

PRESBYTERIANISM ON THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT.

REFORMED CHURCH IN AUSTRIA.—In the Austrian Empire a group of Reformed congregations, locally associated, forms a Senioratus, or Presbytery. The Moderator of the Senioratus is called "Senior," and is elected for six years by the Kirk Sessions of the bounds, but the election must be ratified by the Provincial Government. The Senior has associated with him a *Con-Senior*, or Vice-Senior, and also a Senorate-Curator, or presiding Elder. All the Seniorates of the Province form the *Superintendential-Conventus*, or Provincial Synod. The Moderator of this body is called the Superintendent, and is elected for life by the Kirk Sessions of the whole Province, but the election must be confirmed by the Emperor himself. There is a Superintendential-Curator, also a Vice-Superintendent, who are appointed for six years by the Provincial Synod. This body meets triennially, and is composed of the Superintendent, the Vice-Superintendent and the Superintendential Curator, the Seniors of the Province, with their curators, and a few delegates, ministers and elders in equal numbers, from the Seniorates. The General Synod represents the whole *Reformed Church*, for the Government regards the Churches in the Provinces of Austria, Bohemia and Moravia, not as distinct and independent Churches, but as branch organizations in each Province of the one Reformed Church. The General Synod meets every sixth year, and is composed of twenty-three persons—twelve ministers and eleven elders—as follows:—the Superintendent of the Austrian Church (German), with his Curator; the Reformed Theological Professor in Vienna; two Deputies elected by the Provincial Synod of Austria; the Superintendent and four Seniors of the Bohemian Church, with their respective Curators; the Superintendent and two Seniors of the Moravian Church, with their Curators, with the Senior of Galicia and his Curator. Before taking his seat each member must solemnly declare—"I promise in the presence of God, in my capacity as a member of this Synod, to seek the inner and outward welfare of the Evangelical Church Helvetic Confession, according to my best judgment and conscience, and to aim at the Church's growing into Him, who is the Head—Christ." The General Synod is somewhat anomalous in its character. The lay-members, the curators, are elected by the Provincial Synods, but the ecclesiastical members (Superintendents and Seniors) are there in virtue of their office. Should any of these be absent their places are occupied by their respective deputies. The General Synod, while largely an advisory body, possesses, however, certain powers. If the Government, represented by the *Cultus-ministerium*, has a veto on its actions, the Synod can decline to comply with the wishes of the Government. Thus in 1877 the General Synod desired to divide itself into a *German General Synod* meeting in Vienna, and a *Bohemian and Moravian General Synod*, with an *Oberkirchenrath* for itself, meeting in Prague. The *Cultus-ministerium* vetoed the proposal, which then fell to the ground. At the same meeting the *Oberkirchenrath*, representing the *Cultus-ministerium*, proposed a new Book of Discipline. This the Synod