

**FIVE YEARS' MINISTRY IN THE GERMAN
REFORMED CHURCH, IN RACE STREET,
BELOW FOURTH,
PHILADELPHIA. AN ANNIVERSARY
SERMON, PREACHED, JENUARY 8, 1860,
AND AN ECCLESIASTICAL APPENDIX**

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Five Years' Ministry in the German Reformed Church, in Race Street, Below Fourth, Philadelphia. An anniversary sermon, preached, January 8, 1860, and an ecclesiastical appendix by J. H. A. Bomberger

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J. H. A. BOMBERGER

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FIVE YEARS' MINISTRY

OF THE

German Reformed Church,

IN RACE STREET, BELOW FOURTH,

PHILADELPHIA.

AN ANNIVERSARY SERMON,

PREACHED, JANUARY 3, 1860,

AND

AN ECCLESIASTICAL APPENDIX.

BY

J. H. A. BUMBERGER, D.D.

PHILADELPHIA :

LINDSAY & BLAKISTON.

1860.

HENRY B. ASHCROD, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER,
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PHILADELPHIA, *January 9, 1863.*

TO THE REV. J. H. A. BOMBERGER, D. D.

DEAR SIR:—We, the undersigned members of the Race Street German Reformed Church, of which you are Pastor, considering the Anniversary Sermon, preached by you yesterday, as very appropriate and interesting, and believing that its circulation, in a more permanent form, would be useful to the congregation, respectfully ask of you the same for publication.

With high esteem,

We remain, most respectfully yours,

PHILIP H. HORN,	JOHN G. ALBURGER,
GEORGE MAUBER,	GEORGE PRIEST,
JOHN WIEST,	DAVID McWILLIAMS,
WM. HAYBERRY,	JOHN HINCKLE,
CHAS. SANTEE,	SAM. H. BIBIGHAUS,
JAMES E. AUDENRIED,	WOUTER SOBBE.

CHARLES WASNEMACHER.

Philadelphia, January 13, 1860.

MY DEAR BRETHREN :

Conscious of the peculiar difficulty of the task, my Sermon of last Sunday morning was prepared and preached with more than ordinary diffidence. It is the more gratifying to me, therefore, to learn that, whilst you must have appreciated the delicacy of my position, the manner in which I was enabled to discharge what I believed to be a duty, has won your full approval. And trusting that the opinion you are pleased to express, of the benefit likely to result from the publication of the Discourse, may be correct, I herewith place it at your disposal.

As the Sermon is no doubt designed by you, mainly, for circulation among the members of our own Church, I have thought it would serve a desirable purpose, to add an Appendix setting forth, in a somewhat permanent form, such facts regarding the German Reformed Church as, in my opinion, will be found both interesting and useful. We have, no doubt, been culpably remiss, in neglecting to keep our members duly informed of our history, character, and operations as a Church. Other denominations, some of them smaller and of much later origin than our own, have, by means of annuals, almanacs, and other issues, shown great zeal in spreading information among their members, concerning their own affairs. And no doubt they have in this way promoted proper denominational attachment, and

awakened desirable denominational zeal. But the German Reformed Church, being really less sectarian in its spirit, and more Catholic in its sentiments, has, probably, been too indifferent of the good purposes to be secured by such means. Hence, it happens that our members scarcely know the actual extent of their ecclesiastical heritage, and may even hold somewhat disparaging views of it.

Nevertheless, so far from having anything to be ashamed of, either in regard to the doctrinal position, the ecclesiastical polity, or the historical progress of our Church, it is only necessary that the Church should be better known in all these respects, in order that increased attachment to it should be awakened in our own members, and increased regard secured for it from the Christian public at large.

Let us then regard it as our duty, to make ourselves and our children better acquainted with these things, so that our affection for the German Reformed Church may become at once more ardent and more intelligent. Such affection will serve as an incitement to redoubled efforts for the advancement of the glory of God, as that may be associated with our ecclesiastical prosperity.

I would be far from desiring to kindle in any of your hearts the searing fire of bigotry. Whatever superiority we may feel justified in claiming for our own Church-character and principles, we must be willing ever to recognize, and admire, the peculiar excellencies of other ecclesiastical systems. Indeed, the Evangelical Reformed Church (I use this general title in order to designate our Church in Europe as well as in this country), has always done this to such an extent, as ever to have stood ready to hail the first advances towards a holy union, of all branches of the Uni-

versal Church, and as to have, at this hour, no barriers to such union within herself. We have never, as a denomination, thought that the mere doctrinal or constitutional diversities existing between those several parts of the mystical body of Christ, which practically recognize each other as evangelical, furnished sufficient reasons for perpetuating the formal dismemberment of that body, or for the arrogant exclusiveness maintained by some denominations.

But so long as these separate ecclesiastical organizations maintain their distinctive existence, we are fully justified in using proper means to ascertain more fully, and appreciate more cordially, the particular merits of our own.

Praying that we may continue to enjoy the Divine favor which has thus far so mercifully attended us, and that we may have grace to prove our gratitude for that favor by growing zeal in the service of our Master, I remain, dear brethren, with assurances of sincere personal regard,

Truly yours,

In Christian bonds,

J. H. A. BOMBERGER.

To Messrs. PHILIP H. HORN,
J. G. ALBRIGHT,
Wm. MAYNOR, M. D., and others.

ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US ; WHEREOF WE ARE
GLAD.—Psalm cxxvi. 3.

It has ever been accounted “a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto the name of the Most High.” It must certainly be proper, therefore, from time to time, to pause in the midst of our labors and pursuits, of our trials and blessings, in order to take such reviews of the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, as may more strongly prompt us to suitable thanksgivings. The cheering retrospect, or encouraging circumstances in whose midst we may find ourselves, may, indeed, have the bad effect of exciting self-complacency and pride. Our hearts may find more pleasure in contemplating evidences of prosperity, as these are promotive of self-aggrandizement, than as magnifying the unmerited goodness of our Divine Benefactor. But surely the danger of this