



HISTORY

OF THE

Reformed Presbyterian Church

IN

AMERICA:

WITH SKETCHES OF ALL HER MINISTRY, CONGREGATIONS,
MISSIONS, INSTITUTIONS, PUBLICATIONS, Etc.,
AND EMBELLISHED WITH OVER
FIFTY PORTRAITS AND
ENGRAVINGS.

BY

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Roman Catholicism. He also published three ably written pamphlets in vindication of the position of the Old School Covenanter Church during the controversy of 1833, which are unanswerable. He was Moderator of the Synod of 1834.

WILLIAM GIBSON :

Son of Robert and Susannah (McWhirr) Gibson, was born near Knockbracken, County Down, Ireland, July 1, 1753. His parents were members of the Presbyterian Church, but on account of the departure of that body from the attainments of the Reformation, he connected with the Covenanter Church in early life. He passed through the accustomed routine of studies in the national schools, and under private instructors, and graduated from the University of Glasgow, Scotland, in 1775. He studied theology in Edinburgh, and privately, and was licensed by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland, May 19, 1781. He preached with great acceptance in the vacancies for a few years, and was ordained by the Reformed Presbytery, and installed pastor of the united congregations of Kellswater and Cullybackey, County Antrim, Ireland, April 17, 1787. His labors were signally blessed by the gathering of a large congregation, and in his fidelity to truth, and the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the Church, he rendered himself obnoxious to a tyrannical government. His ardent love for personal liberty led him to encourage those associations formed in Ireland to throw off the British yoke. The Insurrection of 1797 marked a trying period in the history of Ireland, and the Covenanters were often suspected by governmental agents as countenancing

the association of "United Irishmen." During this rebellion, the oath of allegiance was required, but the Covenanters refused to take it. A magistrate living in the vicinity of Mr. Gibson's congregation, administered the oath to two men who waited upon his ministrations, and one of them remarked that Mr. Gibson would censure them for what they had done. This observation reached the ear of the magistrate, who declared with a profane oath, that Mr. Gibson should either take the oath of allegiance or his life should go for it. This was the reason he found an asylum, with hundreds of others, in America, and not because he was a member of the "United Irishmen." According to his own testimony he never was a member of that association.* He fled for safety to America, and landed in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 18, 1797, and resided, with his family, in this city nearly two years. He supplied the small societies of Covenanters in Philadelphia, Coldenham, New York, and in Vermont. He, with the Rev. James McKinney and ruling elders, constituted the Reformed Presbytery of America, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May, 1798. He was installed pastor of the congregation centering in Ryegate, Caledonia County, Vermont, July 10, 1799. This field was very extensive and in a severely cold and uncultivated section of country, but his labors were accompanied with manifest tokens of the Divine blessing. The congregation became divided into several branches, and he resigned the charge, April 13, 1815. He was installed pastor of the congregation of Canonsburgh, Washington

* *American Reformed Covenanter.*

County, Pennsylvania, October 23, 1817, and resigned on account of the infirmities of age, May 27, 1826. He took charge of the congregation of Paterson, New Jersey, for several years. In May, 1834, he removed to the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he resided two years. During the controversy and division of the Church in August, 1833, he remained among the faithful brethren who held the principles of the Covenanter Church as they have always been applied. In 1836, he removed to the city of New York, New York, and supplied the pulpit of his son, the Rev. Robert Gibson, who was in feeble health. In the summer of 1838, disease and the extreme infirmities of age rendered him unable to sustain himself under the fatigue of the usual pulpit labors, and he gradually declined until his death, at his home in the city of New York, New York, October 15, 1838. Although in his eighty-fifth year, he preached twice upon the Sabbath, and his reason and memory were unimpaired. He married Miss Rebecca Mitchell, of Londonderry County, Ireland, in 1788. He was a well-read theologian and a fine classical scholar. His discourses were distinguished for soundness of doctrine, Scriptural illustration, and practical application. He was not a brilliant speaker and yet a most instructive preacher. He was especially interesting upon sacramental occasions, when it was evident that he had drunk deeply at the fountain of Divine truth, and he dispensed the waters of life with a copiousness and richness of sanctified thought seldom surpassed. He was a large, fine-looking man, venerable and imposing in his appearance. He was the honest and upright

man in all his transactions; naturally benevolent in disposition, warm and unchanging in his friendships, and void of anything like dissimulation. He effected little as an author. He published a pamphlet in the form of a dialogue concerning the Calvinistic doctrine of the Atonement against Hopkinsianism, 1802, pp. 80; also a sermon, "When the Enemy shall come in like a Flood," 1803, pp. 47. He was Moderator of the first Synod of 1809, and also in 1816 and 1832.

JONATHAN GILL :

Son of John and Jane (Shaw) Gill, was born near Huntingdon, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, August 9, 1777. His childhood and youth were characterized by many of the deprivations of a new country, and with difficulty he obtained the rudiments of an education, and engaged in teaching. After some time he resumed his studies in the Canonsburgh Academy, and graduated from Jefferson College in 1810. He studied theology in the Philadelphia Seminary, and was licensed by the Middle Presbytery, May 9, 1814. He was ordained by the Western Presbytery, and installed pastor of the united congregations of Xenia and Massie's Creek, Green County, Ohio, May 14, 1816, and resigned this charge, April 6, 1823. He was installed pastor of the Brookland congregation, including Puckety and Thompson's Run societies, Lucesco, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, October 20, 1823. At the division of the Church in August, 1833, he became identified with the New School branch of the Covenanter Church, and the pastoral relation was dissolved. He was restored, October 16, 1834,