 1852. With the exception of seven years, 1855-62, during which he served congregations in Indiana and Illinois, he was pastor of this church until 1899, and under his leadership it became the largest and most influential German congregation in that part of the country. He was also the founder of the Detroit Home for Orphans and old People, and was the first chairman of the Board for Home Missions of the Evangelical Synod of North America.

Both these men were leaders in the *Vereinigte Synode des Nordwestens*, organized in 1859, which was merged with the Evangelical Synod of the West in 1872, adding 56 pastors and 83 congregations, which were scattered over Illinois and Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota, to the membership of the latter group.

#### QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Describe the union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of Germany into the Evangelical Church of Germany.
2. How was the Indians' request for the White Man's "Book of Heaven" related to our early St. Louis churches and to the Protestant churches in the East?
3. Name four Evangelical pioneers in or near St. Louis and briefly describe the date, place and nature of their labors.
4. When and on what principles was the *Kirchenverein des Westens* organized?
5. Describe the Lippe-Detmold settlement in Wisconsin as to reason for leaving Germany, pioneer conditions and its influence on the church in the West.

CHAPTER VI  
ORGANIZATION AND EXPANSION

A. AMONG EVANGELICALS

The first decade in the life of the *Kirchenverein* brought various difficulties and discouragements. Some of the charter members left the Society, and only a few were able to attend all the annual meetings. In the way of active opposition there were not only the slanderous and sacrilegious activities of freethinkers and atheists, but also the bitter denunciations of Lutherans who stood for a narrow, exclusive interpretation of the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechisms. There was also a strong prejudice against the Society on the part of the congregations served by the Evangelical pastors. The people were so afraid of the bureaucratic church government they had left behind in Germany that, although the founders sought earnestly to avoid an organization consisting entirely of pastors, all their persuasion seemed unable to overcome this fear. Finally, in 1849, St. Paul's Church in St. Louis joined the *Kirchenverein*.

The publication of a catechism and a book of worship had been decided upon at the very first meeting of the *Kirchenverein*, and the publication of a hymnal was also under consideration. *Der Friedensbote*, the official church paper, appeared as a monthly Jan. 1, 1850, and later as a semimonthly.

In 1850 a number of Evangelical pastors in Ohio had organized themselves upon the same principles as the *Kirchenverein*, and in 1857 the two groups united. In 1860, the *Vereinigte Evangelische Synode des Ostens*,

which had been in existence since 1854, joined its forces with those of the *Kirchenverein*. At the close of the Civil War, i. e., 25 years after its organization, the membership of the *Kirchenverein* consisted of 122 pastors and 68 congregations. Of these 33 were in Missouri, 26 in Indiana, 22 in Illinois, 17 in Ohio, 10 in Iowa, seven in Wisconsin, four in Kentucky, two in New York, and one in Minnesota. In May, 1866, the General Conference met in Evansville, Ind., and changed the name of the young church body from *Evangelischer Kirchenverein des Westens* to *Deutsche Evangelische Synode des Westens*. There were at that time three districts: the Eastern, Central, and Northern.

In 1858 a college had been founded in connection with the Seminary, near Marthasville, Mo., so as to enable the young men preparing for the ministry to gain a better general education. At the head of this institution, which was called Missouri College, was Pastor Adolf Baltzer (1817-80) who, after receiving a thorough theological training in Germany came to America in 1845, with Pastor Binner, where he served congregations at what is now Redbud and Du Quoin, Ill. Two years later he was called to St. Louis, where he served St. Mark's Church, and later St. Paul's. In 1850 he accepted a call to Friedens Church, near St. Charles, where he served until he was called to the head of Missouri College. When this institution had to be discontinued, in 1862, Baltzer became professor at the Theological Seminary, where he served until 1866, when he was chosen President of the *Evangelische Synode des Westens*, which position he held until the end of his life. In addition to the duties of his office

he was also publisher and book-seller for the Synod, and later editor of *Der Friedensbote* and *Zum Feiertag*, a monthly magazine for wholesome home and family life. The merger of the *Evangelische Synode des Nordwestens*, and of the *Evangelische Synode des Ostens* with the *Evangelische Synode des Westens*, in 1872, was very largely his work, and it was chiefly due to his genius for administration and organization that the *Kirchenverein* of 1850 could become the *Evangelische Synode von Nord-Amerika* (the name adopted in 1877) of 1880. Although he was not among the founders of the *Kirchenverein* he was in a very real sense the father of the Evangelical Synod.

An institution for the training of parochial school teachers was founded in Cincinnati in 1866, but in 1871 this school became a department of the *Proseminar* in Evansville, Ind., which was preparing young men for the theological seminary. In 1872, however, the Evansville institution was moved to Elmhurst, Illinois, to be combined with the Melancthon Seminary of the former *Evangelische Synode des Nordwestens*. In 1883 the theological seminary was relocated from its original site near Marthasville to the vicinity of St. Louis, on the St. Charles Rock Road.

The *Kirchenverein* was composed of pastors whose work consisted mostly in visiting and preaching to groups of German people wherever they could be found, which was home mission work in the fullest sense of the word. Since these church groups were unable to provide adequately for their pastors, they sought and received financial aid from the American Home Missionary Society (Congregational and Presbyterian). During the period from 1840-60, 21 pastors received

about \$8,000 in this way. At about the same time, traveling missionaries, like the Rev. Theodore Dresel, and others, who labored in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin, were supported by voluntary gifts from the members of the *Kirchenverein*.

The General Conference of 1859 authorized the establishment of a common treasury for home missions, to be administered by the officers of the *Kirchenverein*, to whom the Districts were to apply for aid when that was needed. In 1872 a Board for Home Missions was created. During its first 50 years the *Deutsche Evangelische Synode von Nord-Amerika* was an immigrant Church in which the racial home missions motive naturally predominated. It was home missions work of this type that established the Evangelical Synod on American soil.

Many, if not most of the Evangelical pioneers had been trained as foreign missionaries in Basel or Bar-men, but had been sent to America as home missionaries. While their work was distinctly that of home missions, they also maintained their original interest in the foreign fields of their German missionary societies, to which they sent all contributions from their congregations. In 1849 the first union mission festival was observed by the three congregations in St. Louis, where it was reported that the missionary offerings from these churches during the year had amounted to nearly \$400.

In 1865 there was organized in New York the *Deutsche Evangelische Missions-Gesellschaft*, consisting of representatives of the German and Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, Lutheran and Moravian churches. The organ of this Society, *Deutscher Missionsfreund*.

was widely circulated among Evangelical pastors and congregations. In 1867 Oscar Lohr and Jacob Hauser were sent to India, where Lohr had labored previous to the Sepoy uprising (1857), from which he had escaped to America. At the commissioning service in New York, Dr. Philip Schaff, noted theologian and church historian of the Reformed Church, delivered the principal address. Hauser returned to America some years later, as did also three other missionaries who had been sent out. For some time Julius Lohr assisted his father, but it was not until 1879 that Rev. A. Stoll, a Basel missionary, came to India to join Lohr in his work.

In the meantime there had been considerable agitation pro and con among the members of the *Evangelische Synode des Westens* as to whether or not the time was ripe for assuming the support of a mission field as a denominational task. The issue came to a head at the General Conference in St. Louis, 1883, when the *Deutsche Evangelische Missions-Gesellschaft*, unable to bear any longer the financial burdens entailed by the field in India, offered that work as a gift to the Evangelical Synod. Convinced that this was a providential call, the General Conference accepted the offer, with only one dissenting vote, out of a total of 88. The negotiations for the transfer were completed in the following year, and since May, 1884 a Board of Foreign Missions has been in charge of the foreign mission field in the Central Provinces of India.

#### B. THE REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Reformed Church expanded rapidly both by a mi-

gration from the East and a considerable immigration from Germany. This growth can be seen most vividly by listing the Synods and indicating the place and date of their organization.

The Synod of the Reformed (High) German Church in the U. S. A., May 7, 1792<sup>2</sup> at Philadelphia.

The (High) German Evangelical Reformed Synod of Ohio, 1824, New Philadelphia, Ohio.

(The General Synod of the Reformed Church in the U. S., 1863, Pittsburgh, Pa.)

The German Synod of the Northwest of the Reformed Church in the U. S., 1867, Ft. Wayne.

The Pittsburgh Synod of the Reformed Church in the U. S., 1870, Pittsburgh.

The Synod of the Potomac of the Reformed Church in the U. S., 1873, Frederick, Md.

The German Synod of the East of the Reformed Church in the U. S., 1875, Philadelphia.

The Central Synod of the Reformed Church in the U. S., 1881, Galion, Ohio.

The Synod of the Interior of the Reformed Church in the U. S., 1887, Kansas City, Mo.

The Synod of the Southwest, 1914, Louisville, Kentucky.

The Midwest Synod (a union of Interior and Southwest Synods) Freeport, 1921.

The Ohio Synod (a union of Ohio and Central Synods above) Canton, 1923.

The Eastern Synod (a union of Eastern and the German Synod of the East), 1932.

GERMAN IMMIGRATION RESULTS IN NEW GERMAN  
SYNODS

At the time of the second strong immigration of Germans, from 1840 to 1870, the Reformed Church in the East and most of the congregations in Ohio had become prevailingly English. There were a number of German Classes but they belonged to English Synods and in many cases German congregations were members of English Classes. Since quite a number of German ministers and elders were more at home in their language than in the English, they could not take an active part in the deliberations of Synods and Classes. Then too, their traditions, customs and sentiments differed from those of the brethren, who were of the second and third generation American stock.

When thousands of Germans settled in Ohio, Indiana, the Northwest and some in the East, the idea of a closer organized cooperation among those of similar spirit and tradition became strong. These conditions explain the origin of our German Synods and the fact that they, in part, covered the same territory as the English-speaking Synods. So the German Synod of the Northwest was organized in 1867 in Ft. Wayne, including not only the Northwest as we think of its boundaries now, but several Classes that later joined other Synods. In fact, of the present constituency, Sheboygan Classis only was a charter member. This Classis, with Erie, Heidelberg, Indiana and St. Joseph Classes, constituted 83 ministers, 162 congregations and 8,660 communicant members.

For similar reasons the German Synod of the East was organized at Philadelphia in 1875, enabling the German congregations of Philadelphia, New York, and

other city and rural charges of the East to labor together more congenially. So also the Central Synod, centering in Ohio, was organized at Galion in 1881, and the Synod of the Southwest with congregations in southern Indiana, Louisville, Ky., and others much farther west. As can be seen from the list above, in 1923 the Central Synod and the Ohio Synod became the present Ohio Synod; in 1921 the Southwest and the Interior Synods became the Midwest Synod; and in 1932 the Eastern Synod and the German Synod of the East merged into the present Eastern Synod. These separate organizations were not ecclesiastical secessions but merely a division of labor enabling the various groups to do their work more effectively.

For a time the German-speaking synods maintained separate home mission and church building fund organizations, separate church publications, and ministerial relief funds. Up to the present that constituency is chiefly responsible for the Mission House near Sheboygan, Wisconsin, the Orphans' Home at Ft. Wayne, Central Publishing House at Cleveland, O., and the Old People's Home at Upper Sandusky, Ohio. It was out of their midst that the Winnebago Indian Mission at Black River Falls, Wis. (1878) and the Indian school at Neillsville (1917) arose. At the same time they have taken their proportionate part in the work of the boards and agencies of the denomination.

The *Kirchenzeitung*, edited today by the Rev. Dr. Carl F. Heyl at Cleveland, has been a most valuable means of promoting a spirit of cooperation and unity in the formerly German, now German-English synods and beyond. It appeared as early as 1827. In 1875 *Der Evangelist* was united with it. Since the volumes

from 1852 to the present have been preserved, they are of inestimable value for the historian. Since 1875 it has been published by the Central Publishing House, founded in 1859 by Dr. H. J. Ruetenik to provide religious literature for the rapidly developing synods.

#### EXPANSION WESTWARD AND SOUTHWARD

Fully five-sevenths of the territory of the United States lies west of the Mississippi River. The real central West is not a line that follows the "Father of Waters" but a line some 40 miles west of the city of Omaha, Nebraska. Still, in history, and even today the West is a relative term. Our forefathers, when they crossed the Alleghenies and into Ohio, and all the more when they came into Indiana and Illinois, truly went West in the real sense of the term. Of the general movement Clark writes in "The Leavening of the Nation," p. 49, "Certainly it means very much in the light of events, that the northern section of the Northwest Territory, including southern Michigan and Wisconsin, northern Indiana and Illinois and northern and eastern Ohio were preempted by a class of men and women inured to hardships, enlightened by the best traditions of New England and New York, imbued with patriotism, and believers in the future of the American nation."

This westward migration within the Reformed group is most vividly described by the Rev. Peter Herbruck, pastor of the First Reformed Church, Canton, O., 1832-1886,—“In the year 1840, I received an invitation to visit Miami County, Indiana. A number of families lived there who had formerly 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 my Canton congregation. We went on foot to Massillon. From there we rode by canal boat to Cleveland, and then across the lake to Toledo. . . . By noon we were in Defiance, and from there we traveled on the canal to Ft. Wayne, Indiana. The next day we traveled by canal to Huntington, at that time a village of about 18 houses. I looked up some of my former parishioners living in the neighborhood. In the second home 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 schoolhouse before a reverent congregation." In this part of Indiana our Church is now represented by strong congregations at Ft. Wayne, Huntington, Vera Cruz, Bluffton, Berne, Magley and Decatur.

Out of similar circumstances arose church after church in western Pennsylvania, forming in 1870 the Pittsburg Synod; through the migration southward, the Synod of the Potomac was formed in 1873; and in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and neighboring states the Synod of the Interior was organized in 1887. With this expansion went the establishing of educational institutions. Aside from those already mentioned, those that have continued to the present are: Catawba College, Salisbury, N. C., 1851; Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania, 1865; Cedar Crest College at Allentown, 1868; Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa., 1869; Hood College, Frederick, Maryland, 1893; Massanutten Academy, Virginia, 1899.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

For some years before 1863, the joining of Eastern and Ohio Synods to form a General Synod had been discussed. Real impetus was given to this union feeling by the Tercentenary celebration commemorating the writing of the Heidelberg Catechism, in 1863. In 1862 two-thirds of the Classes of the two synods voted favorably and the General Synod was formed at Pittsburgh, Nov. 18, 1863. After adopting an order of business, committees were appointed on Religious Exercises, Minutes of Synods, Overtures, Correspondence, State of the Church, Missions and Finance. It appointed a Board of Orphans' Homes, a Board of Domestic Missions and a Board of Foreign Missions. Of these we shall hear more in a later chapter. The General Synod also recommended that the word "German" be dropped, effective 1869, thus resulting in the new name "The Reformed Church in the U. S."

### THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Though the first organization of our Woman's Missionary Society took place on February 20, 1877, and was founded in the First Reformed Church of Xenia, Ohio, as early as 1826, when home missions work was organized on September 28, under it and auxiliary to it a Female Missionary Society was created in October. There was also a Female Missionary Society of Germantown, Pa. which is credited with a contribution of \$50 in 1827. "The moans of degraded womanhood, the wails of suffering childhood" were not left unanswered. Throughout the years indicated above the women did their part or more through the regular channels of the Church, some Ladies' Aid societies making occasional

contributions for missionary work in addition. But women's missionary societies as such, whose exclusive aim was to promote the cause of missions, not only in raising money, but in educating and training the women and children along the lines of missionary activity arose only in 1877. The number increased slowly at first but by 1883 we read of the first Classical Woman's Missionary Society, and in 1887 of the organization of the Ohio Synodical Society, and of the Woman's Missionary Society of General Synod. Through Women's Societies, Girls' Guilds and Mission Bands, this work now extends to all our foreign fields, Japan, China, India, Iraq and Honduras and to the Winnebago Indian Mission, the support of deaconesses among our Hungarians, to the Ozarks, and many other special projects. The efficiency and zeal of our women set a high standard for the other agencies of our Church.

### OUR HUNGARIAN BRETHREN, 1890

The Hungarians comprise the largest body adhering to the Reformed faith on the continent of Europe. Though individual pioneers had come as early as the American Revolution, the main immigration came in the late eighties of the past century and after. In 1890 the Reformed Church in the United States brought the first Hungarian minister to America from Europe and aided in establishing the Hungarian Church in Cleveland. A second Hungarian church was established in 1891 in Pittsburgh. Ten years later the Presbyterian Church took an interest in these people and for five years missions were developed in various industrial centers where Hungarians had settled in little colonies. For a time a very close relationship ex-



isted between these churches and the authorities in Hungary, but when the World War broke out, Hungary was unable to continue the support needed to maintain the work that had been begun. Through these circumstances some 80 congregations came to be connected with the Reformed Church. They have heretofore constituted four Classes associated with the Eastern, Pittsburgh, Ohio and Midwest Synods. The young people are rapidly adopting the language and customs of our country, so that the Sunday schools and young people's groups are using the English language, but the native tongue is still being used in the main services of worship. For this reason provision is made for a Hungarian Synod in the realignment.

#### OUR JAPANESE BRETHERN

In our Japanese missions in California the Far East meets the West. By the year 1910 some 500 Japanese who had been baptized by our missionaries in Japan had come to live in California. To provide for their spiritual interest the Rev. J. Mori opened the first Reformed mission for the Japanese in America in San Francisco on Oct. 30, 1910. As a graduate of Heidelberg College and of Central Theological Seminary, then in Dayton, Ohio, he was well qualified to serve this First Japanese Reformed Church in the United States. Through his zeal for his people, as missionary at large, Mr. Mori has established missions in Los Angeles, Sawtelle, Redwood City and other points. Because of the various needs in their new home, a varied program of evangelistic, educational, social and industrial work is provided.

## CHAPTER VII THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA

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The years following the Civil War brought many important developments for the Middle West which influenced very strongly the social, economic and religious life of the churches. Outstanding among the factors that made for the rapid development of this section of the country was the coming of the railroad, which soon began to displace the steamboat as a means of transportation and opened up the vast stretches of country that could not be reached by navigation. The establishment of new communities was followed by the organization of multitudes of new congregations and the rapid expansion of denominations and their missionary and educational institutions.

In 1866 the Evangelical churches farthest west were those at Council Bluffs, Iowa, St. Joseph and Kansas City, Mo., while the one farthest north was located at Town Rhine, Wis. The General Conference of that year, however, upon the earnest recommendation of President Baltzer, recognized the urgent need of Home Mission work in the West and Northwest, and during the years that followed he persisted in urging greater interest and more liberal support. The General Conference of 1872 designated one-half of the earnings of *Der Friedensbote* for the support of Home Mission work, and at the District conferences of the following year each District elected a committee for the promotion of this cause within its own area. By 1880 more than \$10,000, a very large sum for that day, had thus become available for this purpose, and missionaries

had been sent into southern Missouri, and into Kansas and Nebraska, while the work in the central and eastern states could also advance. In 1877 the Synod could send its first representative to New Orleans, La., and the General Conference of 1880 authorized the beginning of work in Texas, California and Oregon. In 1881 Rev. F. Werning came to Waco, Texas, as a traveling missionary and organized Zion Church in that city in the autumn of that year. The work in this vast field grew so rapidly that seven years later the Texas District could be organized with 11 pastors and 15 congregations.

In the interest of more effective work, and in order to make the annual conferences more easily accessible, the General Conference of 1874 divided the Synod into seven Districts, designated by numbers, an arrangement which prevailed until 1886, when the present division and nomenclature was authorized.

In 1883 and 1885 the congregations at New Salem and Hebron, N. D., respectively, were established by means of colonization. Work in California was begun at Los Angeles, in 1884, and ten years later the Pacific District was organized. Salem Church in Denver was organized the same year, and in 1902 the Colorado District came into being. St. Paul's Church, Seattle, was established in 1903, and six years later the Washington Mission District, covering the states of Washington, Oregon and western Idaho, was organized.

#### EDEN PUBLISHING HOUSE AND THE CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

After the death of President Baltzer, in 1880, Rev. Reinhard Wobus, of St. Charles, Mo., was appointed manager of the Synod's book and publishing department. In 1890 this department became a separate institution, housed in a rented salesroom, on Franklin Ave., in St. Louis. In 1895 the business was incorporated, and the following year the first building of what is now Eden Publishing House was erected. The first English publication was the *Evangelical Catechism*, in 1896; three years later *The Evangelical Companion* (for children) made its appearance, and in the same year the Hymnal for the Evangelical Church was published. *The Messenger of Peace*, the English church paper, appeared in 1902, as an eight-page monthly; four years later it was made a semi-monthly, and since 1914 it has been published weekly.

The Immigrant Mission at Baltimore was founded in 1886, and about two years later the German Reformed Synod of the East founded the Harbor Mission at New York to assist immigrants and advise them as to the future. Both institutions have been valuable aids in keeping the immigrants in touch with their Church and in ministering to the needs of the seamen. The Church Extension Fund, established by the General Conference of 1889, for the purpose of loaning money for building purposes to small congregations at a low rate of interest, has also rendered important assistance in establishing congregations at strategic places.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

From the very beginning Evangelical congregations have insisted on thorough Christian education for children and young people, preparatory to confirmation. At first the ministers themselves assumed entire responsibility for such instruction, but as congregations demanded more and more of their time it became necessary to establish parochial schools, supplemented by catechetical instruction of confirmands on the part of the pastors. Teachers for this purpose were trained at Elmhurst College and established an organization which flourished for many years. However, the competition of the tax-supported public school, with its thoroughly trained teachers and improved equipment, soon caused the parochial schools to decline, until by 1900 comparatively few of them were able to employ teachers. The increasing use of the English language by the younger generation also operated against the continuance of this method of religious education. Many parochial school teachers prepared to enter the ministry, and the Sunday school came to be more generally recognized as an educational possibility. At the General Conference of 1895 a Sunday school Board of three members was elected.

It was through the Sunday school that Evangelical pastors and young people first became familiar with other denominations. As they studied the literature and attended the local, state and international conventions they became interested in the development of the movement. In this field the Rev. Wm. N. Dresel (1874-1934), Evansville, Ind., was conspicuous as a leader. For many years he was a member of the Executive Committee of the International Sunday

School Association, and was also a leader in Young People's work.

## INSTITUTIONS OF CHARITY

That the congregations of both the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America were not unaware of the need for action in regard to the poverty and suffering round about them appears from the large number of institutions of charity established during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In addition to the Good Samaritan Hospital (now the Good Samaritan Home for Old People), and the German Protestant Orphans' Home established at St. Louis in 1857 and 1858, respectively, there were founded the Bethany Orphans' Home, Womelsdorf, Pa., in 1863; the St. Paul's Orphans' Home, Greenville, Pa., in 1867; and in the same year, the Uhlich Orphans' Home in Chicago; the Evangelical Church Home at Forks, N. Y., in 1877; the German Protestant Home for Orphans and Old People at Detroit, in 1879; the Fort Wayne Orphans' Home, in 1883; Fairview Hospital, Cleveland, O., in 1892; in 1894 the Evangelical Orphans' Home at Hoyleton, Ill., and the German Evangelical Orphanage and Old People's Home, at Bensenville, Ill., the Emmaus Home for Epileptics and Feebleminded, near Marthasville, Mo., in 1892, and its sister institution at St. Charles, Mo., in 1901; the Nazareth Orphans' Home, at Rockwell, N. C., in 1903, and in the same year the Phoebe Old Folks Home, Allentown, Pa. In 1889 the Evangelical Deaconess Home and Hospital at St. Louis was founded, and during the 25 years that followed similar institutions have been established at Evansville, Ind., Faribault, Minn., Chi-

cago and Lincoln, Ill., Milwaukee, Wis., Marshalltown, Iowa, Cleveland, O., and Detroit, Mich.

Since 1857 various independent efforts to provide for the widows of deceased Evangelical pastors have been made. In 1874 a fund was created for the support of invalid pastors, and for the support of the widows and orphans of pastors and parochial school teachers in 1883. In 1910 all provisions for pensions and relief were brought together under the present pension and relief fund.

Many Evangelical congregations organized societies of young people, and of women, and sickness and death benefit groups for men. The first of these to be organized on a national scale was the *Jugendbund*, or Young People's Federation, which came into being in 1902; the first regular convention was held at Washington, Mo., two years later. This organization has proved itself a valuable factor in developing leadership in our congregations and in the Church at large. The church building at Raipur, in India, and the Memorial Library at Elmhurst College, are gifts of the Evangelical League, as the *Jugendbund* later came to be known.

#### THE FEDERAL COUNCIL

Dr. Philipp Schaff (1819-93), biblical scholar and church historian of international reputation, was one of the founders of the Evangelical Alliance (1846), organized in London for the purpose of promoting Christian intercourse between the different orthodox Protestant denominations, and more effective cooperation in Christian work. At the request of the British Bible Revision Committee, Dr. Schaff also organized the American Bible Revision Committee, in 1871, and

was its president until his death. As early as 1891, the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip, founded by the Rev. Rufus W. Miller (1862-1925), first secretary of the Board of Sunday Schools, of the Reformed Church in the United States, proposed a "Federal Council," whose members were to be appointed officially by the highest judicatories of their representatives on the executive councils of denominational brotherhoods. At the meetings in New York, in 1905, and three years later at Philadelphia, which led to the organization of the 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 from the very beginning the delegates of both groups have taken part in the deliberations and activities of the Federal Council.

The organization of the Federal Council is a landmark in the history of American Protestantism. It has been a strong influence toward uniting the member denominations in such a way that they may be able to speak with one voice on matters of general moral, social and religious concern.

In no field has its influence been more strongly felt than in the realm of social justice and righteousness. Inspired by the influence of Josiah Strong (1847-1916), Washington Gladden (1836-1918), Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918), and others, the Federal Council immediately formulated "The Social Ideals of the Churches," which in turn inspired the program of social reforms advocated by the Men and Religion Forward Movement a few years afterwards. On the basis of a paper read at the General Conference of the Evangelical Synod at Louisville, Ky., in 1913, the

Social Ideals of the Churches were adopted by that body, and a Commission on the Common Welfare was created.

Because "The Social Ideals of the Churches" very clearly and ably state the social problems which confront the churches, and because of the large influence which it has exercised upon the social thinking of all Protestant bodies, it deserves a place in this history, and is therefore reprinted in its entirety, as revised in 1932.

In 1910 the George and Agnes Hoffman Orphanage was established at Littlestown, Pa. In 1913 an Evangelical Social Center was founded in St. Louis, now known as the Caroline Mission, with the aim of engaging in "systematic evangelization, the practice of Christian charity, and the support of reform movements, for the special benefit of children and adults who are not under the influence of the church, namely, the sick, the poor, the homeless, the unemployed, the indifferent, the neglected, the fallen, prisoners, etc." In 1917 the General Synod of the Reformed Church appointed a Commission on Social Service, which worked out and circulated throughout the denomination a pronouncement dealing with individual and social salvation, and with the duty of the Church as regards social service.

The passing of nearly 40 years had brought great changes in the locality to which the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Synod had been removed in 1883. By 1920 the institution was surrounded by large industrial establishments, and the buildings were antiquated and unable to accommodate the growing number of students and instructors. The General Confer-

THE SOCIAL IDEALS OF THE CHURCHES,

as formulated by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, in December, 1932.

1. Practical application of the Christian principle of social well-being to the acquisition and use of wealth, subordination of speculation and the profit motive to the creative and cooperative spirit.
2. Social planning and control of the credit, and monetary systems and the economic processes for the common good.
3. The right of all to the opportunity for self-maintenance; a wider and fairer distribution of wealth; a living wage, as a minimum and above this a just share for the worker in the product of industry and agriculture.
4. Safeguarding of all workers, urban and rural, against harmful conditions of labor and occupational injury and disease.
5. Social insurance against sickness, accident, want in old age and unemployment.
6. Reduction of hours of labor as the general productivity of industry increases; release from employment at least one day in seven, with a shorter working week in prospect.
7. Such special regulation of the conditions of work of women as shall safeguard their welfare and that of the family and the community.
8. The right of employees and employers alike to organize for collective bargaining and social action; protection of both in the exercise of this right; the obligation of both to work for the public good; encouragement of cooperative and other organizations among farmers and other groups.
9. Abolition of child labor; adequate provision for the protection of education, spiritual nurture and wholesome recreation of every child.
10. Protection of the family by the single standard of purity; educational preparation for marriage, home-making and parenthood.
11. Economic justice for the farmer in legislation, financing, transportation and the price of farm products as compared with the cost of machinery and other commodities which he must buy.
12. Extension of the primary cultural opportunities and social service now enjoyed by urban populations to the farm family.
13. Protection of the individual and society from the social, economic and moral waste of any traffic in intoxicants and habit-forming drugs.
14. Application of the Christian principle of redemption to the treatment of offenders, reform of penal and correctional methods and institutions, and of criminal court procedure.
15. Justice, opportunity and equal rights for all, mutual goodwill and cooperation among racial, economic and religious groups.
16. Repudiation of war, drastic reduction of armaments, participation in international agencies for the peaceable settlement of all controversies; the building of a cooperative world order.
17. Recognition and maintenance of the rights and responsibilities of free speech, free assembly, and a free press; the encouragement of free communication of mind with mind as essential to the discovery of truth.

ence of 1921 therefore instructed the Board of Directors to relocate the Seminary. A tract of 20 acres was purchased in Webster Groves, and on Oct. 11, 1925, the new and beautiful buildings could be dedicated, in the presence of the General Conference in session at St. Louis at that time.

During the 20 years after 1913 no less than eight institutions of charity were founded in different sections of the country as agencies of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States, all of them Homes for aged persons: in 1918, the Home for the Aged, Upper Sandusky, O.; in 1924, the Evangelical St. Paul's Home, St. Paul, Minn.; in 1926, St. Paul's Evangelical Old Folks' Home, Belleville, Ill.; in 1927, the Evangelical Home for the Aged, Dorseyville, Pa., and St. Paul's Old Folks' Home, Greenville, Pa.; in 1928, the Reformed Church Home for the Aged, Wyncote, Pa.; in 1930, the Homewood Old Folks' Home, Hagerstown, Md., and in 1933, the Evangelical Home (Sloss Memorial), San Rafael, Calif.

#### SOCIAL PROBLEMS ARE STUDIED

The growing interest in the study of social problems among the members of the Evangelical Synod led to the establishment of a Commission on Christianity and Social Problems by the General Conference of 1921, for the fourfold purpose of a) gathering complete, accurate and unprejudiced information concerning economic conditions, in this country and in other lands, and concerning all events or movements which involve moral principles or have a bearing on the welfare of the people; b) to study this information in the light of the teachings of Christ, and with a

view to discovering what needs to be done to relieve or remove social wrongs and to Christianize the present social order; c) to keep in touch with the respective departments of the Federal Council and similar groups in other denominations, as well as with any other Christian groups or agencies which aim at improving or promoting the welfare of the people, and d) to keep the people in the congregations informed concerning the above and kindred subjects through timely popular articles and discussions in the church papers, and in other ways.

The Commission formulated a "Declaration on War" which was adopted by the General Conference of 1925, at St. Louis, and which reads as follows:

"We declare our conviction that international warfare and the Gospel of love and brotherhood which we profess are incompatible. The methods used and the passions aroused by war both outrage Christ's conception of a Kingdom of God in which men should trust, love and forgive one another. We therefore pledge ourselves to support every movement which looks toward an organization of the nations for the elimination and outlawry of war; and to use every means to create the spirit of international good will among our people. We furthermore declare that we will not, as a Christian Church, ever bless or sanction war. We make this declaration of abstention as a Christian communion and do not intend it to bind individuals unless and until they accept it personally. We do mean to commit our Church to the fundamental proposition that to support war is to deny the Gospel we profess to believe."

Upon recommendation of its Commission on International Friendship the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, in 1929, approved a pronouncement concerning war and peace:

"a) We believe resort to the war system for the settlement of international disputes is contrary to the spirit of the Prince of Peace, and we will hereafter refuse to sanction it for this purpose; b) we heartily endorse the Peace Pact of Paris, and rejoice in its ratification by the Senate of the United States; c) we favor membership of the United States in the Permanent Court of International Justice and in the League of Nations, with such reservations, if deemed necessary, as may be mutually acceptable to the United States and the members of the League; d) we approve the reduction of armaments by all nations; e) we encourage systematic education for peace in our church schools, and from the pulpit, for the purpose of creating friendly interest in others, appreciation of their ability and contributions, respect for the rights of property, the opinions of others,—*Christian patriotism.*"

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND MISSIONS

Since the beginning of the century the Reformed Church in the United States, through the work of its four Boards, expanded in a variety of ways. The Sunday School Board began the systematic gathering of Sunday school statistics, organized the general work throughout the synods and classes, and aided in the establishments of Home Departments, Cradle Rolls, Teacher training classes, and other new methods of work. The use of Sunday school lesson helps and papers increased rapidly. As early as 1908 this Board erected the Reformed Church Building in Philadelphia, at a cost of \$150,000. Two years later additional ground adjoining this building was purchased, on which was erected in 1923 the Schaff Building, a 13-story office building, for the purpose of housing denominational and interdenominational agencies, as well as civic, philanthropic and commercial enterprises. Its name commemorates the noted church historian and theologian, Philip Schaff. Summer schools of leadership training have become a very successful part of the Board's work.

The Board of Foreign Missions, in addition to its fields in Japan and China, began work in Iraq, jointly with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and the Reformed Church in America. Expansion in the field of evangelistic, medical and educational work was continuous until the depression made retrenchment imperative.

The Board of Ministerial Relief, in addition to providing for the most urgent needs of aged and infirm ministers and ministers' widows, in the years between 1920 and 1930 raised an endowment fund towards

assuring a modest pension for the aged servants of the Church.

In 1914 the Board of Home Missions organized its work into departments, with a view to developing its many-sided activities in the most effective manner. For a time the following types were functioning: departments of the East, Central West, Northwest, Pacific Coast, Church Building, Missionary Education, Evangelism, Country Life, Immigrant Work, and Social Service. With the decrease of benevolent giving since 1930 it became necessary to curtail the work in many ways.

In the Evangelical Synod, the Board of Home Missions created in 1898 began a more thorough organization of home mission work. Functioning locally through committees in the Districts, surveys of prospective fields were made, followed by recommendations to the Board; these committees also transmitted support moneys from the Board to the workers, and supervised the work within their boundaries. In outlying territories, where the number of self-supporting churches was too small to organize an autonomous district, mission districts were organized, for which the Board appointed the presidents. Special home mission projects were undertaken at Biloxi, Miss., among the exploited fisherfolk; at Madeline Island, Wis., among isolated farmers and fishermen, and not a few summer resorters, and in the Missouri Ozarks, where whole counties were left without adequate spiritual care, as civilization moved westward to more fertile lands and populous cities.

## INDIA AND HONDURAS

In 1900 there were four stations on the Evangelical Synod's mission field in India, served by a total of 107 workers, American and native, men and women. Since then there have been sent into this field 25 American missionaries (not counting those who were called to their reward, or were obliged to end their service for other reasons). At the present time the work on the India field is carried on at eight stations, by a staff of 357 workers, American and native, men and women. In July, 1917, the Board was urged to begin Protestant missionary work in Honduras, Central America. The first missionaries were sent early in 1921, and the General Conference of 1921 approved the establishment of a new mission field in that country and authorized the Board to proceed with the work. At the present time there are three stations in Honduras, with a total of 30 workers, American and native, men and women.

Special efforts to train teachers and officers for Evangelical Sunday schools date back to 1909, when the first training course was issued. In the summer of 1915 the first Leadership Training School was opened at Elmhurst College, and during the 20 years that followed seven similar schools were opened in New York, Minnesota, Kansas, California, Texas, Oregon and Mississippi. The Sunday school papers and lesson helps were also improved in many ways.

The Evangelical Brotherhood was organized at the General Conference of 1913, at Louisville, Ky., for the purpose of uniting all men in the congregations for more effective work on behalf of their local church and the larger tasks of the Kingdom of God. The

Evangelical Women's Union came into being in June, 1921, and was formally recognized by the General Conference of the same year. Both these organizations—the Women's Union especially—owe a very large part of their successful development to the energetic labors of the Rev. H. L. Streich (1879-1937), who was a pioneer in Brotherhood work and served as the first executive secretary of the Evangelical League and the Evangelical Brotherhood, and for 12 years as executive secretary of the Brotherhood and Women's Union, planning their programs for these organizations and helping the churches to carry it out.

When the present Ministerial Pension and Relief Fund was established in 1910 there were on hand about \$6,000 in assets, and the care of 68 pastors and 82 widows and children as liabilities. A definite scale of premiums was established, the Synod continued its support through gifts and contributions, and the establishment of a permanent endowment fund was begun. Two Pastors' Homes are maintained at Blue Springs, Mo., and Bensenville, Ill., an additional hand of help which probably no other American church body extends to those who have served their church loyally and sacrificially.

The experiences of the World War and the changed conditions which followed that tremendous cataclysm gave rise to the desire for a new and modernized constitution for the Evangelical Synod. After careful deliberations on the part of the Districts over a number of years, the present constitution was approved and adopted by a special General Conference at Chicago, Oct. 4-7, 1927.

The increase in the Synod's official business after



CHAPTER VIII  
GETTING TOGETHER

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the World War, especially the Forward Movement, made it necessary to provide administrative headquarters, and the General Conference at New Bremen, 1921, authorized the appointment of a special Commission for this purpose. After occupying rented quarters for some time, a 26-room residence at 2013 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis, was purchased, and in October, 1922, the offices of the President General, and somewhat later those of the Board of Religious Education were moved to the new location. The money for the purchase of this building was raised by the Evangelical Brotherhoods, and it was therefore known as the "Men's Memorial." When plans for the enlargement of Eden Publishing House were made, the fourth story of the new building was added as official headquarters of the Synod, continuing the "Men's Memorial."

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Indicate the geographical extent of the Evangelical churches in 1866 and the results of home mission work in the decades immediately following.
2. What institutions of charity were established from 1850-1900?
3. What part did the Reformed Church and the Evangelical Synod have in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance and the Federal Council of Churches?
4. What active steps are being taken towards realizing the "Social Ideals of the Churches"?
5. What significant changes took place in the churches after 1900?

As the story of the Evangelical and Reformed Church has been unfolding in the preceding chapters, showing how the two groups of German immigrants came to the New World, a century apart, and to different sections of the United States, yet passing through similar experiences, the reader may have expected that, in view of the many things they had in common as to racial origin and religious tradition and interest, the later group would have sought contact with the earlier, and that both would have sought each other's fellowship and cooperation.

The eighteenth-century immigrants in Pennsylvania and the neighboring states had, however, been so fully occupied with gaining a foothold and making a livelihood that they were quite ignorant of and rather indifferent to what happened in the old country after their departure, nor had their long association with church affairs in Reformed Holland left much room for interest in religious conditions in Lutheran Germany. And when the nineteenth-century immigrants found their way to the New World they were particularly interested in the West, where land was cheap and the opportunity to grow up with the country more alluring. By that time also the English language had already gained such predominance in the older East that new-comers from Germany had difficulty in feeling at home there. Finally, transportation between the East and the West was difficult and time-consuming, and was resorted to only when absolutely necessary. Thus the Reformed group in Pennsylvania and the Evan-

gical group in Missouri and Illinois remained largely ignorant and entirely independent of each other. }

#### THE SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP IS REVEALED

Yet, even though important personal contacts do not seem to have taken place, a consciousness of the spiritual relationship persisted. In 1847, Prof. John W. Nevin (1803-86), professor of theology at Mercersburg Theological Seminary, published his "History and Genius of the Heidelberg Catechism," the last chapter of which, entitled "Church Spirit of the Catechism," contains the following interesting comments:

"It (the Catechism) is always closely related in origin and constitution to the Lutheran confessions. . . . It is only in the German Church, we may say, that the two great divisions of the Protestant evangelical faith have seemed able, to this day, to understand one another at all, in their principal differences, so as to preserve clearly either their own contradiction or agreement in its true ground. The Church of England has sometimes been styled *ecclesia Lutheranizans*; but the title belongs more properly to the Reformed Church in Germany itself." In the Palatinate and in the other German provinces that accepted the Reformed faith, "All hinged on the eucharistic question; and in the case of this question, on the mode simply, not the fact of Christ's real presence in the sacrament. . . ! The Heidelberg Catechism was designed to interpret rather than contradict, the Augsburg Confession; to explain the sense in which it was held by the Church in the Palatinate." In the controversy out of which came the Heidelberg Catechism,

"no rebellion was intended against the Augsburg Confession."

"In the end, as we all know, it has come to a formal union of the two confessions, not only in Prussia, but throughout Protestant Germany generally. The confessional differences are not as yet fully abolished; but it has been felt that there were no sufficient reasons to keep the two Churches asunder. They constitute now (as they ought to do all the world over) one Evangelical communion." In a footnote the author adds: "The two German confessions *should* be one, in America as well as in Europe. It is a clear case. The Augsburg Confession, as explained by Melancthon and signed by Calvin, is abundantly broad enough for both Catechisms; and on this platform the whole German Church (in America ) if still true in any measure to its original life, might well stand shoulder to shoulder, and hand in hand, in the Lord's work." (Dr. G. W. Richards, in *The Messenger*, Nov. 26, 1936). It is also known that Dr. Schaff, while professor at the Mercersburg Theological Seminary, was in touch by correspondence, with Prof. Binner, early in the history of the Theological Seminary near Marthasville, Mo.

After the Civil War each group was occupied with its own organization and development, and the increasing use of the English language on the part of the Reformed Church in the United States presented a formidable barrier to closer approach and better acquaintance between the two groups.

In their support of the *Deutsche Evangelische Missions-Gesellschaft* a number of Reformed and Evangelical congregations in New York and New Jersey

demonstrated a fine spirit of fellowship and cooperation in the interest of the Kingdom of God (see page 83); nor must it be overlooked that out of that cooperative enterprise there has developed the flourishing mission field in India which is now so important a part of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. And while some of the Evangelical pioneer missionaries could not carry out their original purpose of doing missionary work among the Indians, the Rev. Jacob Hauser, after his return from India, abundantly made up for this failure by beginning the splendid work among the Winnebagoes at Black River Falls, Wis.

With the organization of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America there came a larger opportunity for better mutual acquaintance, and the representatives of both groups gladly took advantage of it. (See page 99). And when the World War helped to speed up the use of the English language in countless Evangelical congregations where German had previously prevailed, conditions for fraternal fellowship and cooperation became more favorable.

#### THE FIRST APPROACH

It was especially through Dr. Philip Vollmer (1860-1929) that some very definite friendly contacts between the two groups were established. Himself a native of Germany, he was familiar at first hand with the European background of both groups, and was therefore well qualified to interpret the Reformed tradition to Evangelical people. His call to a professorship at Eden Theological Seminary, in 1922, gave him a splendid opportunity for cultivating closer acquaintance and friendly relations, and his fraternal spirit,

his broad scholarship, and his fluency in the use of both German and English made him popular with young and old. He was a familiar figure at Leadership Training Schools, and also at Brotherhood and Women's Union gatherings, where, as executive secretary of the Commission on Christianity and Social Problems, he rendered valuable service toward bringing about a better understanding of the social implications of the Gospel. At the same time, as a regular contributor to *The Evangelical Herald*, he exerted a strong constructive influence upon the entire constituency of the Evangelical Synod, thus preparing the way for the later negotiations looking toward organic union. It was a letter from Dr. A. R. Bartholomew, then President of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, addressed to Dr. Vollmer, that first set in motion the negotiations which finally led to the organic union of that church body with the Evangelical Synod of North America.

At the General Conference in St. Louis, 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 preparing 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.

In response to the letter from Dr. Bartholomew, referred to above, Dr. John Baltzer, President General of the Evangelical Synod, appointed a Commission on Closer Relations with other Church Bodies, consisting of Drs. F. Frankenfeld, L. W. Goebel, J. H. Horstmann, and H. R. Niebuhr, with himself as ex-officio member. At an informal meeting of this Commission, in February, 1928, Dr. Bartholomew's letter, which expressed the assurance that the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States would welcome any communication from the Evangelical Synod of North America looking toward the cultivation of the spirit of cooperation, was read and very favorably received. After a survey of those church bodies most closely related to the Evangelical Synod, it was decided that for the present the Commission should confine its efforts to bring about closer relations between the Evangelical Synod, the Reformed Church in the United States, and the Moravian Church.

In April the Committee met with Dr. Richards, chairman of the Commission on Closer Union of the Churches of the Reformed Church, and requested that the two groups meet at some convenient time and place for the purpose of inquiring together whether the unity of the Spirit which exists might not lead to larger and more effective fellowship in work and worship. In addition to Dr. Richards, the Commission of the Reformed Church consisted of Drs. Chas. E.

Miller, A. E. Dahlmann, J. C. Leonard, A. R. Bartholomew, and Messrs. E. L. Coblenz, D. J. Snyder, Reuben J. Butz, and E. H. Marcus. During 1928 the Committee of the Evangelical Synod was enlarged by the appointment of three laymen: Messrs. J. C. Fischer, W. F. Hazlebeck, and John W. Mueller.

The request from the Commission on Closer Relations was cordially received by the Commission of the Reformed Church, which at that time was negotiating with a Commission from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, with a similar project in mind. The Commission from the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, on the other hand, had for some time been in contact with representatives of the Evangelical Church, formerly known as the Evangelical Association.

#### NEGOTIATIONS ARE BEGUN

When the representatives of the Reformed Church in the United States and of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ unanimously agreed to invite as visitors to the next meeting of the sub-committee entrusted with the drafting of a Plan of Union three representatives of the Evangelical Synod's Commission on Closer Relations with other Church Bodies and three representatives of the Evangelical Church, these men attended a meeting of this committee at Harrisburg, May 31, 1928. Other meetings were held in June and July, and on July 27 all commissioners of the four Church bodies met to receive the report of the sub-committee. The representatives of the Evangelical Synod agreed to accept the Plan of Union as a basis for further negotiations, and to continue as

active participants in the negotiations. The Commission of the Evangelical Church was not prepared to accept the Plan of Union, and the other Commissions agreed to await the final decision of this group before proceeding further. At a meeting on Nov. 21 the commissioners of the Evangelical Church definitely withdrew from the negotiations.

After an intensive study of the Plan of Union on the part of the three Commissions, a joint meeting was held in Dayton, Feb. 7, 1929, at which the Plan of Union was unanimously adopted. At the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren at Lancaster, Pa., in May of that year, the Plan of Union was favorably received, with the provision, however, that it be carefully studied by a committee of 20 members, which was authorized to call a special meeting of the General Conference for the express purpose of approval or disapproval if the sentiment of the Church were found ready to decide this question.

The General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, meeting at Indianapolis, also in May, took similar action, authorizing a special meeting of General Synod, when two-thirds of the Classes have acted favorably, at the same time and place as similar special meetings of the General Conferences of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and of the Evangelical Synod of North America, or of both these bodies, might be convened, for the purpose of completing the negotiations.

The General Conference of the Evangelical Synod, meeting at Rochester, N. Y. in October, welcomed the closer contacts with the two church bodies referred to which had developed during the nearly two years, and

declared its willingness to proceed upon the basis of the Plan of Union submitted, also authorizing a special session of the General Conference, to be called for the same time and place as similar special meetings of the other church bodies, after three-fourths of the Districts have acted favorably upon the Plan of Union. In order to provide actual contacts for better mutual acquaintance, and as a demonstration of the unity of the Spirit, the general officers and boards were authorized to arrange for the interchange of representatives of the three communions concerned at their corresponding board and conference meetings. The Committee on Closer Relations with other Church Bodies was recognized as a regular Commission on Church Union, and was continued as such.

#### DIFFICULTIES AND CROSS-CURRENTS

During 1930, the action taken on the Plan of Union by those annual conferences of the Church of the United Brethren which voted on it were entirely favorable. In the Reformed Church, however, the reaction was not so favorable, and it appeared that further negotiations for union of the three Churches on the basis of the present Plan of Union were not expedient or practicable. All negotiations based on the original Plan of Union were thus halted for the time being.

While these events were in progress, the Churches belonging to the Presbyterian-Reformed family were invited to a meeting for the purpose of considering union among themselves, and the Commission of the Evangelical Synod was invited to participate in the conference. However, while the latter Commission was ready to proceed with negotiations toward the

union of the Reformed Church and the Evangelical Synod, and while it entertained the friendliest of feelings toward the Presbyterian Churches, it had no mandate respecting union with the latter group. The Commission of the Reformed Church hereupon regretfully decided that it was not expedient or practicable at that time to continue further negotiations with the Commission of the Evangelical Synod. It was hoped on both sides, however, that the opportunity for a resumption of negotiations might come at some time in the future.

#### NEGOTIATIONS ARE RESUMED

The negotiations were resumed in the fall of 1931, at the request of the Commission of the Reformed Church. Conferences were then held at Dayton, O., Nov. 12, 1931, and at Pittsburgh, Pa., Feb. 12, 1932, respectively. The Plan of Union worked out at these conferences was submitted to the congregations through the Classes and the Districts in the regular manner. Of the 59 Classes of the Reformed Church in the United States, 51 voted to adopt the Plan of Union; three voted to adopt it conditionally; four rejected it, and one declined to take action. The District conferences of 1933 (none met in 1932, since the new Constitution adopted in 1927 provided for biennial sessions), with one exception, approved the Plan of Union. Having thus been formally approved by both the General Synod of the Reformed Church and the great majority of the Classes, the Plan of Union now came before the General Conference of the Evangelical Synod, which met in Cincinnati, O., Oct. 3-10, 1933, where it was unanimously approved on Oct. 7. Dr.

Henry J. Christman, President of the Reformed Church in the United States, came forward to meet Dr. C. W. Locher, President of the Evangelical Synod of North America, on the platform, where the two joined hands in token of the sincerity of purpose of both communions in thus effecting the union.

According to the Plan of Union thus adopted, it became the duty of the Commissions on union of the two Churches to request the officers of their supreme judicatories to call a special meeting of each judicatory at the same time and place, and to make preparations for the first General Synod of the united Church. At a joint session of the two Commissions at St. Louis, on Dec. 12, the invitation from the Evangelical and the Reformed Churches of Cleveland, O., that both judicatories meet in that city was accepted. The two church bodies met in separate session on June 26, 1934, the delegates of the Evangelical Synod in Zion Church, Rev. Oscar Wittlinger, pastor, those of the Reformed Church in the Eighth Reformed Church, and (in the afternoon) in Pilgrim Congregational Church, which was only two squares away from Zion Church.

At seven o'clock that evening, the delegates of the Reformed Church proceeded from Pilgrim Church to Zion Church, where the Evangelical Synod delegates awaited their coming. Meeting at the Church door, President Paul Press (successor to Dr. Locher, who had been called to the Church triumphant on Apr. 26) and President Henry J. Christman clasped hands and entered the sanctuary together, followed by the members of the Joint Commission on Church Union, the delegates of the merging church bodies, two by two,

and church members from both groups in the Cleveland area. The large Church, seating over 1,400 persons, was filled to overflowing. The officers and the Commissions on Church Union occupied the platform, and Presidents Press and Christman conducted the devotional exercises, the opening prayer being spoken by Dr. J. C. Leonard, Lexington, N. C.

By formal announcement the action taken during the day was then officially reported, and the organic union of the two church bodies ratified by the delegates present and declared effected. With the singing of "Now Thank We All Our God" this session of the first joint meeting of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States came to an end, to be followed immediately by an impressive communion service. Rev. Lee M. Erdman, Reading, Pa., delivered the sermon (1 Cor. 10: 16), and Drs. Paul Press and Henry J. Christman administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, assisted by some 40 pastors from both groups in the Cleveland area.

Promptly at nine o'clock the next morning the first General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church opened in Zion Church. Dr. F. Frankenfeld, Elmhurst, Ill., led the devotional service, and his impressive reading of John 17, as well as the searching prayer spoken in unison, brought out the solemnity of the occasion in a striking manner. Dr. L. W. Goebel was elected temporary chairman, and Dr. J. Rauch Stein, of Philadelphia, temporary clerk. A permanent organization of the new General Synod was effected by electing as President, Dr. Geo. W. Richards, Lancaster, Penna.; First Vice-president, Dr. Louis W.

Goebel, Chicago; Second Vice-president, Judge D. J. Snyder, Greensburg, Penna.; Third Vice-president, Mr. J. C. Fischer, Evansville, Ind.; Secretary Dr. J. Rauch Stein, Philadelphia, Penna.; Associate Secretary, Rev. F. A. Meusch, New Albany, Ind.; Treasurer, Mr. F. A. Keck, St. Louis; Associate Treasurer, Mr. Milton Warner, Philadelphia, Penna.

Letters of congratulation were read from President A. W. Beaven, of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America; from representatives of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Dr. J. Ross Stevenson, of Princeton Theological Seminary, and Stated Clerk Dr. Lewis W. Mudge; and from Mrs. C. W. Locher. Representatives of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Congregational and Christian Church, and the Baptist Church, were also presented.

Speaking in behalf of the Federal Council, Dr. Samuel McRea Cavert pointed out the unusual significance of the organic union that had just been consummated. It is not only, he said, an expression of the new spirit of integration upon which Protestantism has entered in this country, being the eleventh event of this kind which has taken place during less than 30 years, but it represents also the blending of two great historic streams as old as Protestantism itself. It is the first time in American Church history when two uniting denominations not belonging to the same immediate families have been of approximately equal size and strength. From such a fruitful marriage there should come a new generation inheriting the insights and graces of both progenitors and thus producing a still richer type. This union is also in a

class by itself because it was entered upon in a spirit of complete mutual respect and confidence, the united church body having been formed without even drafting a constitution or setting up a new doctrinal formula. "Those of us" he said in closing, "who do not belong to either of these denominations hail your union with gratitude and pray it may bear fruit in furthering a still more comprehensive union among our Evangelical forces."

Resolutions providing for the functioning of the Plan of Union for the united Church and its congregations and agencies were then adopted, to be in effect until a constitution shall have been adopted. An Executive Committee was also authorized and appointed, in order to promote the work of the united Church and to expedite the correlation and unification of the hitherto separate agencies and activities. The first Executive Committee consisted of the following persons: Dr. Geo. W. Richards, L. W. Goebel, H. J. Christman, Paul Press, Melvin E. Beck, John Lentz, Paul R. Pontius, C. J. Snyder, F. C. Klick, F. R. Daries, J. E. Digel, H. J. Schick; Elders Clarence E. Zimmerman, J. Franklin Meyer, Charles S. Adams, Mrs. F. Wm. Leich, W. H. Brown, F. G. Rapp, Jacob Haller, Mrs. Ida Pauley.

The Committee on Constitution and Charter was made up as follows: Drs. Chas. E. Schaeffer, Theo. F. Herman, Edgar F. Hoffmeier, Wm. E. Lampe, Paul J. Dundore, Paul Grosshuesch, F. Frankenfeld, F. R. Schreiber, H. W. Dinkmeyer, Arno E. Klick, G. W. Grauer; Elders Reuben A. Butz, David I. Prugh, John W. Mueller, W. C. Hazelbeck and H. W. Schultheis. The President of General Synod is to be an ex-officio

member of this Committee, and Dr. Chas. E. Schaeffer is to act as convener.

It was also decided that the second General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church was to meet at Ft. Wayne, Ind., at a time to be announced by the Executive Committee.

In addition to the merger of Central Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, with Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Mo. (pages 55-56), which took place in 1934, there appeared also, in November of that year, the first volume of the Year Book and Almanac of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, combining the Almanac and Year Book published since 1864 by the Reformed Church in the United States, and the Evangelical Year Book, published since 1911 by the Evangelical Synod of North America.

At the time of the First General Synod the constituency of the Evangelical and Reformed Church was distributed over all but nine (Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Nevada, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Vermont) of the 48 States of the Union, with a total membership (figures of 1933) of 640,802.

Such is the story of the beginning of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, of its growth during four centuries, in the Old World and in the New. Its history is still to be written, in word and in deed, and it will be written by men and women now living, and by generations yet unborn. 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 experience and



aspiration, toil, suffering and sacrifice guard faithfully what has been committed unto 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.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Indicate through what men and in what way the Evangelical Synod and the Reformed Church were brought together.
2. When, where and how was the union of the two bodies declared effected?
3. What was the unusual significance of this union according to Dr. Cavert?
4. What was the geographical extent and the membership of the joint church at the time of union?