

## 10. Southern Presbyterians.

Several of these divisions are to a large extent *national* in their origin. — The "Dutch Reformed," for example, is the same in doctrine and government with the Old School. The minor sections of the family are chiefly imported from Ireland and Scotland. The "Cumberland" Presbyterians derive their name from the section of country, in the west, where their peculiarities were developed. The "Associate" and "Associated Reformed" are small fragments left behind when the "United Presbyterian Church" was constituted. We cannot undertake to discriminate very lucidly between the "Reformed Presbyterians" that adhere to the *General Synod*, and the "Reformed Presbyterians" that prefer the *Synod*. They protest against one another and against the whole world besides, and are apparently very pure indeed.

Persecution in Scotland drove faithful ministers and people into exile, and led to the founding of Presbyterianism in the United States. It happened just as in the olden time, when apostles and evangelists were driven from their chosen homes by stress of cruel foes.—The oldest Presbytery of which we have any record is that of Maryland, constituted in 1706.

Ten years later, the Presbytery became a Synod, consisting of three Presbyteries and fifteen ministers. In 1729, this Synod adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith, with the exception of the passages that might be understood as giving too much power to the civil magistrate in church affairs.—In 1741, a division took place, which led to the formation of two Synods, known as the Old Side and the New Side. About 1730, commenced a mighty revival of religion, which continued several years, and extended all over the continent. The Tenaunts were very prominent among the promoters of this revival. Many "Revival preachers" went among settled and well organized congregations, denouncing the ministers as unconverted, and creating much confusion and ill-feeling. This led to action on the part of the Synod of which the Tenaunts and others could not

approve, and they withdrew and constituted themselves the "New Side Synod." They continued perfectly orthodox and evangelical, and in course of a few years included nearly all the Presbyterians in New York and New Jersey. They were the founders of the "Log College," and the projectors of "Princeton."

In 1758, the old division of sides was pleasantly healed. About this time the Synod appealed for sympathy and aid to the Church of Scotland. The letter as given by *Baird*, is before us, and is very interesting. It is, however, too long for quotation. "The young daughter of the Church of Scotland, helpless and exposed in this foreign land, cries to her tender and powerful mother for relief." How changed the relative positions of these two Presbyterian churches, since American Presbyterianism thus appealed to Scotland!

In 1788, the Synod became a General Assembly, with four Synods under its care. The first meeting of the General Assembly for the transaction of business, was held in Philadelphia, in 1789.

According to the Presbyterian theory, the "General Presbytery," which was constituted in 1706, was equivalent to a "General Assembly,"—the highest court in the Church. When the Reformation was introduced into Scotland, and a Reformed Church organized, the "General Assembly" was the first court constituted; it consisted of six ministers and upwards of thirty other persons. There was neither Synod, nor Presbytery, under this Assembly. It was in much the same position with the "General Presbytery," formed in Maryland. Thus, too, in our own day, "Presbyteries" are, or have been, Supreme Courts in some of the colonies. It matters not whether it is called an Assembly or a Presbytery; it is the Supreme Court. In course of time the system is duly developed, wrought out according to necessities of time and place. In Scotland, local Presbyteries and Synods were constituted after the General Assembly and by its authority. In America, essentially the same process was gone through, under a somewhat different form.