

THE SOUTHERN  
PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXXVI.—NO. 4.

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OCTOBER, MDCCCLXXXV.

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ARTICLE I.

A TRUE CONSERVATISM.

In Church and State, in sect and party, the words *conservative* and *radical* have acquired a prominence and an emphasis, in the present, never accorded to them in the past. In the pulpit, the senate, and the forum, as well as in the columns of the journal and the pages of the essay or the review, these two terms are the recognised landmarks of every form of modern thought and disquisition. They are the poles of feeling, of taste, of opinion and principle. Every one who talks or writes at all, claims for himself that he belongs to one of these categories, and insists on referring an opponent to the opposite. In American politics we not only discover that the two great parties into which our population is divided are essentially different in the sense of these two criteria, but that each party is further divisible into a conservative and a radical section. There are Republicans who insist upon keeping their party rigidly in the line of its precedents, and others who maintain that its original mission has been fulfilled, and the time has come to propound new issues before the people. There are also Democrats who desire to continue the conflict on principles announced a century ago, whilst others urge the necessity of contending for the more practical interests of the present generation.

vert the heretics. But sermons and argument availed nothing; and then commenced the celebrated crusade against the Albigenes, which continued in all its horrors and bloodshed for thirty years.

JNO. B. ADGER.

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ARTICLE VII.

HANSEN'S "REFORMED CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS."

*The Reformed Church in the Netherlands, Traced from A. D. 1340 to 1840 in Short Historical Sketches.* By Rev. MAURICE G. HANSEN, A. M. New York: Board of Publication of the Reformed Church in America.

This is the title of a work covering, in brief space, a long period in the history of the Reformed Church. A time of five hundred years is comprised within the compass of a duodecimo of three hundred and thirty pages, and the treatment of the subject is necessarily condensed. While much that might be of interest has to be omitted, something is also gained by a rapid and accurate survey of so long a period of time. History repeats itself, is a maxim which is never more true than when applied to the history of human thought. The same variations, the same errors, the same novelties, tend to reappear from century to century, modified by the spirit of the age, and slightly disguised. But the keen search of historical criticism detects the identity of principles, and drags the masquerading theory into the clear light of truth.

Nor can there be a better discipline for the student of theology and the minister actively engaged in church work, than such a review of some great epoch; or a sketch of some one branch of the Church of Christ. As our author well says in closing his book: "One of the most beautiful illustrations of the exquisite neatness of execution which characterises all the works of the

Creator, is furnished by the vegetable kingdom. The angles which are made in the leaves of a particular tree, by the veins which spread out laterally from that which bisects them longitudinally, are similar to those made by the limbs which branch out from the trunk. The peculiarities of the greater are reproduced in the minor. There are certain lessons which are taught by the history of the world, but which are taught also by that of an insignificant portion of it. This must be admitted by every one who studies history, not upon a graduated chronological scale, but, philosophically, upon a principle in which the question of duration of time does not enter. From the history of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands we gather instruction concerning the divine character, the nature of man, the providence of God, his faithfulness to his people, the evil of forsaking him, the wisdom of union, and the disaster of strife, and kindred topics, just as clearly as from that of the Church universal." No Church has a more thrilling and instructive history than that which had its birth amid the throes of anguish and horror in the age of persecution directed by Philip II. of Spain against his Flemish subjects. Outwardly and inwardly, the history of the Church in the Netherlands is full of instruction, of warning, and of comfort. Our author divides the history into four periods: the *formative*, the *defensive*, the period of *danger*, and the period of *transition*. The *first* period extends from about 1340 to 1581. This is also subdivided into three periods: the Reformed Church *prepared for* (1340-1562); *consolidating* (1562-1568); and *organised and established* (1568-1581). The first sub-period centres in interest around a group of prominent men, who were the instruments in God's hand for stirring up the hearts of the people, and preparing for the Reformation. Among the first of these influences at work in the Netherlands was the establishment of the order of the "Brothers of the Common Life."

Gerhard Groote, whom Ullman places among the "Reformers before the Reformation," was a Carthusian monk, having abandoned the honors and wealth of the world for the convent. His earnestness and success as a preacher attracted crowds of people, and he struck at the root of many errors of the age, teaching that

the mass availed not for those who were in mortal sin, and that the intercession of the Virgin and all the saints could not avail him who perished in his sins. Eternal life without purgatory can be promised to him who obeys. But such outspoken teaching brought him in conflict with the authorities of the Church, and permission to preach was withdrawn. Denied this privilege, he gathered around him a band of young men whom he instructed in private, and who made their living by transcribing the sacred books. Out of this little band grew up the "Brotherhood of the Common Life." "The great design of Groote was to join education to religion, or rather to make education prepare the way for religion." He applied himself to the restoration of the schools which had been established under the influence of Charlemagne and his son, the Emperor Lewis, but which, through the ignorance or carelessness of the monks, had fallen into decay. The people of the Netherlands took a strong interest in these schools, and opened their own homes for the accommodation of the young students. "From the tree thus planted in the Netherlands was gathered such fruit as Thomas à Kempis, the author of the inimitable 'Imitation of Christ'; Zerbolt, who argued so nobly for the translation of the Bible and devotional books into the vernacular; Wessel Gansvort, and Erasmus."

The mention of Erasmus leads us to consider the second influence preparatory to the Reformation: the diffusion of learning. Holland lays claim to the invention of the art of printing by John Laurens Koster as early as 1423, and authorities are divided as to the justness of this claim. He was certainly one who early knew the secret of movable type. The great scholar and wit who "laid the egg which Luther hatched," Gerard Gerardz, better known as Erasmus, was born in Rotterdam October 28, 1467, sixteen years before the birth of Luther. His wonderful mental activity and scholarship soon made him a great and growing reputation. Whatever may be thought of Erasmus' attitude toward the Reformation, his editions of the Greek New Testament and his "Praise of Folly" were among the potent influences which led to that great event. But the spirit of martyrdom lacking in Erasmus was found in Pistorius. The young priest was early

thought to be departing from the faith of the Church, and he was summoned to Utrecht. He went instead to Wittenberg, and remained three months, and on his return laid aside his priestly robes, married, and entered his old trade as a baker. But the arrival in his native place, Woerden, of a seller of indulgences roused him to an earnest protest, and he once more entered the pulpit and the confessional. Such boldness could have but one issue, and he was soon led to the stake. Pistorius attempted to reply to the priest who preached at the stake, and who made him out a great criminal. Pistorius was silenced, stripped of his priest's garments, and then a yellow tunic was put on his person and a fool's cap on his head. "It is well," said he; "in this array I share in the mockery that was heaped upon Christ." Another victim of persecution at this period was Merula, founder of the orphan house of Briel, who died of hardships endured in prison just as he was being led out to execution.

During this period the Baptists and Anabaptists came into prominence. They were heard of first about 1527 in the Netherlands. Menno Simons, once a Romish priest, joined the Baptists, and had great influence in preventing fanatical outbreaks and excesses like those committed at Münster. Menno himself was by no means sound in all his theological doctrines, and held a fantastic opinion concerning the incarnation of Christ. He died in 1561. Thus by all these varied influences the people were prepared for the preaching of the gospel, for a final break with Rome, and for a union of those who held the same views of revealed truth. Mr. Hansen says: "The history of the formative period of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands is so closely interwoven with that of the formative period of the Dutch Republic, that in reviewing the former it is not possible altogether to ignore the latter. In this case politics and religion so thoroughly blend that they cannot be kept apart."

"The confederation of the nobles and the adoption of a confession of faith effected, in the manner peculiar to them, the same result which was brought about by the commission of the Duke of Alva and the scattering of the Protestants, operating in a manner appropriate to these instrumentalities." All the long struggle

of the people with the tyranny of the Spanish "Council of Blood" and the cruelty of the Inquisition, had its share in alienating men for ever from Rome and causing them to cling more tenaciously to the principles of the Protestant party.

The Reformed Churches scattered throughout the Netherlands were now united more closely under the guidance of Guido de Bres, author of the "Belgic Confession" and martyr; Petrus Dathenus, translator of the Heidelberg Catechism into Dutch; and Franciscus Junius, afterwards professor of theology at Leyden. Junius met with a number of nobles in Brussels on October 2, 1565, and after preaching a sermon to them and leading them in prayer, the nobles—some twenty in number—entered into an earnest consultation as to how they should protect themselves from the Inquisition. A league was formed, known as "The Compromise," by which they pledged themselves to resist in every way consistent with the honor of God and allegiance to the king the introduction of the terrible Inquisition. In April, 1566, a party of between three and four hundred nobles presented to the Regent Margaret a petition, in which the removal of the pressure brought to bear upon the cause of Protestantism was requested. This occasion gave rise to the famous name of "Beggars," applied to these noblemen, and caught up afterwards as the name of the Protestant party. Encouraged by the attitude of the nobles, the churches began to draw their forces more closely together. In 1566, at the Synod of Antwerp, the Belgic Confession, changed somewhat in phraseology, transcribed by Junius, signed by the nobles present, was adopted, together with the Heidelberg Catechism, as a form of accord in the faith. Space does not permit the tracing further of the deeply thrilling history of the churches during these dark days of trial. Under the lurid light of persecution, the "churches under the cross" were called on to love not their lives unto death, but often to suffer cruelties which might well have crushed anything but the grace of God. The image-breaking in the churches of the Netherlands by the excited mob, and the open-air preaching of the Reformers excited the bitterest wrath of Philip, and he sent the Duke of Alva to put an end to these outrages. Under the

"Council of Blood," summoned by Alva, the *whole people* were condemned to death. "The churches, it was said, had been desecrated by the mob; the mob had been urged on by the heretics; the heretics had been protected by the nobles; the nobles had been sustained by the gentry, who were their relatives. All were guilty, and all were subject to the death penalty. Thenceforth there was no end to the hanging, strangling, burning alive, burying alive, burning at the stake, and drowning. The secret torture chambers resounded with the groans of the hapless victims. The fruit of the trees by the road-side was decaying human corpses. The gibbet, with its horrible freight, cast a shadow over many a flowery path. The prisons were filled to overflowing. Families were scattered like dust before the wind. No lives or property were safe. A heavy gloom of death lay over the land and a great cry of distress ascended to heaven."

Many fled from their native land in despair, and churches were founded by these refugees in London and in Germany. Unlike the churches of Scotland at a later date, the Reformed Church adopted a liturgy which has remained in use down to this day, with some modifications. The consolidation of the churches during this period was furthered by various Synods held from time to time, some local and some general. By these Synods various questions were settled as to the forms of worship, the manner of preaching the word, the method of catechetical instruction, and of pastoral work. With the Synod of Middleburg in 1581 the formative period came to an end. This year was memorable also as the time of the final rupture of the Provinces of King Philip II. and the assertion of the independence of the Netherlands. The war between Spain and the Provinces was of long duration, but resulted finally in the independence of the Provinces. It was during this period, with its intervals of quiet produced by temporary armistices, that the great controversy arose within the Reformed Church on the "five points" of Calvinism, which led to the assembling of the Synod of Dort. The author styles this the "defensive period." It extends from 1581 to 1619, when the Synod adjourned, and the work of defending the faith of the Church was completed. Various causes were at work tending to

a laxer view of the doctrines of the Church than that which was formulated in her recognised symbols. The very liberty of conscience, for which the "churches under the cross" had contended so nobly against the tyranny of Rome, was liable to be perverted into license. The connexion between State and Church was sure to lead to a semi-political opinion concerning the right of the State to control the teaching of the Church to a certain extent. Cornheert, of Amsterdam, was one man who battled for an extreme view of liberty of conscience. He was in Spain when a young man, attending to business, and was present at an execution of heretics. He was awakened to the conviction "that no Church has a right to shackle the consciences of any one who differs from its standards." He became an excellent classical scholar and made his living by engraving and etching. In 1567 he was imprisoned at the Hague, and his wife, despairing of his liberation, mingled freely with persons affected with contagious diseases, hoping to contract them and thus die with her husband. It is no wonder that a man of Cornheert's views should be even more deeply impressed by them under such circumstances. He was exiled by the Council of Blood, and supported himself during his wanderings by his art. In 1572 he was made secretary by the States of Holland. In 1576 he settled in Haarlem as notary public. Down to the time of his death he contended earnestly for the widest liberty of conscience, and actually composed a petition for the Roman Catholics of Haarlem, asking liberty to worship in the convents and in one of the principal churches of the city. Being cited for this before the magistrates, he declared that he had no attachment for the Romish religion, but that he thought the Roman Catholics suffered great injustice since bonds were laid upon their consciences.

The question of the relation between Church and State was brought to an issue mainly by Casper Coolhaas. He was brought up a Romanist, but upon his conversion to Protestantism joined the school which held to the teachings of Bucer and Melancthon. He was called to the pastorate of the church at Leyden, but the siege of that city had begun before he was able to enter its walls. Upon the foundation of the University of Leyden in 1575, Cool-



haas was appointed the first professor of theology. The election of certain elders and deacons in Leyden led to a controversy that shook the whole Church to its foundations. Peter Cornelisson, one of the pastors in Leyden, took the ground that the officers should be nominated by those whose term was about to expire, and the names be submitted to the congregation for election without consulting the magistrates. Coolhaas agreed to the nomination, but demanded that the names should be submitted to the magistrates for their approval before they were proposed to the people for election. The Synod of Middleburg, which was held in 1581, condemned the opinions of Coolhaas and required him to confess his guilt. He refused to do this, and being supported by the magistrates of Leyden, who had deposed Cornelisson from his office, was excommunicated by the Synod of Haarlem in 1582.

These discussions were preliminary to the controversy with the remonstrants. Arminius, professor of theology in Leyden, began to teach views differing seriously from the standards of the Church. This involved him in controversy with Gomarus, his colleague, in the theological department. After much discussion between the two men, further debate was interrupted by the sickness and death of Arminius in the forty-ninth year of his age. In 1610 the followers of Arminius presented the States of Holland with a treatise, in which they advanced their peculiar views with great artfulness, and the States were persuaded to accept these views as in accordance with all the Reformed Churches in Europe. The classes of the Church took alarm at this and requested that a provincial Synod should be called for the purpose of refuting the views of the "remonstrants." The discussions growing out of this led to a growing demand for a national Synod, the remonstrants hoping to revise the standards, and the Reformed intending to defend them. The States General resolved in November, 1617, that a Synod should be held. Great preparations were made for the meeting, foreign delegates were invited, large sums of money were voted for defraying the expenses, and Dordrecht was selected as the place of meeting.

Great was the formality with which the distinguished delegates

and visitors from foreign lands were welcomed, and intense was the interest which was felt by all classes in the Synod. Bogerman, minister of Leeuwarden, was elected President of the Council. "He was a very remarkable man physically and mentally. He had a fine presence—was tall, straight, and well proportioned. His forehead was high, his features were expressive and his eyes sparkling and piercing. A magnificent beard of a light color, like his hair, descended to his waist. He had a full voice, and his gestures, when he was excited (which was not seldom, for he was a man of strong passions), were very impressive. With intense convictions he was impulsive and imperious in his manner of uttering them." The theological propositions to be discussed were comprehended in the famous "Five Points," which need not be detailed here. It was first proposed that the remonstrants should be recognised as delegates to the Synod. This was rejected. It was resolved that thirteen remonstrants, of whom Episcopius, professor of theology at Leyden and successor of Gomarus, was one, should be *cited to appear* before the Synod. The remonstrants were welcomed as "reverend, famous, and excellent brethren in Christ," and had places assigned them at the long table in the centre of the hall. Episcopius declared that he and his associates were ready to begin the "conference." Exception was taken to this by Polyander, the colleague of Episcopius at Leyden, and he received a general support. "The Synod is not a party, but a judge" was taken as the principle of action. The next day Episcopius delivered a long and eloquent address. He declared that he and his associates desired peace, and sought to present a milder view of the doctrines of predestination, and to advocate the subordination of the Church to the State. Nine sessions were occupied with the discussion of the question as to the relation in which the remonstrants stood to the Synod, they claiming to be delegates, while the majority claimed the right to try their views and to judge them. The discussions went on until January 16, when the remonstrants were summarily *expelled* from the Synod. Bogerman, the President, "was in a state of violent agitation. His whole frame trembled with emotion. His eyes shot forth sparks of fire. 'You boast,' he cried in a voice which

rolled like thunder through the hall, 'that many foreign divines did not refuse to grant your request. Their moderation arose from a misunderstanding. They now declare that they were deceived by you. They say that you are no longer worthy of being heard by the Synod. \* \* \* You have been treated with all gentleness, friendliness, toleration, patience, and simplicity. Go as you came! You began with lies and you end with them. You are full of fraud and double-dealing. You are not worthy that the Synod should treat with you farther.' Then extending his arms and turning the palms of his hands outward, he exclaimed: '*Dimittimini! exite! mendacio incepistis, mendacio finivistis! ite!*' The remonstrants arose. 'According to the example of my Saviour,' said Episcopus, 'I shall not reply. God will judge between me and the Synod in regard to the lies with which we are charged.' "

The examination of the tenets of the remonstrants took place after their expulsion, and a solemn sentence of condemnation was uttered against these tenets. It was made public in a great assembly in the church of Dordrecht. The remonstrants were condemned as having scandalised religion and dismembered and offended the churches. The persons who had been cited before the Synod were suspended from their offices and declared unworthy of any professorial position until they had satisfied the Church of their conversion. The others were remanded to their provincial synods, classes, and consistories, and the churches were to search out and depose those who were obstinate, seeking with all gentleness to reclaim those who had gone astray. Two hundred ministers were deposed and were enjoined to lead a quiet unofficial life, the States undertaking to provide for their support. Seventy signed the act of deposition, while eighty, who rebelled, were transported across the frontiers. The remonstrants who remained were positively forbidden to hold any meetings. These things were carried out some two months after the adjournment of the Synod. The Synod formally dismissed the foreign theologians, presenting each one with a gold medal and chain. A great banquet, given by the city of Dordrecht, closed the evening. And a remonstrant historian charges the reverend fathers with

having washed from their consciences the deposition of so many ministers with Rhine wine. “Several foreign delegates indulged so freely that their gait was unsteady as they walked homeward.” On the 9th of May the foreign delegates were thanked and invited to visit the Hague. Those who went four days later beheld the execution of Olden Barneveldt, and as his head rolled on the scaffold one spectator remarked: “The canons of Dordrecht have shot it off.” The permanent result of the Synod’s deliberation remained in the well-known “decrees of the Synod of Dort.” With the adjournment of the Synod the *defensive* period of the Reformed Church came to an end.

The period of danger extended from 1620 to 1720. The danger arose from the spread of sceptical forms of philosophy, the influence of Rationalism, and the interference of the State. Mr. Hansen enumerates among the evil causes at work the doubting spirit of philosophy, the prevalence of strife and contention within the Church, and the influence of wealth and soul-destroying luxury.

Descartes was the philosopher who brought in the new system which laid down *doubt* as a fundamental principle. “*Cogito, ergo sum,*” remained as the basis on which to erect the new system. The government and the Church both attempted to check the spread of the progress of this philosophy, Synods and Classes voting against it; but in spite of this it made a great impression. Cocceius, professor of theology in Leyden, had a large share in creating the excitement of the day in reference to biblical interpretation and theology. His views were novel and ingenious, and his lecture-room was soon crowded with students. His method of interpretation was strictly grammatico-historical, and he sought avowedly to place the dogmas of the Church on a purely biblical basis, divested of the coverings they had received from the schools. The “covenant” theology was the basis of the system of Cocceius, and he made much use of typology. His views led to controversies, his principal opponent being Voetius, professor of theology at Utrecht. Unfortunately, the adherents of these celebrated divines divided the Church into two antagonistic factions, who took pains to emphasise every point disputed between the two schools. “The Voetians wore their hair short; the Cocceians

wore it long. The Voetians called Sunday 'the Day of Rest'; the Cocceians called it the 'Lord's Day.' The Voetians dressed plainly and lived moderately; the Cocceians dressed fashionably and lived luxuriously. The common people followed the former; the aristocracy the latter. Both parties showed too much pride, obstinacy, and uncharitableness." Out of this strife sprang a tendency to mysticism, which was developed under the leadership of John De Labadie, first a pupil in a Jesuit convent, then a Jansenist of Port Royal, and finally pastor of the Reformed church at Middelburg. De Labadie addressed himself rather to the emotions than to the intellect, and swayed great multitudes by his eloquence. His fellow ministers turned against him, although they could not allege anything doctrinally against him except that he refused to accept the statement that "Christ suffered on the altar of the cross" as not scriptural; and that he believed in the literal thousand years reign of Christ. Finally he was deposed by the Walloon Synod of Dordrecht; and as he continued to exercise his ministerial office, he was compelled by the magistrates to leave the city.

Spinoza was another philosopher who exerted a great influence on the thought of his own age, as, indeed, he continues to exercise it in our own day. His system was thought to lead to a pantheistic fatalism, and, being a Hebrew, he was formally excommunicated from the synagogue at Amsterdam. One name of this period deserves to be held in honor—that of Balthasar Bekker, a minister who wrote against the popular superstition of the day in regarding comets as the infallible harbingers of evil. Voetius himself had written a book establishing the "generally received opinion of the Church" on this subject, and as the sceptical Bayle held the same views with Bekker, the latter was not regarded with favor by the orthodox. The greatest excitement was caused, however, when, in 1691, Bekker published at Amsterdam his book entitled "The World Bewitched." In this he opposed the popular doctrine concerning witchcraft, and did much to break up the dreadful evil of witch-hunting and witch-killing. Bekker relied mainly on the Cartesian argument, that mind cannot act directly upon matter unless these substances are united as

in man's body. God alone can work miracles; the deeds of witchcraft are, however, miraculous, and hence impossible. This bold protest against the "generally received opinion of the Church" met with the usual fate. The Church immediately took action against Bekker; he was suspended from the ministry, finally deposed, and debarred from all the privileges of the communion. In 1699 he died without having been reconciled to the Church; but the magistrates of the city paid him his salary until his death, and prevented the consistory from electing any one pastor in his place. Such was the fate of a man who dared attack a cruel superstition, which was protected by all the official authority of the Church as an essential article of the faith!

No wonder that with such champions of orthodoxy Rationalism began to creep into the Church. The leader of this movement was Herman Alexander Roell, who contended for a free interpretation of Scripture. The sentiments which he held were expressed in a Latin sentence: "My friend, I do not adhere either to the old or to the new; whether it be the old or the new, if it be truth, I love it." He became professor of theology in Utrecht where he taught fourteen years, his principal opponent being the celebrated Campegius Vitringa. The States of Friesland at length adopted a decree commanding all professors and ministers to refrain from discussing Roell's opinions, and he was enjoined to strict silence concerning them. All this formulating of doctrines and splitting of hairs in discussion, accompanied by too much bitterness, led to a reaction against religion. The forms were maintained strictly, but the spirit was fast departing. Some contended that a spirit of universal philanthropy was better than any religious opinions, and liberty and enlightenment were to be the guides to a glorious age. The State and the Church were to be renewed, and a higher religion would be evolved from this change. Amid such varied tendencies of thought and such a declining power of religion, the period of danger came to a close.

The last of the periods treated of is the period of transition—extending from 1740 to 1840. The transition is that from a State Church with absolute authority, to a Church less directly connected with the State, and placed on an equality with all other

religious denominations. The period immediately preceding the French Revolution was one of discussion and dissension in the Reformed Church. Questions were sprung which involved the fundamental principles of religion, and these were opposed in a spirit of harshness and asperity. The people took sides in these controversies in a partisan spirit, and all these dissensions served only to weaken the Church. Meantime the state authorities were pushing their claims to control church affairs, and often they succeeded in carrying out their plans. In 1795 the French entered the Netherlands and were welcomed as deliverers of the country. The Prince Stadtholder departed for England and the States were dissolved. The principles of "liberalism" became triumphant. It was declared by the provisional representatives of the people that every one has the right to worship God in accordance with his own wishes, and that any man is eligible to office without any qualifications except morality and capacity. The privileges of the Old National Reformed Church were destroyed, no ruling Church was allowed, and the wearing of any distinctive ecclesiastical dress was forbidden. The edicts in regard to the observance of the Sabbath were repealed. The Church was thrown entirely on her own resources. But the religion of the Church was also in a deplorable state. A spirit of unbelief was prevalent, and many scorned all religion and treated ministers with disrespect. In 1801 a constitution was framed, and it was provided that a fund should be created from which the salaries of ministers should be paid. In 1802 the government determined to resume the payment of salaries of ministers of the Reformed Church. There were signs of a return to a better way of thinking. The desire for better observance of the Sabbath was expressed, and it was enjoined that this should be enforced. With the fall of Napoleon in 1813, there was effected another change. The Prince of Orange returned to the Netherlands, all parties were united under him, and efforts were made to provide for the wants of the Reformed Church.

During the second quarter of the nineteenth century a reactionary movement took place within the Church. There was an effort made to break away from the lifeless rationalism with which

the Church was infected, and some of the leading minds of the age led the way in this struggle. Some withdrew from the Established Church and formed other churches, which took the old name of "The Churches under the Cross." The secessionists were at first not permitted to hold services, but afterwards, upon submitting to the government the code of statutes for their churches, they were approved, and the bodies allowed to hold religious worship. They have now grown into the "Christian Reformed Church" or "Seceded" Church, which is a strong and influential body. In 1877 it contained 362 churches, 270 ministers, and 133,155 souls.

This brings down the history to a period near our own time. In compressing such a long history into so small a space there is of course need of brevity. The book is no mere skeleton of dry facts, names, and dates; but a fresh, crisp, sparkling narrative, full of interest and instruction. The author has shown much skill in bringing salient points clearly into light and giving vividness to his pictures of prominent men and important events. The vast amount of instruction to be gained by a thoughtful study of such a varied history is only hinted at by him in the conclusion; but many a lesson suggests itself while reading his pages. The style of the author is clear, simple, direct, full of movement, and rising at times to eloquence. His personal opinions are not obtruded, nor does he seek to screen or excuse any harshness or bitterness on the part of the leaders of the Church, while there is a glow of sympathy pervading the whole narrative with the great principles of truth which were brought out even by the dissension and conflict of the times. We lay down Mr. Hansen's book—not satiated, indeed, but with a keener interest in the history of the noble Church of the Netherlands, and with an earnest desire for a profounder study of the periods of which he has written so attractively.

W. S. BEAN.