

HISTORY

OF THE

Associate Reformed Synod

OF THE

SOUTH,

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A History of the Associate Presbyterian

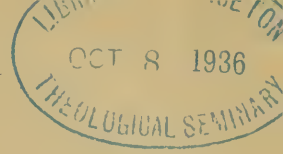
AND

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES.

BY

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In May, 1811, the case of Messrs. Mason, Matthews and Clarke came up for adjudication. As all the circumstances connected with that case, and the decision of the General Synod, have been minutely related elsewhere, they need not be repeated here. From that day on to the hour of its final dissolution, the General Synod was regarded by the subordinate Synods of Scioto and the Carolinas as a mere partisan court. In 1819 the Synod of Scioto withdrew and declared itself no longer subordinate to the General Synod, and in 1820 dissolved and reconstituted itself as an independent and coördinate Synod. At this time it took to itself the name of "The Associate Reformed Synod of the West."

To the Synod of the Carolinas, at its meeting at Steele Creek, on the 2d of April, 1821, the First Presbytery reported that "It is the opinion of a majority of this presbytery that the relation which has hitherto existed between the sub-Synod of the Carolinas and Georgia and the General Synod should be dissolved." On the next day (April 3d), this report of the First Presbytery was taken into serious consideration, after which the following resolution was offered by Rev. John Hemphill, and seconded by Mr. John Nisbet, ruling elder from Mr. Blackstock's charge, in Lancaster county, S. C. :

WHEREAS, Our distance from the place of synodical meeting is so great that it is altogether impracticable to maintain a full representation in General Synod; *And whereas*, It is supposed that the interests of truth and godliness may be promoted as successfully in a state of separation from General Synod; therefore.

Resolved, That be appointed a committee to write to General Synod requesting permission to form ourselves into a sister coördinate Synod.

The above resolution was adopted and the blank filled by inserting the names of Rev. Messrs. John Hemphill and John T. Pressley. The committee prepared a letter, which was unanimously approved by the Synod and sent to the General Synod by Mr. Henry S. Wilkin, a probationer in connection with the Presbytery of New York. In reply to this letter, the following resolutions were adopted by the General Synod, on the 19th of May following :

1st. *Resolved*, That the Synod of the Carolinas be and they hereby are authorized to erect themselves into a separate church, if they continue to judge the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, in that quarter of the country, to call for such a measure.

2d. *Resolved.* That in the event of the Synod of the Carolinas becoming a separate sister church, this Synod will continue to cherish, as heretofore, a Christian affection for all members and ministers of said church, and be ready to keep up the most friendly correspondence, according to any plan that may be mutually agreed on between the two churches.

On the 1st of April, 1822, the Synod of the Carolinas met at King's Creek, Newberry county, S. C. All the ministers, except Mr. McKnight, were present, and a ruling elder from all the pastoral charges except those of Rev. Messrs. Eleazar Harris and Joseph Lowry. On the first day, "It was moved by Messrs. John T. Pressley and Joseph Lowry, that inquiry be made of the members whether they judge that the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom in this quarter of the country call for a separation according to the answer given by the General Synod to our petition on that subject. The members were unanimous in the opinion that the present state of the Church justified such a measure. It was, therefore, moved by Messrs. Hemphill and Rogers, that the Synod act on the permission of General Synod, and agreeably thereto resolve ourselves into an INDEPENDENT CO-ORDINATE Synod."

To this resolution there was not a dissenting vote. So far as anything to the contrary appears, the members were all of one mind.

Immediately after the adoption of the resolution by which the Synod of the Carolinas was erected into an Independent and Coördinate Synod, the following motion by Revs. John Hemphill and William Blackstock was unanimously adopted :

Resolved, That this Synod be hereafter known by the name of the ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD OF THE SOUTH; adhering to the constitution and standards of the Associated Reformed Church, in that sense, in which they were received when adopted at Greencastle, in the year 1799, and uniformly acted upon until the year 1811.

Such was the origin of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South. This event took place thirty-two years after the organization of the Associate Reformed Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia, and nineteen years subsequent to the organization of the Synod of the Carolinas. If the organization of the Associate Presbytery of the Carolinas is excepted, very little change had taken place in the general features of the Associate Reformed Church in the South during either of these periods. When the Associate Reformed Presbytery of the